An Anthropology of Death for the Twenty-First Century

Antonius C. G. M. Robben

A silent but steady revolution has been taking place in the anthropology of death during the last few decades. The influence of Robert Hertz and Arnold van Gennep, as well as of Bronislaw Malinowski and A. R. Radcliffe-Brown, has waned even though their works still seem to stand tall as a result of ceremonial citing. Superb ethnographic work has been liberating the anthropology of death from its founding fathers. Classic themes such as mortuary rituals, the emotions of grief and mourning, and the complexities of death and the afterworld, are being rethought and reconceptualized. Furthermore, new areas of research have opened that are changing the ways in which life, death, and dying are understood. This collection of essays by prominent scholars of the anthropology of death is intended to galvanize these developments. Before discussing how their ethnographic studies challenge the foundational ideas of the anthropology of death, I will briefly delineate the new theoretical approaches that emerge from the six parts of this volume and that are replacing older perspectives summarized by Bloch and Parry (1982), Fabian (1973), Goody (1975), Huntington and Metcalf (1979), and Palgi and Abramovitch (1984).

The anthropology of death's founding fathers based their comparative analyses mainly on nonstate societies, and thus inadvertently set a research agenda that neglected the relation between death and the state, even when anthropologists began studying Western and postcolonial societies. Influenced by Émile Durkheim's model of the sacred and the profane, Arnold van Gennep regarded society as the social organization of religious and secular realms: "Since the time of the Renaissance the relations between these two realms have undergone all kinds of changes within nations and states. But it is a significant fact that, because of fundamental differences between them, secular and religious groups as a whole have remained separate throughout the countries of Europe" ([1909] 1960: 1). In fact,

political authorities have exerted their influence on the religious realm for a long time, especially when the state became their principal instrument of power in the eighteenth century.

Finn Stepputat (2014: 11) has conceptualized the relation between death and the state in terms of sovereignty, which he defines as "an effect of practices that are fundamentally related to the body and to issues of life and death, and pertaining to the state as well as other political and moral communities." Although influenced by Foucault's ([1976] 1998: 135) understanding of sovereignty as the power to decide over life and death, Stepputat disagrees with Foucault that sovereign power in Europe shifted from necropower to biopower when the modern state came into being. He points at the interrelation of biopower and necropower in health care, and the state's administration of human remains. Furthermore, the state is not a monolithic structure but is wrought with conflicts and divisions that engage differently with issues of death and that evoke various forms of resistance. The authors of Part I demonstrate the multiple ways in which today's multifaceted states govern dead bodies and influence their ritual treatment in public and domestic settings. Anthropologists have examined the relation between death and the state, inter alia, in studies about the repatriated bodies of illustrious figures in postsocialist Eastern Europe (Verdery 1999), the political manipulation of public mourning (Holst-Warhaft 2000; Kwon 2006), the destruction of human remains in genocide (Anstett and Dreyfus 2014), and the state's contradictory involvement in mass graves and forensic exhumations (Ferrándiz and Robben 2015).

Anthropology's interpretation of the emotions surrounding death was formulated first by Durkheim, Radcliffe-Brown, and Malinowski. I will discuss Durkheim and Radcliffe-Brown later in relation to the difference between grief and mourning, and will focus here on the postmortem bond between the bereaved and the deceased addressed in Part II. Malinowski had observed among mourners on the Trobiand Islands a contradictory attitude toward the dead: "on the one hand to preserve the body, to keep its form intact, or to retain parts of it; on the other hand the desire to be done with it, to put it out of the way, to annihilate it completely … there is a desire to maintain the tie and the parallel tendency to break the bond" (Malinowski 1954: 49–50). Malinowski explained this ambivalence as a consequence of the combination of a fear of death and the desire for the "reintegration of the group's shaken solidarity" (1954: 53). For Malinowski, like Durkheim, Hertz, and van Gennep before him, mortuary rituals served to restore the social fabric of the bereaved community and to make the bereaved accept the death through a ritual process of mourning. Sigmund Freud offered a psychodynamic explanation of such working through, an explanation that has been influential in the anthropology of death: "time is needed for the command of reality-testing to be carried out in detail, and that when this work has been accomplished the ego will have succeeded in freeing its libido from the lost object" (Freud [1917] 1955: 252). In other words, people need to mourn the loss, to cut their emotional attachment to the deceased, and to accept the death as irreversible. The assumption that healthy mourning implies an emotional distance between bereaved and deceased that is achieved by unraveling their attachment relation has recently been disproved in psychology, sociology, and anthropology (Francis, Kellaher, and Neophytou 2005; Klass, Silverman, and Nickman 1996; Robben 2014; Stroebe, Schut, and Stroebe 2005; Walter 1999). These studies demonstrate that mourners may refashion their affective relationship with the deceased into meaningful continuing bonds through personal conversations, the display of photographs, and the tending of home altars, as well as through public commemorations, religious services, the media, and so forth.

