
ZMANJKALO JE SOLZ

Konceptualizacija fenomena smrti skozi prostorsko-časovno dimenzijo in tradicionalno vs. moderno dihotomijo na primeru pogrebnih obredov

Marta Gregorčič

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Ključne besede: smrt, pogrebni obredi, tradicija, Jessica Mitford, Internet, postmoderna družba

1. Uvod

Smrt je na mestu glavne tabu teme mojega časa zamenjala spolnost. Tekmujemo, kdo bo naštel zanimivejše detajle intimnega življenja, o smrti pa nimamo česa povedati. Kratkotrajnost spolnega užitka ni primerljiva z dokončnostjo smrti. Pogrebne šege se malo spreminjajo, na kar vplivajo vera v posmrtno življenje, želja spoštovati, ceniti in spominjati se umrlih, strah in ugibanje, povezana z neznanim, ter končno občutek izgube in porušenje ravnotežja, ki spremljata smrt. Globoko zakoreninjene vrednote, verovanja, prepričanja nam ne dovolijo spreminjati obredov, ki izpolnjujejo našo odgovornost do umrlih, boga, celijo rane tako nam kot tudi družbi. Pogrebne šege so v svojem bistvu konzervativne in tradicionalne. Kadar se spremenijo naglo in v veliki meri, odsevajo dramatične materialne, vedenjske in tudi ideološke spremembe v širši družbi. Modernizacija, industrializacija, visoka tehnologizacija, sekularizacija, globalizacija, mobilnost... so le nekateri od elementov postmoderne družbe, ki se razkrivajo tudi v samem obredu pokopa. Najprej se nameravam v prvih treh poglavjih sprehoditi skozi opis pogrebnih obredov, šeg in pogrebne industrije, ki sem jih spoznala v literaturi, prek interneta, skozi intervjuje (pogovore) ali pa sem jih opazovala na pokopališčih.

Zanimal me je zunanji - kvantitativni čas obredov (obred v času) kot tudi notranje časovne kvalitete obredov (čas v obredu: krajši/daljši oz. počasnejši/hitrejši). Opazovala sem tudi obred v prostoru in sam prostor obreda (tudi specifičen prostor znotraj pokopališča). Skozi tako optiko časa in prostora sem poskušala uzreti tradicionalni (na primerih antične Grčije, starega Rima, zoroastrizma, avstralskih staroselcev in starega slovenskega krščanskega pogreba) in moderni (na primerih: Žale, Trst, Amsterdam; internet) obred pogreba. Pri tem sem namerno nekoliko zanemarila samo komparacijo, ker se mi je zdelo bolj optimalno skozi tradicionalni obred pokazati specifičnosti novih,

modernih obredov (ki se kažejo v zrcalu moderne družbe), predvsem pa z njimi povezane nove procese ali elemente, ki zadevajo sam obred kot 'slovo od umrlega' in hkrati tudi sprijaznjenje ali pomiritev žalujočih, bližnjih.

Pri deskripciji pogrebnih obredov sem se naslonila na Van-Gennepovo konceptualizacijo obredov prehoda:

Obred	umrli	žalujoči
SEPARACIJA	od živečih članov družbe	od živečih članov družbe
TRANZICIJA	iz sveta živih v svet mrtvih	iz sveta mrtvih v svet živih
INKORPORACIJA	v svet mrtvih	v svet živih

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Separacijo sem (v nasprotju z Van-Gennepom) razumela kot nastop smrti ('mrlič v hiši', 'mrlič v bolnišnici ali kakšni drugi instituciji') in z njo povezane obrede. Transzicijo sem razumela kot konkreten akt pogrebnega obreda (akt pokopa, akt kremiranja) v vseh specifikah. Pri inkorporaciji pa so me zanimale popogrebne šege, sprejetje smrti, 'živost' spomina na umrlega in vključitev žalujočih nazaj v vsakdanji življenjski, rutinski svet.

Če uvod morda zmotno napeljuje, da bom govorila predvsem o žarnih pokopih, naj opozorim, da sem se le-tem v veliki meri odpovedala, saj bi s samim opisovanjem različnih žarnih obredov povedala prav malo novega ali vsaj ne tistega, kar želim povedati. Seveda menim, da so zanimivi in da bi zaradi svoje 'modernosti' nedvomno zaslužili opredelitev. Opozoriti moram tudi še na to, da sem namerno zanemarila cel kup elementov, ki so relevantni pri proučevanju obrednega pogreba (vaško/mestno, nagrobni spomeniki, osmrtnice, pogrebi otrok ali tistih, ki so umrli nasilne smrti - zanje so veljali posebni obredi...), ker sem poskušala poudariti predvsem novejšo procese pri sprejemanju smrti svojcev kot tudi novejšo procese, ki zadevajo sam obred pokopa. O tem več na koncu.

2. Tradicionalni pogrebni obredi glede na prostorsko in časovno dimenzijo v treh momentih

Za antično Grčijo in Rim veljajo določene podobnosti pri pojmovanju smrti, ker je Rim precej prevzel od grške kulture. Kljub temu so pri starih Rimljanih smrt in pokop spremljale zapletene šege, v grški mitologiji pa je smrt štela za nesrečo, nekaj nečistega, kar je zahtevalo celo vrsto pravilno izvedenih postopkov, da ne bi 'okužila' drugih.¹ Tudi pogrebni obredi zoroastrizma² so prežeti z mitologijo. Smrt je zmaga hudiča nad dobrim stvarstvom in truplo prebivališče demonov, zato zaradi svoje nečistosti ne sme biti pokopano ali sežgano, da ne bi onečastilo zemlje ali ognja. Avstralski staroselci³ imajo smrt ved-

¹ Pri spoznavanju pogrebnih obredov Rimljanov in Grkov sem se opirala na: Toynbee, Jocelyn M.C. (1996): "Death and Burial in the Roman World". Baltimore, London: Tahe Johnson Hopkins University Press; Vernat, Jean-Pierre (1991): "Mortals and Imortals: Collected Essays", Princeton: Princeton University Press; Janičević, Jovan (1986): "U znaku Moloha: antropološki ogled o žrtvovanju". Beograd: Vajat.

² Pri opisovanju pogrebnih obredov zoroastrizma sem se opirala na: Hinnells, John R. (1985): Persian Mythology. Peter Bedrick Books, New York.

³ Pri opisovanju pogrebnih obredov Aboriginov sem se opirala na: Turner, Ann Warren (1976): Houses for the Dead. New Yourk.

no za umor; človek ne more umreti naravne smrti: kako sicer pojasniti nenadno smrt nekoga, ki je bil tako poln življenja? Sorodniki umrlega morajo najti morilca in pri tem izprašajo vse člane skupnosti. Mrtveca vsi objokujejo ter kažejo druge znake žalovanja tudi zato, da jih ne bi osumili umora (Turner, 1976: 69). Kristjanov, ki so kot Kristusovi udje eno v Kristusu, niti smrt ne more nikdar ločiti.⁴ Krščanski pogrebni obredi se razlikujejo glede na regije, zato bom poskušala podati splošen opis. Krščanska cerkev poudarja spoštovanje telesa, pristojno obnašanje in pokopališče kot sveti kraj.

a) 'Mrlič v hiši' - separacija

V antičnem Rimu so umirajočega položili na gola tla in najbližji sorodnik je s poljubom ujel njegov zadnji dih in mu zatisnil oči. Navzoči so začeli glasno klicati umrlega po imenu⁵ in njegovi domači so, v posebnih oblekah za to priložnost, umili truplo s toplo vodo, ga odišavili in odeli v togo. Truplo je bilo nato izpostavljeno⁶ v atriju hiše na mrtvaškem odru, obdano z gorečimi oljenkami in prekrito s kitami in venci cvetja. Mrtvec je pod jezikom nosil novčič za plačilo brodarju mrtvecev - Haronu, da bi duša pokojnega mogla v onostranstvo. V znamenje žalovanja so ugasnili ogenj v domačem ognjišču, jokajoče žene so si pulile lase, trgale obleko in bile po prsih. Grške predpogrebne šege se le malo razlikujejo od rimskih. Truplo je bilo tu le dan ali dva izpostavljeno v hišnem pred-dverju 'z nogami naprej' - proti vratom. Podobno kot Rimljanke so tudi Grkinje glasno žalovale, se tolkle po prsih, posipale lase s pepelom, s posebnimi pahljačami varovale mrličev obraz pred soncem in muhami. Grki so si v znak žalovanja rezali lase. Najeti žalovalci in žalovalke so prepevali pogrebno žalostinko. Pred vrati hiše z mrličem je stala posoda z vodo, kot simbol, da je mrlič v hiši, in kot simbol očiščenja.

V zoroastrizmu mora biti truplo umito z gomezom,⁷ oblečeno v čisto sudre⁸ in povezano s kusti.⁹ S truplom se ukvarjajo le naras-salas - nosači trupla, saj telo zasede demonka trohnenja in razpada - Nasu, zato se žalujoči truplu ne približujejo. Nasar-salas z žebli ogradijo nečisti prostor okrog mrtveca in pripeljejo psa, da bi potrdil, da je človek res mrtev - sagdid. Navzoči z duhovnikom molijo do pogreba, ki je še isti dan, vendar ne po sončnem zahodu, saj v temi na žive prežijo zle sile. Po Solonomem zakonu je potrebno mrliča odnesti naslednji dan po izpostavitvi trupla in pred svitanjem, da ne bi onečistili sončnih žarkov. Po smrti avstralskega staroselca truplo posujejo z rdečo prstjo, ki spominja na kri, ki je bila prelita ob rojstvu (Turner, 1976: 70). To kaže na ponovno rojstvo umrlega na drugem svetu. Na pokojnikove prsi in trebuh narišejo znak klana v beli in rumeni barvi - verujejo namreč, da ti znaki spreminjajo umrlega v sveto bitje, ki lahko vstopi v svet duhov (Turner, 1976: 71).

⁴ Prim. Simeon Solunski, PG 155, 685 B, v: Krščanski pogreb: Slovenski obred: Rimski obrednik kakor ga je prenovil drugi vatikanski cerkveni zbor in ga je razglasil papež Pavel VI, Ljubljana, 1970. Pri opisovanju krščanskega pogreba sem se opirala še na: 'Knjižice' - časopis za duhovno probudo in prosveto (1938, let. 5, št. 119).

⁵ To je stara šega, imenovana conclamatio, o kateri je pisal tudi Homer v Odiseji.

⁶ Truplo je bilo izpostavljeno največ en teden, vendar pa je to veljalo le za veljake. Reveže in otroke pa so pokopavali brez sežiga navadno še isti dan, sredi noči.

⁷ Kravji urin, ki velja za najmočnejše zemeljsko očiščevalno sredstvo.

⁸ Sveta srajca iz belega bombaža.

⁹ Dolga tkana volnena vrstica.

Smrt katoličana so na Dolenjskem najprej oznanili zvonovi.¹⁰ Domači so ustavili stensko uro, mrliču so v največjem prostoru v hiši pripravili mrtvaški oder, stene so oblekli v črnino in obesili vence. Mrliča so preoblekli in položili na mrtvaški oder. S sklenjenimi rokami je objemal rožni venec. Pred odrom je na mizi stalo cvetje, križ in blagoslovljena voda, da so ga ljudje hodili kropiti in zanj moliti. Ob straneh so gorele sveče in nad vzglavjem je navadno visela slika ali križ. Mrlič je ležal v hiši 48 ur, tako da ni bilo več mogoče dvomiti o smrti. Svojci so pri bedenju ob mrliču molili, peli psalme ali brali Sveto pismo. Včasih so duhovniki prišli na dom in so s procesijo pospremili mrliča v cerkev, kasneje pa so mrliča pričakali na cesti do cerkve ali pred cerkvenimi vrati.