The continuing bonds between the bereaved and the deceased acquire another dimension in the case of violent death, and especially when those enduring but dynamic relations have sociopolitical implications. A focus on memory has become an important perspective of the

anthropological study of massive death, and it raises a concern for issues of temporality that had been missing from the field. The work of Maurice Halbwachs ([1925] 1992) on collective memory and of Pierre Nora (1984) on memory sites have been of great inspiration to anthropology (French 2012), and have yielded research on narrative and material reconstructions of violent pasts (Boyarin 1994; Slyomovics 1998; Watson 1994). Paul Connerton (1989) added an interest in embodied memory through his study of commemorations and bodily practices. He began his research with an examination of the mourning of traumatic events through speech, material culture, and corporeal memory (Connerton 2011). Traumatic memory and its intergenerational transmission have also drawn anthropological attention (Antze and Lambek 1996; Argenti, and Schramm 2010; Robben 2005b). However, what should be heeded is Paul Ricoeur's warning that personal remembrance cannot be subsumed under the framework of collective memory, as Halbwachs ([1925] 1992: 182) had argued, but that the two forms of memory constitute one another reciprocally (Ricoeur 2006: 95). This critique is relevant here because the mourning of massive death by bereaved relatives, the state, and society at large may vary considerably (Robben 2014). Moreover, these different ways of mourning and memory may change and be politically contested through time, as is shown in Part III.

The differentiation of life and death into distinct ontologies, and the recognition that cultures mediate this division through religious beliefs of immortality, have dominated the anthropology of death since its inception. Part IV tries to overcome this stark separation by analyzing life and death as continuous processes of generation and regeneration that are manifested in spiritual, cosmological, recollective, communicational, and technological ways. The perspective of regeneration offers an alternative to the conceptualization of life and death as a dichotomy or as an incommensurable binary opposition. Many people do, of course, understand life and death as such and construct cosmologies and funerary cultures on the basis of this differentiation, but many others understand life and death in relational terms. Michael Lambek wants anthropology to take distance from the binary conceptualization of life and death. He proposes "to rethink opposed states of life and death as connected processes of animation, de-animation, and reanimation" (Lambek 2016: 643). Related ideas are expounded by Robert Desjarlais (2016) with the term "co-poiesis," which considers life and death as continually fashioning and refashioning one another. This process of generation and regeneration may also be understood as a process of survival because, as Jacques Derrida remarked in an interview months before his death: "the meaning of [survival] is not supplemental to life or death. It is originary: life is survival. Survival in the conventional sense of the term means to continue to live, but also to live after death … It does not derive from either to live or to die" (Derrida 2004). Derrida's sematic broadening of the term "survival" also applies to the term "regeneration," which transcends the mutual constitution of life and death.

The materiality of human bodies has for a long time been within archaeology's domain of investigation, but the emergence of medical anthropology, the anthropology of the body, forensic anthropology, and the anthropological study of material culture has kindled interest in the anthropology of death. Materiality refers to "the fleshy, corporeal and physical, as opposed to spiritual, ideal and value-laden aspects of human experience" (Tilley et al. 2006: 3). The materiality of the corpse deserves as much attention in the anthropology of death as spirituality has traditionally received. The human body, dead or alive, is embedded in a physical, social, material, and cultural world that influences the body's constitution, whether as sculpted physiques and gendered persons or as political subjects and metonyms for social relationships (Harris and Robb 2013). The rising popularity of natural burials in the United Kingdom after millennia of rich funerary material culture is a telling illustration of the

changing conception of the body's materiality (Hockey et al. 2012; Miller and Parrott 2009). Elizabeth Hallam and Jenny Hockey (2001) have contributed significantly to a deeper understanding of the materiality of death by demonstrating how the dead are given meaning through material culture. They interpret artifacts as relational constructs because of the mutual constitution of human beings and material objects, which in a roundabout way can animate those objects and give them agency, as has been argued by others (Gell 1998; Ingold 2011; Knappett 2016). Several contributions in Part V show how bodies can become artifacts through technical and semiotic rematerializations that mediate life and death.