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b) 'Akt pogreba' - tranzicija

Za Rimljane je veljal obred pokopa za slovesnost. Pogrebni sprevod so vodili piskalci, tem so sledili flavtisti, hornisti, trobentači; naenia - žena, ki je pela hvalnico umrlemu, nato vzklikajoče žene z lesenimi butarami, prepojenimi z dišečimi smolami; igralci, ki so z mimiko ponazarjali lastnosti umrlega. Tik pred nosili z mrtvim so si žalujoči nadeli voščene maske umrlih prednikov. V črno oblečeni liktorji so nosili odkrito truplo, ki mu je v žalni črnini sledila žalujoča družina. Mesto pokopa ali sežiga je bilo zunaj naselbine,¹¹ kjer je bila pripravljena bustum.¹² Prastara šega je bila, da so truplu poslednjič odprli in zaprli oči in mu dali poslednji poljub, zatem pa je bližnji sorodnik zažgal grmado, prisotni pa so v ogenj metali cvetje, nakit, hrano, dišave. Z vinom so pogasili žerjavico in umili kosti, ki so jih z dišavami in medom stresli v urno. Med pogrebom so svojci s posebnim obredom izlili pitno daritev bogovom. Kraj sežiga je kasneje krasil s cipresami ograjen oltar - aro -, okrašen s slikami in statuetami, žaro pa so najpogosteje postavili v kolombarij, ki je nosil pokojnikovo ime. Rimljani so pokopavali mrtve tudi v znamenite podzemne katakombe z marmornatimi sarkofagi ali umetno sezidanimi grobnicami, v katere so polagali nakit, keramične figurice, velike jantarne prstane, ki so varovali pred zlimi uroki...¹³

Grško pogrebno povorko, ki je krenila po opravljenem žrtvovanju v hiši pokojnega, je vodila žena s posodo za izlitje žrtve, njej so sledili možje, nato žene¹⁴ in kot zadnji godci s frulicami. Mrtveca so na odru nosili sorodniki ali sužnji ali pa so ga peljali na vozu. Pri Grkih, podobno kot pri Rimljanih, je bilo pokopališče zunaj mestnih zidov. Mrtvega so pokopali ali sežgali. Po sežigu so pepel in kosti zbrali v robec in spravili v žaro, nato pa pokojniku izlili žrtve. Pri Perzijcih pogrebno procesijo vodijo nasar-salas,

¹⁰ To velja vsaj za večji del Dolenjske še danes. (Smrt duhovnika: 3-krat veliki zvon s presledki, smrt moškega: 3-krat mali zvon s presledki, smrt ženske: 2-krat mali zvon s presledki.) Zvonenje se je ponavljalo 3-krat na dan z vsemi zvonovi, ko so klicali k molitvi.

¹¹ Nekropole so navadno ležale ob mestnih vpadnicah.

¹² Rimljani so poznali več vrst grmad. Bustum je izkopana grobna jama, nad katero so položili les, nanj pa nosila s truplom in vse skupaj zažgali, ostanke pa nato prekrili z zemljo.

¹³ Več o bogati pestrosti predmetov, ki so jih Rimljani polagali v grobove, v: Janičijević, Jovan (1986): "U znaku Moloha: antropološki ogled o žrtvovanju". Beograd: Vajat.

¹⁴ Žene v Grčiji se niso pojavljale v javnosti, tako so se tudi pogrebov udeležile izključno bližnje sorodnice pokojnega.

ki nosijo kovinski mrtvaški oder in z mrtvaškim prtom pokrito truplo; njim sledita dva duhovnika in nato v parih žalujoči, ki med sabo držijo bel kos blaga, da jih povezane varuje pred zlom. Ko v tišini prispejo do dokhma (stolpa tišine), položijo truplo na marmorno ploščo, žalujoči se z zadnjim pogledom poslovijo od umrlega in še zadnjič izvedejo sagdid. Nato truplo v dokhmi izpostavijo jastrebom. Žalujoči se po poti domov umivajo in molijo za očiščenje, nasar-salas pa se lahko vključijo v družbo po devetdnevem očiščevalnem obredu.

Avstralski staroselci položijo truplo v drevesno deblo, kjer leži tri mesece. Očistijo kosti, jih 2-3 mesece opazujejo, da se prepričajo, ali jih je duh zapustil, nato jih zložijo v deblo, ki ga položijo na sredo tabora (Turner, 1976: 76). Krščanski pogrebni sprevod je vodil duhovnik s strežniki, ki so nosili križ, kropilo z blagoslovljeno vodo, kadilnico in večno luč. Njim so sledili pogrebci s krsto. To so včasih peljali na vozovih, kasneje avtomobilih ali na traktorjih. Za krsto so hodili svojci, bližnji. Kar zadeva nadaljnjo razvrstitev, obstajajo spet različne šege.¹⁵ Med potjo so molili in peli. Pogrebni sprevod je najprej peljal v cerkev, kjer so pri opravi božje besede poslušali tolažbo upanja, darovali evharistično daritev in pozdravili rajnega s posebnim slovesom. Opravili so tudi obred absolucije ("reši me"), ki so ga kasneje imenovali 'poslednje priporočanje in slovo', kar je pomenilo nekakšno oproščanje grehov rajnega, ko krščansko občestvo skupno pozdravi svojega člana, preden ga pokopljejo. Ta obred je bil večkrat izvršen na pokopališču. Ko so duhovnik in verniki spremljali rajnega na pokopališče, so molili ali peli. Tu je duhovnik opravil verski obred: kropljenje groba v znamenju sv. križa in s tem blagoslov, nato blagoslov telesa in na koncu je na krsto spustil zemljo.¹⁶ Pogrebni akt se je lahko končal s pesmijo.

c) 'Popogrebni obredi' - inkorporacija

Rimljani so se tudi po smrti na različne načine spominjali pokojnega. Na grob so prinašali cvetje in darila in v njegov spomin opravljali obrede. V grobno jamo so porinili cevko, po kateri so spuščali mrtvemu jedačo in pijačo.¹⁷ Grki so po pogrebu odšli na žalujoči dom, kjer so morali, da bi se rešili najhujše nečistosti, ki so jo pridobili v stiku s smrtjo, opraviti pomembne obrede očiščevanja, temu pa je sledila žalna gostija. Naslednji dan je bila hiša očiščena z vodo in dišavami in v znak kulturnega spoštovanja pokojnika se je gostija ponovila tretji, deveti in trideseti dan po pokopu in ob obletnici smrti.

Zoroastrijci molijo in opravljajo posebne obrede skupaj z duhovnikom prve tri dni, ko duša potuje v večnost. Posebni obredi sledijo še vse leto po točno določenih intervalih, ko v veselju vabijo mrtve k praznovanju živih. Avstralski staroselci poskušajo pomagati umrlemu na njegovi poti v svet duhov, zato opazujejo kosti umrlega, da bi se prepričali, ali je njegov duh uspešno prešel na oni svet. Do mrtvih se torej obnašajo zelo

¹⁵ Na Dolenjskem niso poznali posebnih navad. Drugod po Sloveniji pa so svojem najprej sledili mladi moški, nato poročeni moški z družino, na koncu so hodile ženske ali je veljal spet obratni vrstni red...

¹⁶ Blagoslov, voda, zemlja - imajo v krščanstvu simbolni pomen: ...sprejmi zemlja, kar je tvojega... z nebeško roso naj orosi tvojo dušo Bog..., iz prsti si ga naredil, s kostmi in kitami si ga sklenil, obudi ga poslednji dan..., Gospod, daj mu večni mir in pokoj in večna luč naj mu sveti...

¹⁷ Ta šega še danes živi med pravoslavnimi v Evropi.

spoštljivo in skrbno. Katoliki so poznali šego, da so se po pogrebu, ki mu je sledila gostija, še sedem dni zbirali na domu pokojnega, kjer so peli, molili in obujali spomine na mrtvega. Udeležili so se tudi sedmine, tridesetega dne in obletnice pogreba. Prav tako so se rajnih spominjali ob cerkvenih praznikih - npr. ob veliki noči, kjer so se bodrili v veri v vstajenje in ponovno snidenje.

3. Moderni pogrebni obredi skozi prostorsko in časovno dimenzijo (separacija - tranzicija - inkorporacija)

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Danes smrt ne nastopi več na domu, pač pa v bolnišnicah, zavodih, ustanovah. Domači mrliča ne vidijo in z njim nimajo nikakršnih opravkov, saj truplo prevzamejo pogrebni servisi. Prva postaja za truplo je hladilnica, kjer na ljubljanskih Žalah¹⁸ truplo tudi po teden dni čaka na upepelitev. Svojci pokojnega ne morejo obiskati in "slovo" je le zadnja ura ali zadnje minute v obredu. Kljub temu da Žale pesti problem časa, da se pogrebi odvijajo vsako uro (ko je umrljivost večja pa vsake pol ure¹⁹), je krščanski pogreb ohranil vse tri dele obreda: prvi del, ki se je nekoč odvijal na domu, danes opravijo pred mrliško vežico, drugi del v cerkvi ali v katafalku - pred Plečnikovo molilnico, tretji del pa na samem grobu. Pri žarnem pogrebu smo Slovenci izoblikovali poseben obred - izgnili smo se "slovesu" in imamo le "pogreb"²⁰.

Pri krščanskem pogrebu opozorimo še na eno spremembo, ki jo je uvedel drugi vatikanski cerkveni zbor 1970. leta; dejstvo, da smrti ne gre več zavijati v črnino in obup, pač pa v vero v vstajenje, črnino zamenja upanje, kar se kaže v oblačilih, molitvah, nagovorih... Žale so posebnost v tem, da je arhitekt Plečnik že 30 let pred vatikanskim koncilom zaslutil ne le arhitekturni, pač pa tudi verski pogled na smrt in črnino zamenjal z belino. Žale kljub urbani stiski poskušajo ohranjati "človeške" obrede, kar pa za nekatera velika evropska mesta na velja več.

Samo pogled na pokopališče Sv. Anne v Trstu pove, da je tam velika prostorska stiska. Grobovi so nametani vseprek in stisnjeni drug poleg drugega, kolikor prostor dopušča. Mešajo se različni slogi in oblike. Mogočnim grobnicam in velikim družinskim kapelam danes konkurirajo 'serijski grobovi'. V tako imenovane 'serijske grobove' pokopljejo 48 neznancev, ki jih veže le isti časovni termin smrti. Nova grobišča so v obliki betonskih ploščadi, kajti ne pokopavajo v zemljo, ampak vlagajo krste v podzemlje. Namesto nagrobnih spomenikov imajo skupno betonsko korito za rože v obliki križa ali črke T (ti so ob koncih vrst), v velikosti 2x7m, ki pa je mnogokrat prazno ali poraslo s travo. Vsako korito ima 48 serijskih števil, ki se ujemajo s serijskimi številkami v podzemlju, kjer so nameščene krste. Vsakemu pokojnemu tako na korito s serijsko številko prilepijo ploščico z njegovim imenom, letnico rojstva in smrti in navadno do-

¹⁸ Žale predstavljam na podlagi pogovora z gospodom Antonom Rojcem.

¹⁹ Prehodi iz zime na pomlad, jesensko obdobje, včasih tudi poletno obdobje...

²⁰ To pomeni, da imamo samo zadnji del - drugod po svetu pa je ravno obratno.

dajo še sliko. Poleg vsake serijske številke pa je majhna luknjica v obliki kroga, kamor je možno namestiti vazo z rožami. Korita si v vrsti sledijo v razmiku enega metra. Med vrstami, ki so vzporedne, so hodniki ali ulice s pokritimi jaški, skozi katere s posebno pripravo spustijo krsto v podzemlje. Vendar je to podzemlje le začasni dom pokojnega, kajti po 10 – 15-ih letih krste potegnejo iz podzemlja,²¹ jih sežgejo in s tem pridobijo prazne prostore za nove krste. Samo v primeru, če svojci plačajo novi prostor za žaro ali 'serijsko' pokopališče z žarami, pokojnemu zopet pripada tablica z napisom na posebnih stenah ali betonskih panojih, sicer pa njegovo ime izgine.²²

Poleg očitne prostorske stiske pokopališče Sv. Anne v Trstu pesti še časovna stiska, ki se kaže ob obredu pokopa. Pri civilnem pogrebu svojci pospremijo krsto iz mrliške vežice do kraja pokopa, kjer delavci krsto postavijo na posebno pripravo in jo spustijo v podzemlje. Zatem se v podzemlje spustita tudi dva od delavcev in vložita krsto pod zaporedno številko. Eden od delavcev svojcem pokaže serijsko številko, pod katero nalepijo ploščico s pokojnikovimi podatki, in tako se obred po dveh minutah konča, brez govora ali kakšne pristojne osebe. Tako kot mene, ki sem pokop zgolj opazovala, je tudi svojce, ki verjetno niso poznali 'modernih' šeg, poleg kratkosti obreda presenetila še ena malenkost. Ko so prisotni po teh dveh minutah hoteli še zadnjič stisniti roko žalujočim ali jim morda nameniti spodbudno besedo, so presenečeni ugotovili, da se morajo kar najhitreje odstraniti, saj so pogrebni delavci že prinašali naslednjo krsto. Cerkveni pokop se ne razlikuje mnogo od civilnega. Traja za spoznanje dlje - to je 3.48 minute. Ko duhovnik spregovori zadnje besede in simbolno z lopatko na krsto položi zemljo, krsto spustijo v podzemlje. Temu sledi že opisan nadaljnji potek, vključno s tistim, ko delavci zopet prinesejo naslednjo krsto in se morajo žalujoči umakniti naslednjim žalujočim...

Absolutni kontrast opisanim novim, 'modernim', 'mašinskim' pokopom, s katerimi se soočajo številni svojci na prenatrpanih (predvsem mestnih) pokopališčih, je De Nieuwe Ooster v Amsterdamu. Govorim o 33 hektarjev velikem, arhitektonsko konstruiranem parku in pokopališču obenem. Naravni in kulturni park je s svojim intimnim značajem in veličastnimi spomeniki območje, ki nudi več kot le kremiranje in pokopavanje ali obisk svojcev. Narava in spomeniki nudijo ogledalo časa v socialnem in kulturnem pomenu. Zelenice, ogromna, stara drevesa in raznovrstno grmičevje popestrijo ptičje petje, ježi, fazani, zajci... Mojo pozornost je pritegnila predvsem raznovrstnost, vendar ne razkošnost nagrobnih spomenikov. Pokopališče je razdeljeno v 82 con, ki jih ločuje široka peščena cesta. Cone se med seboj razlikujejo v slogu ali obliki nagrobnih spomenikov, ki so razvrščeni glede na leto smrti ali glede na slog pogreba, narodnost umrlega... Ponudba pogrebnih servisov se tu ne razlikuje veliko od ameriške, ki je podrobno opisana v naslednjem poglavju. Samega obreda pogreba nisem imela možnost opazovati, pa si kljub temu upam trditi, da se močno razlikuje od obreda v Trstu.

²¹ O tem sem se tudi prepričala, saj sem videla delavce, ki so sredi popoldneva iz podzemlja vlekli razpadle krste, iz katerih so gledale kosti ali ostanke trupa.

²² Njihov pepel verjetno shranjujejo na kakšnem skupnem pokopališču ali prostoru.

4. Pogrebna industrija na internetu in v delih Jessice Mitford

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Tako imenovani pogrebniki (preden je prišlo do sprememb v terminologiji) se niso ukvarjali samo z vodenjem pogrebnih zavodov: izdelovalci pohištva so delali krste, družinski člani so pripravili vse potrebno za pogreb. Ponavadi so truplo opazovali ne zaradi želje - vtisniti si pokojnika v spomin - pač pa da bi preprečili morebitno pomoto. Moderno pogrebno podjetje je iznajdba podjetnika, ki je zaslužil, da je mogoče s ponudbo pogrebnih storitev na enem mestu dobro zaslužiti. S podporo kapitala prepričane oblasti odobrijo podjetniško iniciativo. Je torej res mogoče govoriti o pogrebni industriji? Vsekakor! Delo Jessice Mitford *The American Way of Death* razkrinka vse črne plati pogrebne industrije. Skepticizem, ki se je na začetku porajal ob tem šokantnem besedilu, se je razblinil, če jo preverimo na Internetu. Svetovni splet razkriva 1132 spletnih strani na temo smrti, 21772 na temo pogreba, 13885 strani o pogrebnem obredu, 36711 o pogrebnih podjetjih, 3827 o krstah... Na voljo je ogromno informacij o različnih pogrebnih obredih, mrliških vežicah, pogrebnih zavodih, organizaciji spominskih slovesnosti, pripravah na pogreb in čas po njem,²³ balzamiranju, glasbeni spremljavi, cvetličarjih, darovanju telesa, oblačenju in kozmetični obdelavi trupel, obisku pokojnika, bedenju pri njem,²⁴ o cerkvah, kapelah, izbiri krst in žar,²⁵ hranjenju trupel v hladilnici, mumificiranju, spominkih²⁶ ... (Precej naštetega je na voljo ne le umrlim ljudem, temveč tudi hišnim ljubljencem.)

Če ne bi poznali črne plati pogrebne industrije, bi bilo potrebno navdušeno pozdraviti samo zamisel, pomagati ljudem v prelomnem (morda najtežjem) trenutku, ko so izgubili bližnjega. Ker pa v moderni družbi vsaka velika ideja sloni na profitu, realnost pokaže, da je pogrebna industrija ena izmed najpohleplejšejših, saj služi na račun žalujočih. Pogrebni industriji je uspelo prevrednotiti ali razvrednotiti pogrebni obred. Danes prej kot o slovesu od umrlega in kreiranju obreda lahko govorimo o kompliciranem poigravanju s ponudbami pogrebnih direktorjev in denarjem žalujočih. Naj najprej opozorim le na nekaj nepravilnosti ali načinov manipuliranja, ki jih hitro opazimo ob prebiranju pogrebnih ponudb in pritožb nanje na internetu. Pri svojih ugotovitvah pa se bom oprla predvsem na Jessico Mitford in njeno precizno kritiko.

Najprej naj opozorim na ogromne razlike v ceni med posameznimi pogrebnimi zavodi za enake ponudbe.²⁷ Hvalospjevi izdelkom in pretirano besedičenje pogrebnih poslovnicev vsiljujeta opcije, kaj bi pokojni najbolj želel oz. kaj bi si zaslužil. Pogrebni zavodi ponujajo "pogrebne pakete", ki naj bi svojem pomagali pri izbiri ustreznih po-

²³ Tako imenovane "post-need services", ki skrbijo za potrebe žalujočih po pogrebu, obsegajo od pomoči pri izpolnjevanju raznih obrazcev do sspoje knjig z relevantno vsebino in organizacije terapije za odrasle in otroke...

²⁴ Enkratni obisk \$185.00, poldnevno bedenje \$285.00, celodnevno \$385.00.

²⁵ Ker sem prepričana, da ne znam opisati izjemno raznolike ponudbe caskets (neke vrste krsta), predlagam, da si kot primer ogledate Virgil T. GOLDEN Funeral Service casket price list: <http://www.golden-funeralservice.com/caskets.html> - in spoznate pogrebno industrijo iz prve roke.

²⁶ Zahvalna pisma, seznam pogrebecev, molitve, osmrtnice, razpelo, program spominske slovesnosti, sveče...

²⁷ Do 4-kratna razlika za 'casket' iz enakega materiala, barve...

grebnih storitev. Tako so mnogokrat prisiljeni plačati tudi storitve, ki jih ne potrebujejo ali ne želijo. Pogrebni direktor nadzoruje celotno dogajanje po smrti. Funkcionira kot glavni igravec pogrebne ceremonije, oskrbnik trupla in koordinator z njim povezanih dejavnosti. Poznavanje njegove vloge je ključno pri razumevanju s smrtjo povezanih obredov v sodobni družbi.²⁸

Gre za paradoks: na eni strani družine, ki so izgubile ne le bližnje, pač pa jim je bil onemogočen tudi način pokopa, ki bi ga želeli, in na drugi strani t. i. "tradicionalni obredi", ki so jih ustvarili pogrebni poslovneži zaradi za dobička, nadzora nad žalostjo svojcev in razrednega položaja.²⁹ Nekdanje "coffins" (krste) so danes zamenjale "caskets" v vseh možnih oblikah, barvah in 'presenetljivo dobrih' materialih, ki uničijo truplo veliko hitreje ter preprečijo, da bi ga napadli črvi in mravlje, pač pa ga napadajo plesni v vseh barvah in oblikah.³⁰ T.i. "pre-pay plan"³¹ (plačilo za pogreb še za časa življenja) znašajo običajno veliko več kot pogreb, ki ga naročijo svojci; po večini se ga ne da odpovedati, v primeru odpovedi stroški navadno niso vrnjeni v celoti ali sploh niso vrnjeni; mnogi ne dobijo pogreba, ki so ga naročili... Kiber-spominki³² naj bi izražali našo bolečino in častili spomin na pokojnega, pa temu navadno ni tako.

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Pogrebe lahko razdelimo na takojšnje pokope (tj. brez kakršnegakoli obreda), tradicionalne pogrebe, sežige, ki jih spremlja pogreb, in sežige brez obreda. Takojšnje pokope izvršujejo ob smrti brezdomcev in tistih, ki ne morejo kriti stroškov pogreba. Kremiranje je danes prepovedano pri ortodoksnih judih, parsih, muslimanih in pravoslavnih Grkih, običajno pa pri hindujcih in tudi že pri krščanskih pogrebi. V zemlji zakopano telo razpada počasi, naravno. Pri upepelitvi pride do zelo hitrega, nenadnega razpada. Pri tradicionalnem pogrebu predajamo telo bogu in zemlji, pri čemer sta združeni naravna in nadnaravna komponenta. Sodobna upepelitev pa je tehnološki postopek, ki pokojnika zelo hitro pretvori iz enega v drugo stanje. Leta 789 je Karel Veliki zagrozil s smrtno kaznijo vsakomur, ki bi se ukvarjal s kremiranjem trupel. To početje je veljalo za nekrščansko, saj sežgano telo po smrti ne bi moglo vstati od mrtvih. Prvi sežig trupla v ZDA so opravili 1876. leta v Washingtonu, v Angliji pa 7 let pozneje (Hatfield, 1993). Katoliška cerkev je trikrat ostro obsodila sežiganje trupel (1886, 1918 in 1926).³³

V Ameriki iz leta v leto sežgejo več trupel, ne zaradi mode ali želje pokojnega. Tako imenovani tradicionalni pogrebni obredi so v svojih izpopolnjenih detajlih na-

²⁸ Več o tem v: *Death, Value, and Meaning Series* by John D. Morgan (1993).

²⁹ Pogrebniški so zabrisali spomin na religiozne obrede in družinske tradicije na račun lastnega dobička.

³⁰ Več o tem Jessica Mitford. Ali so pogrebna podjetja, ki povzročajo uničenje trupel, silijo stranke, da kupujejo krste iz škodljivih materialov in jim za to mastno zaračunajo, res "ugledna", "čuteča" in "skrbna", za kakršna se razglašajo?

³¹ Nosilci pogrebne industrije naštevajo mnogo "utemeljenih" razlogov za 'plačanje pogreba še za časa življenja' (npr.: olajšali boste bolečino svojcev, prihrankov vam ne bo požrla inflacija, sami boste določili obliko in trajanje pogrebnega obreda in tudi pri načrtovanju boste lahko sodelovali; tako se boste izognili nasoglasjem med družinskimi člani, pomirjeni bodo tako oni kot vi...).

³² Nekaj primerov: Highgate Cemetery, New Orleans, Online Memoria, The World Wide Cemetery, DeathNET, Rivendell In Memoriam, The Virtual Memorial Garden, The DAV Vietnam Veterans Memorial at Angel Fire, New Mexico...

³³ Več o tem 'Knjižice' - časopis za duhovno prubodo in prosveto (1938, let. 5, št. 119).

menjeni le še eliti, zato raste povpraševanje po (cenejšem) kremiranju. Ker pa pogrebni direktorji neradi izgubljajo svoje radodarne stranke, okoliščinam primerno višajo tudi ceno kremiranja.

Čeprav je v ZDA še vedno več tradicionalnih pogrebov, število upepelitev narašča (med letoma 1990 in 1995 naraslo s 17% na 24%). Število Američanov, ki načrtuje upepelitev, se je v tem času povečalo s 37% na 43%; interes za upepelitev narašča s starostjo, stopnjo izobrazbe in zaslužkom... Upepelitev je precej cenejša od tradicionalnega pogreba... V 23% primerov žaro s pepelom vrnejo družini, 16% jih pokopljejo ali shranijo na pokopališču, 6% jih svojci raztresejo po zemlji ali morju. V večini primerov (54%) svojci pepel preprosto pustijo pogrebniemu zavodu.³⁴ V študiji o upepelitvah v Angliji Jupp navaja, da se za zanje odločajo mestni, predmestni in na podeželje priseljeni prebivalci, za tradicionalni pogreb pa tisti, ki že dalj časa živijo na podeželju.