The classic notion of death as a distinct biological and sociocultural phenomenon, analyzed within the restricted domain of liminal time, has increasingly been abandoned in the anthropology of death because life can be regarded as the beginning of dying, and death as the anticipation of new forms of living. Death is now studied together with life because the boundaries between them are considered to be porous, and liminality is understood more as a bridge between life and death than as a demarcated time frame. Sharon Kaufman and Lynn Morgan (2005) have discerned this new direction in the anthropology of death in terms of biopolitics and personhood. Anthropological studies are showing that the state, health corporations, and the medical field have been governing new forms of life and death worldwide (Birenbaum-Carmeli and Inhorn 2009). Stem cells are being manipulated to generate life and to treat degenerative diseases, while the technology of organ transplants has changed how the state and the medical profession define death as a neurological instead of a cardiac condition (Lock 2002). Human reproduction has become a process wrought with social, cultural, and biomedical interventions. Kaufman and Morgan (2005) show that abortion and *in vitro* fertilization are social practices that can deny or create personhood, and influence the ensuing production of families. These links between death, conception, and personhood extend throughout life and into the dying process where social attachments change, and death can be delayed or hastened through organ transplants or euthanasia (Kaufman 2015).

Part I: Mortuary Rituals

Mortuary rituals exist in all human societies because people resist the finality of life, and want to express their feelings for the deceased. The universality of funerary rituals and the care for the dead make the unceremonious disposal and destruction of corpses during war and genocide so devastating because, according to Robert Hertz ([1905–1906] 2017: 19), "The body of the deceased is not regarded like the carcass of some animal: specific care must be given to it and a correct burial; not merely for reasons of hygiene but out of moral obligation." Hertz's contemporary, Arnold van Gennep ([1909] 1960: 146), argued that these funeral ceremonies have a basic structure: "Everyone knows that funeral rites vary widely among different peoples and that further variations depend on the sex, age, and social position of the deceased. However, within the extraordinary multiplicity of detail certain dominant features may be discerned." Funerary rituals prolong the ties between the living and the dead through a phased departure, and regulate the transition from one social status to the next. Van Gennep delineated three phases: a separation phase during which the deceased and the bereaved are secluded from society; a liminal phase in which the soul separates from the corpse and travels to the afterworld; and an incorporation phase in which the soul arrives in the land of the dead, and the bereaved end their mourning and return to society. Yet, not only have visual signs of grief been recorded among animals (King 2013),

but the circumscription of the social obligations to the dead to mortuary rituals and a limited period of mourning period deserve also to be questioned, as will be done in Parts I and II.

Although Hertz and van Gennep continue to inspire (Davies 2000; Hockey 2002), they paid insufficient attention to the complex contexts in which mortuary rituals are embedded, and failed to notice the social tensions among the mourners. Hertz and van Gennep, of course, developed their ideas on the basis of societies existing at a time that was very different from the present globalized and increasingly urbanized world. For example, the mortuary rituals of the Dayak, which constituted the ethnographic basis for Hertz's analysis, were carried out in the relative isolation of the Dutch colonial authorities, at least in the rendition of Hertz. Today, the dead in Indonesia and in most states around the world require official death certificates, and there are laws about the disposal of human remains in prescribed ways and at designated places. The late modern state is less hierarchical than the colonial and postcolonial state, which could dominate mortuary rituals, and resembles more "a significantly unbounded terrain of powers and techniques, an ensemble of discourses, rules, and practices, cohabiting in limited, tension-ridden, often contradictory relation with one another" (Brown 1995: 174). Said otherwise, states are "culturally embedded and discursively constructed ensembles. Instead of viewing states as preconstituted institutions that perform given functions … they are produced through everyday practices and encounters and through public cultural representations and performances" (Sharma and Gupta 2006: 27). It has therefore become unthinkable to examine mortuary rituals without analyzing the impact of the multifaceted state. States make the dead visible and quantifiable in civil registries, and design policies that affect the longevity of its citizens.

The official regulation of the dead was not accomplished easily in Guatemala, as Finn Stepputat demonstrates in Chapter 1, because the colonial authorities had difficulty asserting their authority over the population. The construction of cemeteries beyond towns and Catholic churches was an arduous struggle because of popular defiance of the colonial administration and tenacious resistance from the ecclesiastical authorities. Stepputat analyzes the conflictive historical trajectory of the procedural removal, registration, and disposal of the dead in terms of the concepts of biopower and necropower. He emphasizes that the state's sovereign power does not end with the power to decide over the life and death of its citizens, as Foucault ([1976] 1998), Agamben (1998), and Mbembe (2003) have argued, but that it also takes control of the dead, supposedly for reasons of public health and hygiene but rather to control their potentially disturbing spiritual and political qualities. The fear of unregulated bodies was so effectively inculcated by the colonial state that in the 1970s and 1980s Guatemala's authoritarian regime intimidated its population by leaving the mutilated bodies of massacred citizens on roads and in village squares. Survivors buried the dead as best as they could. Similar reactions were found among Brazilian street children when their comrades were murdered (Drybread 2013), and among urban youngsters in Congo who politicized the burial of those who had died prematurely to contest the authority of their elders, the state, and the church (De Boeck 2008). Clearly, political authorities exert much power over how people deal with the dead but this official control is contested in power struggles both with and within the state.