Opozorila sem le na nekaj očitnih primerov zlorabe pogrebnih servisov, veliko bolj pa so šokantne ugotovitve Jessice Mitford. Prva raziskovalna študija Jessice Mitford "The American Way of Death" (1963)³⁵ razkriva pohlep, skomercializiranost in zlorabe ameriške pogrebne industrije. Knjiga je postala uspešnica in je sprožila veliko polemik o moralnosti in načinih dela pogrebne industrije, ki se je poigrala z ameriško javnostjo. Beremo jo lahko kot satiro ali kot neomajno kritiko potrošniške družbe in manipulacije s ponudbo in povpraševanjem. Mitfordova je raziskala novi besednjak smrti, v katerem ni več mesta za pogrebne krste in mrliške vozove. Danes se govori o "pogrebnih direktorjih", "bivališčih" in "transportnih sredstvih". Rože so "cvetni spomin", trupla vedno "ljubljeni osebe", pepel je "pepelnata zapuščina", pare "kraj počitka"... Ena od posledic je, da stroški pogrebov naraščajo hitreje kot življenjski stroški.

Natanko 35 let po prvi izdaji je Mitfordova objavila novo, dopolnjeno: "The American Way of Death Revisited",³⁶ kajti v pogrebni industriji je prišlo do mnogih sprememb in le redke so bile na bolje. Spremembe Mitfordova razdeli v tri glavne kategorije: prvič, upepelitev, včasih najcenejši način pogreba, postaja čedalje dražja, pogrebna podjetja pa delajo iz nje čedalje bolj zapleten obred. Drugič: težko pričakovani odlok zvezne trgovinske komisije, ki naj bi pokrival to področje, ima veliko pomanjkljivosti. Najbolj zaskrbljujoče pa je dejstvo, da se je v zadnjih petnajstih letih močno razširilo monopolno lastništvo prej neodvisnih mrtvašnic in pokopališč. Stroški pogrebov so dramatično (desetkratno) narasli. Pogrebna industrija je velik posel, v katerem čedalje bolj prevladujejo velike korporacije, ki imajo v lasti ogromno mrliških vozov, limuzin, storitvenih vozil, v službi pa cel spekter pisarniških delavcev, od računovodij do obdelovalcev podatkov, ki skrbijo za potrebe več kot pol ducata nekdanj neodvisnih pogrebnih

³⁴ Po Brad Edmondson: The Facts of Death (American Demographics magazine, April 1997) - http://www.demographics.com/publications/ad/97_ad/9704_ad/ad970427.htm

³⁵ Pred tem je Mitfordova kot reakcijo na pojav revij, ki so se ukvarjale s ponudbo pogrebnih storitev (The Mortuary Management, Casket and Sunny Side, The Journal of Creative Ideas for Cemeteries...), objavila članek "Sveti Peter, ne drzni si me poklicati" ("St. Peter, Don't You Call Me"). S tem je sprožila veliko člankov na to temo - npr.: v Saturday Evening Postu je Roul Tunley objavil članek "Si lahko privoščite smrt" ("Can you Afford to Die").

³⁶ Večino poglavij (A Global Village of the Dead, Pay Now - Die Poorer, New Hope for the Dead ...) v prenovljeni izdaji je Jessica Mitford napisala sama, preden je leta 1996 nepričakovano umrla za rakom. Knjigo so dokončali njeni asistentki Karen Leonard in Lisa Carlson ter njen mož Robert Treuhaft.

podjetij. Pogrebna industrija je zdaj verjetno večji posel kot kdajkoli poprej in je odkrila nov vir dohodkov - kupovanje parcel za grobove vnaprej. Skupno je bilo v te nakupe v zadnjem času vloženi 20 milijard dolarjev (v letu 1961 le milijarda dolarjev). Načelo, ki velja za industrijo, je še vedno isto: to je posel velikih razsežnosti, v katerem se neprestano uporabljajo evfemizmi in olepšave, ki trkajo na domišljijo Američanov in njihovo željo po urejenosti. V boljšem in morda pametnejšem svetu bi bili pogrebi skromnejši in preprostejši, kot so npr. v drugih deželah, zlasti v tistih, ki jih še ni pozlatil ameriški "Midasov dotik" (Jonathan Yardley, 1998).³⁷

Mitfordova želi zrušiti mit o pogrebi: mit o tem, da sodobni pogrebi temeljijo na ameriški tradiciji; da javnost dobiva, kar želi, vendar pa so stroški pogreba spremenljivi ne glede na posameznikov okus, ampak glede na to, kaj bo pogrebna industrija prinesla; in končno psihiatrične teorije, ki stojijo za njo, in zagotavljajo, da je trajna spominska slika ali zadnji pogled na umrlega terapija za žalujoče. Na nepravilnosti pogrebne industrije in njenih direktorjev pa ne opozarja le Jessica Mitford, pač pa je bilo na to temo napisanih ogromno člankov in knjig.³⁸ Slovenija premore odličan primer pogrebne industrije: monopolno javno podjetje Žale d.o.o. z monopolnimi cenami. Zaradi prostorske stiske in estetike so preuredili zapuščene grobove in iznašli novo pogrebno filozofijo, da gredo 'vnaprej pripravljene grobovi' dobro ali bolje v promet.³⁹

Moje lastno opažanje pogrebne industrije, besedila, pa tudi vse dostopne informacije na internetu so me privedli do spoznanja, da ne gre zgolj za moderno ekonomijo pogrebniških servisov, pač pa za nekaj več! Lakomnost pogrebne industrije in njeno profitno cvetenje, z vsak dan lepšim cvetom, je zgolj posledica želje svojecev, da bi šlo to trpljenje (truplo) ne glede na ceno mimo njih. Znebiti se trupla hitro, tiho, nemoteče, komaj opazno, po receptu pogrebne direktorje, brez velikega žalovanja, objokovanja in velikih družinskih ceremonij za pripravo na končni, poslovlilni obred. Ali v moderni družbi denar prevzame terapevtsko vlogo in zaceli bolečino, ki se je zarezala ob izgubi? Bi pogrebna industrija res lahko nemoteno cvetela v svojem profitu na tako očiten način, če ne bi držala v svojih krempljih umazanega dela - tabuja smrti, mrliča, trupla... - nad katerim si akter moderne družbe z denarjem umije roke?!

5. Postmoderna družba, novi obredi in novo razmerje procesov

Renoviranje starih tradicionalnih obredov, ki se s svojo 'mašinskostjo', hitrostjo... prilagajajo moderni, kompleksni družbi in modernemu načinu življenja, in nastanek (pojav) modernih, povsem novih obredov, kot sta npr. kremiranje in kiber-spominki, s sabo prinašajo nove procese tako v načinu izvedbe obreda kot tudi v načinu spreje-

³⁷ <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/WPlate/1998-08/02/0281-080298-idx.html>

³⁸ Navajam jih le nekaj: *The High Cost of Dying*, Ruth Harmer (1963); *The Truth About Funerals: How to Beat the High Cost of Dying*, Donald Flynn (1993), Canada; *Dealing Creatively With Death: A Manual of Death Education and Simple Burial*, Ernest Morgen (1994), *Profits of Death*, Darryl J. Roberts (1997)...

³⁹ Več o Žalah d.o.o v Mladini (1998), 40, str. 24-25.

manja 'izgube'. Gre za nova razmerja naslednjih procesov ali elementov, ki med sabo sovpadajo, se prepletajo in dopolnjujejo:

- (de)personalizacije
- (ne)formalnosti
- (aktivne/pasivne) participacije
- sekularizacije
- inkluzivnosti/ekskluzivnosti
- ritualizacije/deritualizacije/deritualizacije
- (de)teritorializacije

174 Pri obredu pogreba gre danes tako za proces personalizacije kot tudi depersonalizacije. Na eni strani Amerika z visoko razvito pogrebno industrijo, kjer si danes lahko posameznik pred smrtjo ali njegovi svojci po smrti privoščijo na pogrebu katero koli zvrst glasbe, katero koli znamko avtomobila ... Ker je smrt najbolj oseben in ireverzibilen akt, svojci želijo pogostiti sebe in svojega preminulega s spoštljivim, osebnim in nestandardiziranim, spontanim pogrebom.⁴⁰ Kitajsko verovanje, da so mrtvi še vedno živi, samo v drugem svetu, lepo ilustrira daoistična praksa sežiganja potrebščin iz papirja. Le-te naj bi umrli uporabljali v postmodernem življenju: papirnate avtomobile, hiše, celo služabnike. To nima nič opraviti z vraževernostjo, na to gledajo kot na obred, ki pokaže njihovo skrb in spoštovanje do umrlih.⁴¹ Personalizacija se kaže tudi na nagrobnikih. Nekdanje verske simbole danes pogosto nadomeščajo kipi, skulpture..., ki simbolizirajo pokojnikov karakter ali njegov hobi oz. stvari, ki ga kakorkoli označujejo, ali preprosto stvari, ki jih je imel rad.⁴² Vsi ti novi simboli hočejo poudariti mogočnost, trdnost in karakter umrlega. Personalizacija nagrobnikov je še bolj očitna pri otroških grobovih, ki so polni raznovrstnih igrač, kar bi bilo skozi očala tradicionalne družbe prej nespodobno kot zeleno.

Opisana personalizacija je neke vrste upor rutinskim, depersonaliziranim pogrebom in depersonalni, standardizirani družbi. Proces personalizacije v pogrebnih obredih, ki je danes prej izjema kot pravilo in od svojcev terja znatno vsoto denarja, se navadno odvija pri pogrebih slavnih oseb, kjer ne manjka emocionalno nabitih poslovnih govorov in vseh ugodnosti pogrebne industrije,⁴³ po drugi strani pa je neke vrste personalizacija prisotna tudi na vaških pogrebi. Danes se je kot pravilo, skladno z množičnim mašinskim, serijskim pokopavanjem in časovno in prostorsko stisko moderne družbe, uveljavil proces depersonalizacije. Serijske pokope v Trstu izvajajo vsakih 5 minut, na Žalah vsake pol ure. Sorodniki, svojci pri obredu ne sodelujejo, pač pa se sku-

⁴⁰ Npr.: v Ameriki žalujoči ob raztresanju pepela spontano izrekajo govore - povsem osebne - svojemu pokojnemu in s tem aktivno in osebno kreirajo pogrebni obred.

⁴¹ <http://www.cuhk.hk/journal/varsity/9503/dead.htm>

⁴² Npr. na ljubljanskih Žalah lahko opazimo kipe ali skulpture: nogometno žogo, letalo, violino, doprsne kipe, orle - vendar so le ti, vsaj za Slovenijo izjemni. Personalizacija se je kazala na amsterdamskem pokopališču, predvsem na novejših grobovih. Tu ne gre več za nagrobne spomenike, pač pa za 1x1m velike 'vrtičke', posute z najrazličnejšimi kamni, porasle z različnim cvetjem, polne kipev, predmetov, igrač, školjk - ki naredijo na obiskovalca simpatičen in prijeten vtis - in so daleč od kiča...

⁴³ O personalizaciji pogrebne obreda lahko govorimo v primerih, ko si svojci to lahko privoščijo, oz. glede na status.

šajo prilagajati standardiziranemu vzorcu obreda, ki ga vodi ali duhovnik ali pogrebni direktor ali (npr. v Trstu) kar navaden delavec v umazani delavski obleki. Obredi postajajo hipni, momentalni. Pri cerkvenih pogrebih maše časovno več ne sovpadajo s pogrebom, ampak so nekaj ur kasneje ali jih sploh ni.

Depersonalizacija sovпада tudi z večjo stopnjo formalnosti, kar zadeva potek obreda in govore. Gre za točno določen vzorec obreda, ki ga navadno pozna le pogrebni direktor in njegovi pristaši, svojci pa kot izgubljene ovce sledijo njihovim zahtevam. Neformalni, spontani govori ob posipanju pepela in medsebojna izmenjava lepih spominov ali dogodkov pokojnega so spet prej redkost kot pravilo. Na drugi strani pa je vse nižja stopnja formalnosti vidna v oblekah, načinu obnašanja svojcev in tudi prostor - nekdanj cerkev ali kapelo - danes pogosto zamenja zunanji ozvočeni prostor, namenjen predvsem za žarne obrede.

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Pasivna vključenost v obred ali neparticipacija pri obredu je ena od naslednjih smernic, ki se kažejo pri modernih obredih. Le redko⁴⁴ je zaslediti obrede pokopa, kjer svojci želijo ali potrebujejo aktivno participacijo in kreiranje pogreba. V ZDA so nekatere tradicionalne obrede priredili tako, da lahko svojci umrlega v njih sodelujejo: zapojejo, preberejo pesem, ki so jo napisali posebej za to priložnost, povedo anekdoto o umrlem... Danes pobudnik ceremonije nastopa predvsem kot organizator ter nima osrednje vloge pri samem dogodku. Pa vendar so to spet redkejši primeri, kot pa vsakodnevni neparticipativni, mašinski pogrebi. Iz besedil Jessice Mitford je več kot očitno, da so subjekt pogrebnih obredov mnogokrat direktorji, in ne svojci oz. umrli, katerim naj bi bil dejansko obred namenjen.

Naslednji element sodobnih tako pogrebnih obredov kot tudi nagrobnih spomenikov je sekularizacija. Pogrebi se odvijajo na posvetnih lokacijah, brez prisotnosti duhovščine, brez verskih liturgij, glasbe in simbolov. Prav tako prihaja do mešanja posvetne in posvečene zemlje. Maše kot sedmina in trideseti dan se v mestih le redko opravljajo, navadno v primerih, ko svojci za to zaprosijo, pa tudi takrat navadno duhovniki mašujejo 'prazni cerkvi'.⁴⁵ Sekularizaciji se zoperstavlja strah pred smrtjo, neznanim, bogaboječnost..., kar se je pri Slovencih pokazalo v raziskavi SJM (91/1), kjer je 73% anketirancev menilo, da je ob smrti potreben verski obred, pa čeprav jih je le 23% verjelo v življenje po smrti oz. 37% v dušo oz. 55% v Boga.⁴⁶

Glede na zapletena razmerja v sodobni družbi ter naraščujoče verske, rasne, etnične in kulturne razlike, današnje ceremonije in rituali vključujejo čedalje več žalujočih. Če so nekdanj mrtvega na zadnji poti pospremili družina, sorodniki in vaščani ali sosedje iz bližnje okolice, ki so ga poznali, je današnja pogrebna 'povorka' med sabo povsem heterogena, večidel tuja in 'skregana' (npr.: tretji mož, polsestra, mešane

⁴⁴ Spet sem tu zasledila v glavnem primere iz Amerike ali primere slavnih oseb. V Sloveniji svojci pogreb na različne načine kreirajo predvsem na vaseh. Kot specifičen primer lahko nevedem vasi v Brkinih, kjer imajo navado, da ob slovesu od doma vsakega pozdravijo z "Zbogom!", predno vaščani sami pokopljejo rajnega. Zavodi imajo zgolj postransko vlogo (npr.: pripeljejo rajnega iz bolnišnice).

⁴⁵ Danes se samo krščanstvo sooča s t.i. "osebno vero" oz. ne gre več za vero v občestvo. Individualistično življenje pogloblja osebno vero, kar se kaže tako v številčnosti ob obredu, simbolih...

⁴⁶ Niko Toš: Center za raziskovanje slovenskega javnega mnenja (SJM 1991/1).

družine, sodelavci iz različnih služb...). Zaradi geografske in družbene mobilnosti, integriranih delovnih mest, vedno večjega števila večrasnih družin ter imigracij z vseh koncev sveta obstaja čedalje večja verjetnost, da bodo tudi žalujoči oz. pogrebci drugačnih veroizpovedi, nacionalnosti, etničnega porekla... kot pokojnik. Družbena in geografska mobilnost (globalizacija, reteritorializacija) oddaljujeta in odtujujeta sorodstva in zahtevata razumevanje družbene tradicije. Spremembe dovoljujejo ali zahtevajo prevrednotenje kulturnih vrednot. Ideologije in institucije so pogosto postavljene pod drobnogled in pogosto ne zadovoljujejo potreb.

176 Deritualizacija ali vsaj reritualizacija, je naslednji proces, ki ga lahko zaznamo tako v pogrebni industriji kot tudi v serijskih, mašinskih pogrebi. Razvrednotenje ali prevrednotenje pogrebnega obreda, ker obred postaja zgolj nuja, ker je bil tak tradicionalen način slovesa in ga danes zgolj mehansko opravimo. Deritualizacija ali reritualizacija, depersonalizacija, formalnost, departicipacija, sekularizacija, reteritorializacija in ekskluzivnost so le nekateri od procesov, ki jih ne gre posploševati za celotno moderno družbo, pač pa so sestavni del moderne, postmoderne družbe in sodobnega človeka in se zrcalijo tudi v pogrebnih obredih. Moderni, mašinski pogrebni obredi s konfuzno in hitrostno 'ritualizacijo' imajo priokus moderne družbe. Zadržati staro obliko in prilagoditi se novim okoliščinam, na nov način, v razpoložljivih prostorskih in časovnih razmerah, terjata nove procese, nov način akomodacije, 'sprejetja' smrti oz. nov način sprijaznitve ali pomiritve z 'izgubo'. Smrt gre, kot tudi sam mašinski pokop, hipno, nezavedajoče mimo svojcev. Smrt se je nekdanj nahajala v središču življenja, kot se je pokopališče nahajalo v središču mesta. Smrt je bila dih vsakdana. Danes smrti ni!

6. Smrt - tabu postmoderne družbe - se kaže tudi skozi pogrebni akt

Kolektivnemu duhu v tradicionalni družbi, kjer je smrt razložena, umeščena, opredeljena in obvladana, se zoperstavlja sicer svobodni individuuum, ki pa je pri operacionalizaciji smrti prepuščen sam sebi. Zastarelost starih razlag in neprepričljivost novih sprožata krizo posameznikove eksistence. Avtonomnost nad naravo in višjimi silami, dinamičnost, diferenciacija, kompleksnost, formalizacija in univerzalizacija spreminjajo mrtve v obsesijo podzavednega. Po Geoffreyju Gorerju se smrt skriva za zaprtimi vrati, Aries vidi družbeni sram in strah pred smrtjo v ne-obstoju smrti. Carl Gustav Jung, oče psihoanalize, je zdravil licemerje in neumneže, ki se niso spraševali o smrti in njeni dramatičnosti, pač pa so se delali 'odrasle', 'moderne' in 'elegantne' v pretvarjanju, da smrti ni. Danes bi moral zdraviti celotno družbo! In kaj bi Jung imel povedati danes, ko 'izgubo' (ne)uspešno nadomešča novo terapevtsko sredstvo - denar? Smrt je danes strašljiva, zanikana in sramotna. O njej ne velja govoriti, sicer te lahko označijo še za frommovskega nekrofila. Po Frommu osebe z nekrofilno orientacijo privlači neživo, mrtvo, trupla, gniloba, razživijo se ob pogovorih o bolezni, smrti, pogrebi in ljubijo smrt. Za tako osebo je Fromm poleg ideala - Hitlerja označil tudi Carla Gustava Junga.

V pričujočem članku želim opozoriti na 'radikalne' pogrebne obrede (in z njimi povezano 'industrijskost'), ki odpirajo nekatera nova razmerja procesov, ki se pojavljajo

sočasno s hitro spreminjajočo se družbo in so v veliki meri odsev le-te. Razvrednotenih, mašinskih pogrebov in plitvega ali vse plehkejšega 'slovesa' od umrlih ne gre jemati kot splošno ali bodočo smernico, pač pa kot opozorilo, da v moderni, postmoderna družbi sami fizični, nujni procesi (modernizacije, urbanizacije) zahtevajo ali vodijo v nesprejemanje smrti, skrivanje bolečine, ki se ob deritualizaciji (ali reritualizaciji) niti ne porodi, pač pa skriva, potlači, ali v pomiritev, ki sploh ni bila vznemirjena. Zato se prevrednoti tudi sam občutek izgube, ki dejansko to več ni. Ne gre več za sprijaznitev s smrtjo, ampak za obsesijo. Smrt ni več izguba, jasno tudi ni dobiček (z izjemo pogrebniških servisov), pač pa je ni. Je ne vrednotimo, o njej ne govorimo, se ne srečamo z mrtvecem, s truplom, z umazan delom, kajti mrtveci preprosto izginejo, sama smrt pa nas zadene le še finančno in v 'hipnem obredu'.

Če postmoderna družba spreminja način gledanja na smrt, bi se lahko vprašali tudi, ali smrt spreminja postmodernizem. Ali resnično obstaja postmoderna smrt, katere značilnosti so ironija, paradoks in igrivost postmodernega življenja? Ali pa smrt razkriva željo za iskanjem smisla, ki spodkopava postmodernizem? To je vsekakor pomembno vprašanje za teoretike postmodernizma, prav tako pa tudi za vse, ki jih zanima družbena konstrukcija smrti in umiranja (Walter, 1993: 267). Smrt je izziv postmoderna družbi. Ali bodo pokopališča postala le še draga odlagališča odpadkov in zarjavelih kosti? Ali bomo smrt prepustili toku hiper-modernizacije, njenih urbanih, kulturnih, socialnih in globalnih prisil? Ali bo šlo vse bolj za (že zdaj očitno) vrtilčkarstvo, tekmovanja v nagrobnikih, skulpturah...? Ali bodo mrtveci še kdaj zaživel v naših spominih ali jih bomo razvrednotili dostojanstva, ki so jim ga nekoč izkazovali?

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OUT OF TEARS

Conceptualization of the Phenomenon of Death through the Time-Space Dimension and the Dichotomy between Traditional and Postmodern Funeral Rites

Marta Gregorčič

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Key words: *death, funeral rites, tradition, Jessica Mitford, Internet, the postmodern society*

1. Introduction

Death has replaced sex as the taboo subject of our times. People compete to discuss the most intimate details of their sex lives, but they have nothing to say about dying, which in its immensity dwarfs the momentary pleasures of sex. Our beliefs about the afterlife and the relationship between the living and the dead, the desire to respect, honour and remember the deceased, the mystery and fear surrounding the unknown, and the disruption and grief that occurs when we die, all contribute to keeping funeral customs from changing much. In the face of deeply entrenched values, beliefs and emotions, we don't change the rites that we believe are necessary to not only fulfil our responsibilities to God and the deceased, but that helps us and our society to heal. Funeral customs are inherently conservative, traditional. Ordinarily they change very little across time. But when they change extensively and quickly it can reflect dramatic material, behavioural and even ideological changes in the broader society. Modernization, industrialization, the increase of high technology, secularization, globalization and the increase of mobility are but a few elements of the postmodern society that are demonstrated throughout the act of the funeral. In the first three sections of the paper an overview has been made of funeral rites and related customs, the funeral industry as featured on the Web, and personal observations made through interviews and visits to cemeteries.

The main point of interest was the time, duration and pace of funeral, as well as the appearance of the funeral site itself. Attempts were made to extract the characteristics of the traditional and the contemporary funeral rites on the examples of old Greece and Rome, Zoroastrianism, the Aborigines and old Slovene Christian funerals, contrasted

with the M.O. at Ljubljana, Trieste and Amsterdam cemeteries, alongside with the source on the Web. The comparison of the traditional and the contemporary was neglected, as the goal was to demonstrate the characteristics of the latter through the characteristics of the former, with emphasis on the “saying farewell” and “finding peace” components.

Describing the funeral rites I drew on Van Gennep’s conceptualization of the rites of passage:

Rites	The Dead Person	People who are Bereaved
SEPARATION	From the living members of society	From the living members of society
<u>180</u> TRANSITION	From the world of the living towards the world of dead	From the world of dead towards the world of the living
INCORPORATION	Into the world of dead	Into the world of the living

‘Separation’ (in contrast to Van Gennep) was understood as the actual event of death and related rites. ‘Transition’ was understood as the act of the funeral (burial, cremation), and ‘incorporation’ as the post-funeral customs and rites, the memories of the deceased and the return of the mourners to everyday routine.

Cremation was not dealt with in detail although it represents an interesting contemporary phenomenon. Also some elements which are undoubtedly relevant to the research of funeral rites (the difference between the urban and the rural; gravestones, obituaries, burials of children and those who had suffered a violent death) have been omitted as the paper focuses on the reception of death, and on new practices involved in the act of the burial.