The multifaceted state opens up numerous uncontrollable spaces where people can adjust mortuary rituals to the changing exigencies of life. In Chapter 2 Yohko Tsuji demonstrates how major economic, demographic, and social developments have altered Japanese funerary rituals. Burial and ancestral worship were encoded in Japanese law in the late nineteenth century as the responsibility of a three-generation family system. This system consisted of

the parents, the eldest son, and his family, whose obligations were fulfilled with the financial support of an extensive social network. Although the civil code was derogated in 1948, the practice remained in place for decades until urban migration, geriatrification, a decline in family households, and rising funeral costs made bereaved relatives search for alternative ways to bury and commemorate the dead. Furthermore, the aged began to make funerary provisions that would unburden their relatives: rather than being a family obligation, commemorating the dead has increasingly become a personal affair. Tsuji shows that, despite these changes, people still succeed in securing the proper mortuary care by turning family obligations into individual responsibilities, and by maintaining modified forms of ancestor worship and interactive ties between the dead and their friends, rather than with their relatives. With the decline of family obligations, Japanese funeral companies commercialized the religious rituals, and now offer a wide array of services (Suzuki 2000).

In the United States, even the corpse has become a commodity, and corporations brand their funeral services in appealing advertisements. In Chapter 3 George Sanders uncovers the complex relations between corpses, funeral workers, executives, and relatives behind this commercial facade. Branding aims to communicate to potential customers that the funeral company maintains the highest standards of honesty and integrity, and that the human remains entrusted to its employees will be treated with dignity and care. These values are also important for the employees themselves because their work is emotionally, physically, and existentially demanding, especially because their profession is often considered to be morbid and exploitative of people's misfortune. Their professional ethics is jeopardized, however, by the industry's profit-driven business model. For example, embalmers feel uneasy about the less than optimal preparation of the corpses, which prevents them from fully manifesting their care for the dead. They regard their work of treating bodies that are symbolically suspended between life and death as a spiritual and compassionate service to the deceased and the bereaved. Sanders concludes that funeral brands are humanized simulacra of inert bodies that would otherwise cause anguish among the bereaved relatives, and would provoke horror about the intrusive labor done by funeral workers to produce a presentable corpse for the wake.

My critique of the founding fathers of the anthropology of death does not imply that their ideas can be discarded altogether. The validity of the insight by Émile Durkheim and Robert Hertz that mortuary rituals may serve to strengthen kin groups and social networks is shown by Erik Mueggler in Chapter 4, albeit with an important twist. Mortuary rituals and the manipulation of corpses among the Yi people of Southwest China do not restore but generate kinship by mobilizing family members to unravel the deceased's personhood and to reconfigure him or her in society's ideal image. Mueggler analyzes this transformative process through the enactment of kinship ties in three multiday mortuary rituals held several years apart. These ties are manifested in sacrificial offerings, mortuary exchanges, and materializations of the deceased's body and soul. The 'Emerging from the Courtyard' ritual is performed within days of the person's death, and begins with the sacrifice of a chicken to locate the deceased's soul and to confine it to the chicken's crushed carcass. The ritual proceeds with the reassembly of the body's core by reordering the deceased's relations to the natural world and the underworld. An essential element of the ritual, which is indicative of the enduring importance of kinship relations, is that the deceased is always assembled and reassembled together with a deceased spouse, even if the actual spouse is still alive. Such matrimony in death is crucial to determine which kin groups will carry out the mortuary duties and to weave a web of kinship exchanges that reveals the deceased's social stature within the community. The participating kin groups are the deceased couple's descendants, their affines, and the couple's married daughters, together with their husbands

and children. The ritual sacrifices and exchanges involve goats or chickens and rice loaves, which are analogies of the deceased couple's bodies, whose partition and consumption generate the cycle of life and death.