2. Traditional funeral rites through space and time dimension, viewed in three key moments

There are certain similarities between old Greek and Roman concept of death. For Romans, however, death and burial represented complex and solemn occasions, while in the Greek mythology death was unfortunate as it was impure which brought on a series of measures (prevention) in the community.¹ The funeral rites of zoroastrianism² are also concerned with mythology. Death was thought of as the victory of the devil over the universal good and the dead body as the sanctuary of demons, and as such impure. They did not allow the body to be buried or cremated as it might dishon-

¹ For ancient Greek and Roman funeral rites, see Toynbee, J.M.C. (1996): “Death and Burial in the Roman World”. Baltimore, London: The Johns Hopkins University Press; Vernat, Jean-Pierre (1991): “Mortals and Imortals: Collected Essays”, Princeton: Princeton University Press; Jančićević, Jovan (1986): “U znaku Moloha: antropološki ogled o žrtvovanju”. Beograd: Vajat.

² For Zoroastrian funeral rites, see Hinnells, John R. (1985): *Persian Mythology*. Peter Bedrick Books, New York.

our the Earth or the Fire. Aborigin tribe³ feels that death is always a murder, there are no natural causes. "How else could you explain how a person died so suddenly, who before had been so full of life?" was their reasoning. The relatives of dead are responsible for finding the murderer. They would have to question everyone. After a person dies, everyone in the camp raises up a wailing, and shows their pain of mourning. Sometimes they would do this so they would not be suspected of the murder (Turner, 1976: 69). The Christians, who are according to their belief, one in Christ, cannot be separated, not even by death.⁴ Christian burials differ according to the regions, but on the whole Christianity preaches a respectful attitude towards the body and considers the cemetery a holy place.

a) "A body in the house" - separation

In ancient Rome, the dying was laid on the bare floor. Their closest relative caught their final breath with a kiss and closed their eyes. Everybody present started loudly calling the deceased's name⁵, the deceased family, in the special clothes for the occasion, washed the body with warm water and dressed it in a toga. The body was then laid out⁶ on a bier in the atrium, surrounded by burning oil-lamps and covered with flowers. They put a coin under the deceased's tongue, to pay the fare to Haron and ensure the deceased's soul would be able to enter the world beyond. As a sign of mourning, the fire was put out in the fireplace, the women were crying, pulling their hair, tore their clothes and beat their chest. Ancient Greek customs were very similar. The body was laid out in the hall, with the feet towards the door, for a day or two. Greek women were also loud in their lamentations, beat their chest, sprinkled ashes over their hair and protected the deceased's face from sun and fries with specials fans. As a sign of mourning Greek men cut their hair. Hired mourners of both sexes were singing laments. There was a jug of water put in front of the house door as a purifying symbol and to show that there was a body in the house.

In Zoroastrism, the dead body has to be washed with gomez⁷, dressed in a clean sudre⁸ and tied with kusti⁹. Mourners do not approach the body because it is possessed by the demon of rot and decay Nasu; it is handled by the pallbearers, who are called naras-salas. They make a circle of nails around the body and bring a dog which confirms death (sagdid). Everybody present then joins in prayer until the funeral which takes place before the sunset, because in the dark demons pray on the mourners. Ac-

³ For Aborigine's funeral rites, see Turner, Ann Warren (1976): Houses for the Dead. New Yourk.

⁴ Cf. Simon Solunski, PG 155, 685 B v Krščanski pogreb: Slovenski obred: Rimski obrednik kakor ga je prenovil drugi vatikanski cerkveni zbor in ga je razglasil papež Pavel VI, Ljubljana, 1970. For further information on Christian burials, see 'Knjižice' - časopis za duhovno probudo in prosveto (1938, let. 5, št. 119).

⁵ An ancient custom called conclamatio. Homer mentions it in his "Odyssey".

⁶ The body was laid out for a week at the most. This applied to distinguished men only - the children and the poor were buried, not cremated, on the same day, usually in the middle of the night.

⁷ Cow's urine (believed to be the strongest purifying means know to man).

⁸ A holy shirt, made of white cotton.

⁹ A long woven wool rope.

ording to Solon's law, the body has to be removed day after being laid out before the sunrise, otherwise it might contaminate the sunrays. Aborigine - once the person is dead, they spread red earth on the body, which looks like the blood shed at birth (Turner, 1976: 70). This indicates that the dead person is being reborn into another world. They paint the design of the clan in white and yellow on the chest and stomach. They believed that "these signs would change the dead man into a sacred being who could then enter the world of the spirit" (Turner, 1976: 71).

The death of a catholic in the Dolenjsko region in Slovenia was announced by the church bells.¹⁰ The family stopped the wall clock and prepared the largest room in the house to host a bier. Walls were covered with black fabric, and wreaths were hung on them. The deceased's clothes were changed and he or she was placed on a bier, holding the rosary in his hands. In front of the bier there was a table with flowers, the cross and holy water. The body lay in the house for 48 hours so there was no doubt as to his/her death. The family prayed, sung psalms or read the Bible during the wake. Sometimes the priest came to the house and escorted the funeral procession to the church, at other times the priest met the procession in front of the church or at the church entrance.

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b) "The act of the funeral" - transition

For Romans, the funeral was a solemn occasion. The funeral procession was led by whistlers, flute players, horn players and trumpet players. Then followed 'naenia', a woman singing praise to the deceased, a group of women crying out laments, carrying bundles soaked in scented pitch, actors who mimed the character traits of the deceased. Immediately preceding the bearers of the body, there were mourners carrying wax masks of the ancestors. Liktors, clad in black, carried the body, followed by the deceased's family, also wearing black. Burial or cremation took place outside the settlement¹¹ where *bustum*¹² was ready. It was customary to open and close the eyes of the deceased; afterwards the next of kin set fire to the stake while the rest of the mourners threw flowers, jewellery, food and spices into the fire. The amber was put out with wine, with which they also washed the bones. They put it in the urn together with honey and spices. During the funeral the family presented it as a sacrifice to gods. The site of cremation was later on decorated by an altar, surrounded by cypresses (*aro*). Paintings and statuettes were placed on the altar, while the urn was placed into a *colombarium* bearing the name of the deceased. The Romans buried their dead in the catacombs as well. In the catacombs, there were marble sarcophagus or vaults in which jewellery, ceramic figures, jade rings (to protect from evil spells) were put...¹³

¹⁰ This is still true of the larger part of the Dolenjska region (Southern Slovenia). If the deceased is a priest, the large bell rings three times; if he is a man, the small bell rings three times, and if she is a woman, it rings twice. This is repeated three times a day.

¹¹ Necropolies was usually positioned by the main road leading into the city.

¹² Romans distinguished between different types of stakes. A 'bustum' was a niche over which wood was placed. On it, they put the body and burnt it. The remains were then covered with soil.

¹³ More about diverse objects put into Roman graves in Janičević, Jovan (1986): "U znaku Moloha: antropološki ogled o žrtvovanju". Beograd: Vajat.

A Greek funeral procession was led by a woman carrying the sacrifice receptacle. She was followed by men and women¹⁴ and the musicians. The body was carried by the relatives or the slaves or it was transported by a cart. Greek cemeteries, like Roman, were situated outside the settlement. The body was either buried or cremated. After the cremation the ashes and bones were gathered into a handkerchief and put into an urn. A Persian funeral procession is led by nasar - salas who are carrying the metal bier and the body covered with a cloth. They are followed by two priests and the mourners, walking in couples and holding a white cloth protecting them from evil. When they arrive to dokhm (the tower of silence), the body is put onto a marble platform. The mourners say goodbye to the deceased by looking at him/her one last time; they once more perform the sagdid. Then they lay out the body to the vultures. The mourners pray for purification and wash themselves on their way home. Nasar - salas have to perform a nine-day purifying ritual to be able to become a part of the community again.

Aborigine placed the dead body in a tree. After three months, the body is removed, and the bones are cleaned. They then watch the bones for 2-3 months, to make sure the spirit is gone. Then the bones are placed in a log in the centre of the camp (Turner, 1976: 76). The Christian funeral procession was headed by the priest with acolytes bearing the cross, the holy water, the incense and the sanctuary lamp. They were followed by the pallbearers; the coffin was sometimes transported on a cart, later on by car or a tractor. Family and friends followed the coffin. There are different customs concerning the order of the mourners.¹⁵ They sang and prayed on their way to the cemetery. The procession went to the church first, where there was a sermon, an eucharist and the farewell to the deceased. They performed Absolution ceremonies as well - a sort of forgiveness of the deceased's sins by the Christiendom. This ceremony often took place at the cemetery. The priest made the sign of the cross with holy water over the grave (he blessed it), then he blessed the body. The coffin was then lowered into the ground.¹⁶ The funeral might conclude with a song.

c) "Post-funeral rites" - incorporation

The Romans performed various rituals in the memory of the deceased: they brought flowers and presents to the grave, carried out rites and ceremonies. They pushed a small tube down into the pit, which they used to bring food and drink to the deceased.¹⁷ The Greek went to the house of the deceased after the ceremony took place; there they had to carry out rituals of purification, then followed the funeral repast. On the following day, the house was cleansed with water and spices. The honour the cult of the deceased, they held a mourning feast again on the third, the ninth and the thirtieth day after the burial and at the anniversary of his death.

¹⁴ Greek women never appeared in public; only the closest female relatives attended the service.

¹⁵ There were no particular habits concerning this in the Dolenjska region. Elsewhere in Slovenia, the family was followed by young men, married men with their families and women.

¹⁶ The blessing, the water and the soil have a symbolic meaning in Christianity.

¹⁷ This is the custom of the Orthodox in Eastern Europe.

Zoroastrians pray and perform special rituals together with their priest during the first three days when the soul travels into eternity. Special ceremonies take place over the entire year after the funeral, in exactly timed intervals, when they invite the dead to celebrate the living. The aborigines try to help the dead on their way to the spirit world, and they continue watching to make sure that the spirit has made it. Through this, and in the treating of the dead's remains with respect, they show caring towards the dead or their tribe. It was customary for the Catholics that after the funeral and the feast, they gathered for seven days at the home of the deceased. They gathered on the seventh, the thirtieth day after the funeral, and on the anniversary of the death. They have also remembered those who have passed away on religious holidays, e.g. at Easter when they encouraged each other in faith into resurrection and afterlife.

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3. Contemporary funeral rites through space and time dimension (separation - transition - incorporation)

Nowadays, death does not take place at one's home any more. It takes place in hospitals and other institutions. The family does not need to deal with the body as funeral companies take care of it. The first stop for the body is the cool-room where the body waits, as is the case at the Ljubljana cemetery "Žale"¹⁸, up to one week to be cremated. The family cannot see the deceased and their farewell is limited to the last hour or the last minutes of the ceremony. In spite of the time shortage at "Žale" (funerals take place on the hour, or, if it's necessary, every half an hour¹⁹), the Christian burial retains all three parts: the first part, which used to take place at home, is now performed in front of the funeral home, the second part in the church or outside Plečnik's chapel, and the third part on the grave itself. At urn burial, Slovenians omit "the farewell" and only hold "the funeral"²⁰.

With Christian burial, another change has to be pointed out - it was introduced by the second Vatican council in 1970. Death was not to be made out in black and despair. Belief in resurrection is to be emphasized, despair should be replaced by hope. This was reflected in the clothes, prayers, speeches... "Žale" is a rare exception in this respect: thirty years prior to the Vatican council, the architect Plečnik has sensed not only the architectural but also religious "shift" and substituted the black marble for white stone. At "Žale" they try to keep the ceremonies "humane", which is no longer true of the cemeteries of some other European cities.

One look is enough to establish the lack of space at Santa Anna cemetery in Trieste. The graves are squeezed together to the greatest extent. There is a great mixture of styles

¹⁸ Details of burials and cremations at "Žale", the Ljubljana cemetery, were kindly provided by Mr. Anton Rojc.

¹⁹ Between winter and spring, sometimes during a very hot summer.

²⁰ Only the funeral part is held; exactly the opposite as elsewhere in the world.

and shapes. Contemporary “serial graves” are a competition to the mighty family vaults and chapels. Into the “serial graves” up to 48 John Does are buried, who have nothing else in common but the time of death. The new grave sites take the form of concrete platforms, for they do not perform traditional burials any more, they put the coffin onto the underground platform. Instead of a gravestone, there is a concrete flower box shaped as a cross or the letter T (at the end of the row), 2 x 7 meters in size. They are often empty, or overgrown with grass. Every flower box has 48 serial numbers which correspond to the numbers of the coffins. Each deceased is given a plate with his/her name, date of birth and death, usually a picture of the deceased as well. Next to every serial number is a circle-shaped hole where one can put a vase with flowers. Flower boxes are a metre apart. Between parallel rows of graves, there are (covered) underground passages down which a coffin is lowered onto a platform. Ten to fifteen years after, the burial coffins are lifted²¹ and burnt. Thus space for new coffins is provided. Only if the family of the deceased pays the fee again, his/her name-plate does not disappear.²²

There is also lack of time at Santa Anna cemetery in Trieste. At funerals where there is no religious service, the family accompanies the coffin from the funeral home to the grave site. There it is lowered down onto the platform; two workers descend onto the platform and insert the coffin next to its serial number. One of the workers points out the serial number to the family; a plate containing the personal information on the deceased is fastened on next to it, and the ceremony is over. As myself, also the family of the deceased (obviously not used to the “modern funeral”) were surprised not only by the briefness of the ceremony but also by the fact that they had to get out of the way as quickly as possible since the next coffin was already being brought out. The funeral which includes religious service is only slightly longer; it last 3.48 minutes. After priest’s last words and his putting a spade of soil symbolically onto the coffin, the coffin is lowered down onto the platform, and the above described procedure takes place.

An absolute contrast to these modern, machine-like funerals with which the bereaved are faced at crowded city cemeteries, is the Amsterdam cemetery De Nieuwe Ooster. It is a 33 hectares large, architectonically constructed park and cemetery in one. Its intimate atmosphere and magnificent monuments offer much more than just a place to bury or remember your loved ones. The nature and monuments mirror the spirit of times in a social and cultural sense. Fields of grass, huge old trees and various shrubbery offer home to birds, hedgehogs, pheasants, rabbits... My attention was drawn to the great variety (not luxury!) of gravestones. The cemetery is divided into 82 zones by a gravel path. Zones differ in style and shape of gravestones, which are ordered by time of death, type of the funeral, nationality of the deceased... The range of funeral companies is similar to the one in the U.S.A. (described in the next chapter). Unfortunately there was no opportunity to actually observe the funeral there, still I strongly suspect it to be much different from the one in Trieste.

²¹ I saw workers pulling decayed coffins out of the ground, with pieces of bones and other remains visible.

²² The ashes are then probably placed into a special place on cemetery grounds.

4. Funeral industry on Internet and the work of Jessica Mitford

Undertakers, as they were known back than before all the terminology changed, were not full-time morticians and usually had another job. Furniture makers made coffers and families took care of the bodies. Someone usually watched the body not for the “memory picture” but to make sure there were no signs of life. The modern funeral home was perhaps invented by so entrepreneur who realized he could make money from supplying all those service goods and service in one place. Once he had enough money he was then able to get the legislation to back up his rights as a businessman.

186 Funeral industry? Doubtless! A book of Jassice Mitford: *The American Way of Death* uncovers the black sides of the funeral industry and a scepticism, which was raised in me by this shocking text, and it all went up in smoke when I checked the funeral industry on the internet. There are 1132 sites on the web where death is a focal point, 21772 webpages about burial, 13885 webpages about funeral service, 36711 about funeral home, 3827 webpages about casket... There you can find a mass of funeral services, funeral homes, funeral directors, memorial service, preplanning, postplanning,²³ embalming, musicians, florist, body donation, dressing, cosmetics, other body preparations, viewing, visitation,²⁴ ceremonies, churches, chapels, casket selection,²⁵ burial containers, cremation urns selection, refrigeration, mummification, automotive, remembrance items,²⁶ ... (Some of this stuff is not only for people but even for pets.)

If we were ignorant of the dark side of the funeral industry, the idea to help people in this time of need would be highly commendable. Yet in modern society every great idea is based on profit, and reality shows that the funeral industry is among the greediest as it makes money out of people’s grief. The funeral industry managed to shift and change values around the funeral ceremony. Today it is more about finding your way between funeral companies’ offers than parting from your loved ones. Firstly, I will point to a few irregularities and manipulations that I have observed reading the funeral companies’ offers on the Web, and complaints concerning them. The findings will be backed up by Jessica Mitford’s precise criticism.

Firstly, there is a huge discrepancy in prices for identical offers by different funeral companies.²⁷ Funeral businessmen keep trying to tell you what would your loved ones deserve or want. Some funeral services have designed “Funeral Packages” to

²³ Offered by post-need services, which support your needs at ‘difficult’ time. Some of the valuable post-need services offered include: providing information and completion of all Veteran, Life Insurance, and Social Security forms, a lending Library, Memorial Programs, assistance in arranging counseling and information on how to deal with your grief, Children’s programs...

²⁴ (Private visitation \$185.00, half day visitation \$285.00, full day visitation \$385.00)

²⁵ For diverse offer of caskets, see Virgil T. GOLDEN Funeral Service casket price list: <http://www.goldenfuneralservice.com/casets.html> - and find about the funeral industry.

²⁶ Acknowledgment cards, guest register book, memory folders, prayer cards, limated obituary, crucifix, memorial tribute program, cemetery candle...

²⁷ There is up to 400% difference between various offers.

'help' you select appropriate last rites. The funeral director exerts a powerful control over the after-death system. As a key player in the funeral ceremony, trustee of the body, and coordinator of related agencies, knowledge of the occupational role of this deathworker is central to understanding death ritual in modern societies. The emphasis for the modern funeral director tends toward the application of 'scientific' techniques to enhance the perception of quality in the product.²⁸

There is a paradox: on one hand, there are families which lose not only a loved one, and control of their own funeral activities to morticians (the right to celebrate or grieve as they wish) and on the other, the so-called 'traditional rites', created by businessmen whose bottom line is profit, control and status.²⁹ Once 'coffins', today 'caskets', in every shape, colour and material of 'surprising quality' which destroys a body fast; it is not eaten by worms and ants but by moulds in all shapes and colours.³⁰ Pre-pay³¹ plan usually costs much more than funerals bought at time of death; many can't be cancelled or give little or no refund; many families don't get funerals they bought... Cybermemorials³² should express our grief while honouring and commemorating the people we loved and respect who have died.

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Funerals can be roughly divided into immediate (i.e. without ceremony) earth burials, traditional burials, cremation with ceremony and immediate cremations. Immediate burial is the most often occurrence in the case of indigents or others who are unable to pay for service. Cremation is forbidden by orthodox Jews, the Parses, Muslims and members of Greek orthodox church. It is customary with Hindus and increasingly so with Christians. With burial, the body decomposes slowly, in nature's time. With cremation, decomposition is rapid and corresponds to clock time. Natural processes are assumed to be slow, therefore cremation is an unnatural process. In traditional burial, the corpse is committed to God and the earth, combining the supernatural and natural dimensions. But modern cremation is a technological ritual which transfers the deceased from one life stage to another and transforms the status of survivors faster than ever before. Carl the Great forbade cremation in 789 under threat of capital punishment. Cremation was considered heretic, as it prevented resurrection. The first

²⁸ For further information, see *Death, Value, and Meaning Series* by John D. Morgan (1993).

²⁹ Morticians have destroyed and distorted religious rites and family traditions in order to benefit their profit-making.

³⁰ More about these Jessica Mitford. Can you really say that you are 'caring', 'honest' and 'reputable' when you internationally cause the destruction of most families' bodies, urge families to buy harmful caskets, charge exorbitant markups and prices of them, and don't warn families about the destruction?

³¹ Or Pre-arrange your Funeral, Pre-Planning Services, Pre-arrangement On-line, Pre-financing your Funeral... The funeral industry leaders forced you many excellent reasons to participate in Pre-Need arrangements: to ease the pain and suffering of your loved ones, your funeral costs are guaranteed in today's money without inflation, you choose the extent, kind and cost of service you want, right down to the small detail, you are able to make your wishes known to your loved ones, your family is not only relieved of the financial responsibility, they are also able to participate in the planning, you will avoid conflicts that can arise between family members, you will relive a terrific burden on your family, you can bring peace of mind to yourself and your loved ones...

³² Some examples: Highgate Cemetery, New Orleans, Online Memoria, The World Wide Cemetery, DeathNET, Rivendell In Memoriam, The Virtual Memorial Garden, The DAV Vietnam Veterans Memorial at Angel Fire, New Mexico...

cremation in the U.S.A. was done in 1876 in Washington, the first one in England seven years later (Hatfield, 1993). This procedure was strongly condemned by the Catholic church (in 1886, 1918 and in 1926).³³

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 Cremation is on increase in the U.S.A., not because it would be fashionable or because more people would express the wish to be cremated. The so-called “traditional” funerals are reserved for the elite, therefore more and more people decide for (cheaper) cremation. This being noticed by the funeral director, the cost of cremation is rising accordingly. “The vast majority of U.S. deaths are followed by a burial, but the trend is toward cremation. Between 1990 and 1995, the share of U.S. deaths handled by cremation increased from 17 percent to 21 percent, and the percentage of Americans who say they plan a cremation for themselves increased from 37 percent to 43 percent. Cremation is especially popular in trend setting states: 41 percent of deaths are cremated in California, where social trends are born, and 40 percent are cremated in Florida and Arizona, where death is almost as common as birth. Interest in cremation increased with age, education, and income... Cremation is also a lot less expensive than a traditional funeral.... Ashes are returned to families in about 23 percent of cremations; 16 percent are buried or stored in a crematory, and 6 percent are scattered over land or water. In most cases (54 percent), the cremator simply leaves the ashes with the funeral director.³⁴ In a study of cremation in England Jupp states the individuals who choose cremation are urban, suburban or newly rural residents, whereas those who choose earth burial tend to be long-term rural dwellers.

Only a few instances of obvious manipulation by the funeral companies have been pointed out here; Jessica Mitford’s findings are much more upsetting. Mitford’s first investigative study, *The American Way of Death* (1963)³⁵ exposes the avarice, commercialism and abuses of the American funeral industry. It quickly became a bestseller and caused a vigorous national debate over the practices and morality of the funeral industry. It can be read (now reread) as a hilarious piece of satirical writing and muck-raking journalism, it exists at a deeper level as a relentless critique of the consumer society and the manipulation of supply and demand; how American funeral industry successfully turned the tables in recent years to perpetrate a huge, macabre, and expensive practical joke on the American public. She explored the changing lexicon of death, in which undertakers had come to call themselves “funeral directors” and “morticians”, coffins had become “caskets” and hearses had become “professional cars”. In the new terminology flowers were “floral tributes” and corpses were always called “loved ones”, cremated ashes were “cremains”, the corpse viewing room were “slumber room”, “reposing room”... One of the results of all this was that the cost of dying was rising faster than the cost of living.

³³ More about it in ‘Knjižice’ - časopis za duhovno probudo in prosveto (1938/5, no. 119).

³⁴ By Brad Edmondson: The Facts of Death (American Demographics magazine, April 1997) - http://www.demographics.com/publications/ad/97_ad/9704_ad/ad970427.htm

³⁵ Before that book she wrote an article (“St. Peter, Don’t You Call Me”) as an reaction on mortuary magazines (*The Mortuary Management, Casket and Sunny Side, The Journal of Creative Ideas for Cemeteries...*). After that a Saturday Evening Post writer called Roul Tunley wrote an article called “Can you Afford to Die”.

Exactly thirty-five years after the original the edition *The American Way of Death Revisited*³⁶ is being published because a lot had changed in the funeral trade and not many of the changes were for the better. Developments in the industry since 1963, Mitford writes, fall into three broad categories: Cremation, once the best hope for a low-cost, simple getaway, has become increasingly expensive; furthermore morticians are fast developing techniques for upgrading this procedure into a full-fig funeral. The Federal Trade Commission's much heralded trade rule has huge loopholes. Most sinister of all is the emergence over the last 15 years of monopoly ownership of hitherto independent mortuaries and cemeteries. On top of all that, the price of mortuary services has risen dramatically; early 1960s figures from the original edition of the book, Mitford advises, "should be increased tenfold to reflect current costs", which is to say that the cost of the average funeral has risen from \$400 in 1961 to \$4,700 today. Funeral industry is a huge business, more and more dominated by huge corporations that "cluster" the "hearses, limousines, utility cars, drivers, dispatchers, embalmers", and a spectrum of office workers from accountants to data processors who are kept constantly busy servicing, at vast savings, the needs of a half dozen or more erstwhile independent funeral homes. The funeral industry may now be bigger than business than ever, and the cemeteries may have uncovered a rich new source of income in "the massive 'pre-need' sales campaign" pushing advance purchase of burial space - money tied up in such sales has risen from \$1 billion in 1961 to more than \$20 billion today - but the name of the game is still the same: a high-pressure business in which everything is couched in euphemism and evasions calculated to appeal to the American instincts for sanitation and fantasy. In a better and perhaps more sensible world, death would be accepted as part of life and treated accordingly; funerals would be humble and simple, as indeed they are elsewhere in the world, at least in those places not yet gilded by America's Midas touch (see Jonathan Yardley, 1998).³⁷

Mitford wishes to dispel the myths surrounding funerals: that today's funerals are founded on American tradition; that the public is only being given what it wants - but the cost of a funeral almost always varies, not 'according to individual tastes' but according to what the traffic will bear; and finally there are the psychiatric theories behind the funeral industry for providing 'the lasting memory picture', or last view of the deceased as well as that of the mortician as a grief therapist. Not only Jessica Mitford, but also a number of articles and books were published, which point at the irregularities of the funeral industry and its managers.³⁸ We find an excellent example of funeral industry in Slovenia in the monopoly firm of Žale Ltd. Due to lack of space and for

³⁶ Most chapters (*A Global Village of the Dead, Pay Now - Die Poorer, New Hope for the Dead* ...) Jessica Mitford finished before her unexpected death from cancer in 1996 but what remained to be done was accomplished by her research and investigative assistant Karen Leonard, Lisa Carlson and Jessica's husband Robert Treuhaft.

³⁷ <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/WPlate/1998-08/02/0281-080298-idx.html>

³⁸ A few of them are: *The High Cost of Dying*, Ruth Harmer (1963); *The Truth About Funerals: How to Beat the High Cost of Dying*, Donald Flynn (1993), Canada; *Dealing Creatively With Death: A Manual of Death Education and Simple Burial*, Ernest Morgen (1994), *Profits of Death*, Darryl J. Roberts (1997)...

aesthetic purposes they rearranged some deserted grave sites and discovered that they can make a profit out of advance purchase of burial space.³⁹

My own observations of the funeral industry, the literature and articles on the subject, alongside with information available on the Web, have led me to a conclusion that there is more to it than abiding to the market laws. The greediness of the funeral industry and the growing increase of its profit find the support in the bereaved families who wish to 'get it over with' as quickly as possible regardless of the price. They wish to dispose of the body quickly, without much mourning and elaborate preparations; following the advice of the funeral director they do exactly so. Does in modern society money assume the therapeutic role, healing the pain at the loss of a loved one? Would funeral industry make such a large profit if its job were not to do the dirty work dealing with the taboo of death, a dead body - over which people in contemporary society tend to wash their hands by paying for it?

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5. The postmodern society: introduction of new rites and the newly established relationship between the key moments of the process

The changes of traditional funeral rites which are becoming more machine-like and faster to adjust to the complex modern society and way of life, as well as the emergence of new rites (such as cremation and cybermemorials), brought about new relationships between the key elements of the process, both in the ceremony itself as well as in dealing with the loss:

- (de)personalization
- (in)formality
- (active or passive) participation
- secularization
- inclusion/exclusiveness
- ritualization/re-ritualization/de-ritualization
- (de)territorialization.

Today's funeral ceremonies are as much about the process of personalization as about depersonalization. In the U.S.A., where funeral industry is most developed, one can order a specific type of music to be played at the funeral, or choose any type of vehicle they want. Because death is the most personal and irreversible act, the family wishes to honour the deceased by a respectful, personalized, spontaneous funeral.⁴⁰ The Chinese belief that dead are still 'living' in another world can be illustrated by the Taoist practice of burning paper-made necessities for the dead. These objects are for the use of the deceased in the afterlife. People most order (paper)cars and houses and

³⁹ More about Žale, Ltd. in "Mladina" (1998/40, pp. 24-25).

⁴⁰ In the U.S.A., while the ashes are being scattered, the mourners make impromptu speeches - are active and creative in their approach to the service.

even servants and that's not a question of being superstitious or not. Rather people regard such practice as a necessary ceremony, through which they can show their care and respect for the dead.⁴¹ The process of personalization is clearly observed in grave-stones as well. Once religious symbols, today statues and sculptures are found there, which symbolize the character traits of the deceased, their hobbies and things they enjoyed.⁴² These new symbols are here to emphasize the deceased as a person. This is especially true of children's graves which are often full of toys in different shapes in forms; this would probably be regarded as improper by the traditional society.

This type of personalization is a sort of rebellion against the routine funeral ceremonies and depersonalized, standardized society. It is more an example than the rule, as it usually costs more than the standard ceremony. It is typical of celebrities' funeral services, which abound with farewell speeches and everything the funeral industry has to offer.⁴³ On the other hand, personalized elements may be found in village funerals as well. Alongside, and in accordance to the machine-like, serial burials and the ever-present lack of time in modern society, there is an increasing process of depersonalization. Funerals in Trieste take place every five minutes, and every half an hour at "Žale". Family and relatives do not take part in the ceremony, but adapt to the standard pattern of behaviour let by a priest, a funeral director or an ordinary worker (as in the case of Trieste Santa Anna cemetery). The ceremony itself is very brief, almost instantaneous. With church funerals, the mass takes place a few hours after the funeral, or not at all.

Depersonalization is parallel to the increasing degree of formality concerning the ceremony itself and the speeches. There is usually a standard pattern of the service known only to the funeral director and his staff, while the family follows it without doubting it. Informal, spontaneous speeches while scattering the ashes or an exchange of one's memories of the deceased is more an exception than the rule. On the other hand, we can observe an increasing informality of dress and behaviour of the family; also the setting of the service is no longer a church or a chapel but an outside setting, especially for urn burials.

Contemporary funeral rites also show the trends of passive participation or the lack of participation. Only seldom⁴⁴ the family wishes to participate in the service actively and creatively. In U.S. some traditional rites have been modified to include ways in which survivors can sing a special song, read a poem they've written for the occasion, tell a story about the deceased, or share some special experience they had

⁴¹ <http://www.cuhk.hk/journal/varsity/9503/dead.htm>

⁴² For instance, at Žale one can see statues and sculptures shaped as a football, an aeroplane, a violin, an eagle, or the bust of the deceased. But this is rare in Slovenia. The graves at the Amsterdam cemetery are more personalized, especially the recently built ones. There are not only gravestones but almost gardens, 1 m² large, with various types of decorations: pebbles, flowers, statuettes, toys, sea-shells,... which are pleasant to look at and not at all kitschy.

⁴³ A funeral ceremony is personalized when the family can afford it.

⁴⁴ This is mostly the case in the U.S.A. In Slovenia, it occurs mostly in rural areas, in a village in the Brkini area for instance, the whole village bids farewell to the deceased and organizes the funeral. Institutions play only a minor part (arrange the transport of the body from the hospital, for instance).

with the deceased. In some instances today, especially in cremation ceremonies where the ashes are scattered, the ceremony's officiator may do little more than coordinate the logistics of everyone's participation rather than be the center of ceremony. Yet again this is far less common than the everyday unparticipatory, machine-like funerals. Jessica Mitford's texts show that it is the funeral directors that are often the subject of the ceremony, not the deceased themselves or their families for whose sake it actually takes place.

Another element of contemporary funeral rites, as well as gravestones, is secularisation. Funerals are held in secular locations, without the presence of clergy, without religious liturgies, music, and symbols. No distinction is made between consecrated and secular ground. Masses like *The Seventh Day* or *The Thirtieth Day* are rarely served in the cities, usually by request only, and even then the church is more or less empty.⁴⁵ Opposed to secularization are fear of death, of the unknown, fear of God, which was clear from the 1991 Public Opinion Poll: 73% considered some sort of religious service to be necessary at a funeral, even though only 23% claimed they believed in life after death, 37% in the eternal soul and 55% believed in God.⁴⁶

Reflecting our society's complex relationships and increasing religious, racial, ethnic and cultural diversity, some of our ceremonies and memorials are today more inclusive. Today's funeral processions are by far more heterogeneous than they used to be; its participants are often strangers to each other or are even involved in some 'dispute' (e.g. the third husband, a half-sister, mixed families, co-workers from different jobs, etc.). With geographic and social mobility, integrated workplaces, an increasing number of multiracial families and individuals, and immigration from all parts of the world, survivors also are more likely to be of different religions, nationalities, ethnicities or regions than the deceased. Social and geographic mobility (globalization, re-territorialization) set distance between various parts of the family and demand the understanding of social tradition. The changes allow or demand a shift in cultural values. Ideologies and institutions were scrutinized and often found lacking.

Deritualization or at least rereitualization is another process which has its source in the funeral industry, as well as serial, machine-like funerals. The change of values concerning the funeral rites brings about people's view of a funeral as being the necessary evil - this used to be a tradition, so we put up with it and carry it out mechanically. Deritualization (or rereitualization), depersonalization, formality, departicipation, secularization, reterritorialization and exclusiveness are an integral part of the modern and the postmodern society and as such of affect the course of the funeral service as well. Contemporary, machine-like funeral rites with their speedy, confusing 'ritualization' reflect the state of the modern society. To hold on to the old forms and adjust then to the new circumstances, the lack of time and

⁴⁵ Nowadays, Christianity is facing the so-called "personal belief". A more individualized way of life deepens this belief, which then affects the presence at the service, the symbols...

⁴⁶ Toš, Niko: Public Opinion Research Centre (Slovensko javno mnenje 1991/1).

space, new processes, a new manner of accommodation, acceptance and dealing with the loss. As the funeral itself, death does not hold our attention for long. Death used to be the centre of life, as the cemetery used to be in the centre of the city. It was a part of the everyday life. Death today does not exist!

6. Death - the taboo of postmodernity - as it shows itself through the act of the funeral

Contrasted to the collective spirit of the traditional society (in which death is explained, classified, defined and placed under control) there is the individual; left entirely to his own resources in operationalizing the phenomenon of death. Old explanations appear to be obsolete, the new ones unconvincing. This brings about an existential crisis. Autonomy of nature and higher forces, dynamism, differentiation, complexity, formalization and univerzalization transform the dead into an obsession of the subconscious. According to Geoffrey Gorer death is hiding behind closed doors; Ariès sees the shame and fear of death in its non-existence. Carl Gustav Jung treated people who did not ask themselves questions about Death and its dramatic effects but pretended to be 'mature', 'modern' and 'smart' in believing that Death does not exist. Today Jung would need to treat the entire society? And what would he say to the contemporary therapy - money, which (un)successfully treats the sense of loss. Death is perceived as frightening and shameful, one is not supposed to talk about it if one does not want to be classified as a Frommian necrophile. Fromm's definition of a necrophile states that one is attracted to everything dead, decaying; one is interested in disease, death and funerals. Fromm characterized Hitler as an ideal of a necrophile, and claimed Carl Gustav Jung was one, too.

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"Radical" funeral rites and "the industry" behind them were the main focus of this paper. They introduce new relationships between the processes occurring simultaneously with the changes in the society and to some extent resulting from them. Machine-like funerals, devoid of values and the shallow farewell from the deceased cannot be regarded as a future trend but as a warning that in the contemporary postmodern society the processes of modernization and urbanization lead to unacceptance of death and to denial (or, with the growing deritualization or re-ritualization, non-existence of) pain. There is, in fact, no sense of loss any longer. Finally, death ceases to exist as itself. It is not an object to values, we do not speak about it, do not see the body - the dead simply vanish, and the only consequence of it is the cost of the funeral.

"But if postmodernity transforms the way we approach dead, one might also ask whether death challenges postmodernity? Can there really be a postmodern death, characterised by irony, paradox and playfulness of postmodern life, or does death reveal a more serious need for meaning the undermines postmodernity? This should surely be an important question for theorists of postmodernity, as well as for those concerned to understand the social construction of death and dying" (Walter, 1993:267). Death presents a challenge to the postmodernity. Will cemeteries turn into expensive

waste disposals? Will death be left to the mercy of hiper-modernization, its urban, cultural, social and global effects? Are we going to go on gardening and competing about the size, quality, etc. of gravestones, sculptures...? Or will the dead come to life in our memory, with their dignity restored?

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BESEDA O AVTORICI

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Marta Gregorčič, študentka 4. letnika sociologije (analitsko-teoretska sociologija, smer socialna politika in socialni razvoj) na Fakulteti za družbene vede Univerze v Ljubljani.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Marta Gregorčič is a fourth grade student of sociology (analytical-theoretical sociology, the programme: social politics and social development) at the Faculty for Social Sciences, University of Ljubljana.