Unlike Mueggler, Judith Bovensiepen (Chapter 5) entirely rethinks Durkheim's and Hertz's insight that mortuary rituals hold people together for reasons of social reproduction. In the central highlands of Timor-Leste, people believe in a cosmic continuity of spiritual and material domains whose life-giving force creates separate yet interrelated human, nonhuman, and material entities. Mortuary rituals serve to sever rather than to strengthen existing relationships through gift exchanges and oblations that produce new, prosperous relations. Such separations are not permanent because of the primordial nondifferentiation of cosmic existence. Mortuary rituals detach the living from the dead and the ancestral land, deter the dead from accompanying the bereaved to their homes, and enable the production of new social relationships. Separation is thus necessary for reproduction in all realms of life. Bovensiepen shows how political violence disturbed this process. The violent deaths and disappearances of Timorese at the hands of Indonesian occupation forces and local militias between 1975 and 1999 disrupted the dynamics of separation, exchange, and creation. The living and the dead could no longer be disentangled because the ancestors and the spirit powers were not appeased, and thus the flow of life was impeded.

Durkheim and Hertz regarded mortuary rituals as effervescent occasions for restoration and cohesion, but Daniel Jordan Smith (Chapter 6) reveals how they became sources of antagonism among the Christian Igbo of Southeastern Nigeria as a consequence of the social and economic disparity between successful urban migrants and poor rural relatives. Igbo prefer to be buried in their ancestral villages, and the bereaved regard elaborate night vigils, funerals, and the luxurious hosting of guests as opportunities to demonstrate their individual achievements in life. In other words, wealth is converted into prestige, social capital, and active family ties through its conspicuous redistribution at elaborate funerals. The ambiguities of cohesion and conflict, of social reproduction and strife, and of admiration and envy are the consequences of the intertwinement of patronage and kinship ties. Thriving migrants reproduce their identity, prestige, and power in the home village during funerals, while villagers receive support to survive an encroaching state and the unpredictable forces of globalization. Smith argues that the asymmetrical patron–client relations between migrants and villagers clash with the generalized reciprocity common to kinship ties. As patrons, wealthy migrants engage in conspicuous redistribution, and want deference and loyalty in return, but as family members they are expected to be unconditionally generous to their less privileged rural kinsmen. The influence of migration on the dead and the living is also shown in the expression of cosmopolitanism in rural funerals in Guinea-Bissau (Gable 2006), in fatal road accidents involving funeral corteges traveling long distances in South Africa (Lee 2012), and in the health risks of undocumented Latino workers in the United States (Holmes 2013; Quesada, Hart, and Bourgois 2011).

What emerges from the chapters in Part I is that states intrude on mortuary rituals to dominate the dead and the living by regulating death, the disposal of the corpse, and the social and spiritual obligations of the bereaved. Authoritarian states may abuse the dead and disturb mortuary practices through political violence, while late modern states are faced with the mortuary demands of self-reflexive citizens who demand novel ways of treating the corpse. Mortuary rituals have thus become a terrain in which states, markets, and mourners contest the place, status, and treatment of the dead in society. This power struggle is complicated by the multifaceted organization of the state, the commercialization of funeral services, and the social disparities among the mourners.

Part II: Emotions

The anthropology of death has shown more interest in the cultural variations of general patterns of mortuary rituals than in the subjective experiences of the mourners because of Hertz's emphasis on the social significance of death: "Whatever their personal feelings may be, they have to show sorrow for a certain period, change the colour of their clothes and modify the pattern of their usual life. Thus death has a specific meaning for the social consciousness; it is the object of a collective representation" (Hertz ([1905–1906] 2017: 19). Hertz's mentor, Émile Durkheim, wrote some years later about the Australian Aborigines: "Mourning is not the spontaneous expression of individual emotions … Mourning is not the natural response of a private sensibility hurt by a cruel loss. It is an obligation imposed by the group. One laments not simply because one is sad but because one is obligated to lament" (Durkheim [1912] 1995: 400–401). Radcliffe-Brown broadened this discontinuity between grief and mourning in his study of the Andaman Islanders who would weep at certain social occasions and ceremonies: "First of all it is necessary to note that not in any of [these] instances is the weeping simply a spontaneous expression of feeling. It is always a rite the proper performance of which is demanded by custom … Nor can we explain the weeping as being an expression of sorrow" (Radcliffe-Brown [1922] 2017: 151). Radcliffe-Brown was not suggesting that the Andaman Islanders did not feel sorrow or never wept spontaneously, but he wanted to stress that weeping aroused people's mutual affections, and expressed and reaffirmed their social attachments.

Hertz, Durkheim, and Radcliffe-Brown did not deny the existence of grief as a painful psychological reaction to death but demonstrated that grief could be transformed into mourning as a cultural performance of social solidarity. People may be grief-stricken by the death of a loved one but may express this experience of loss in collective mourning practices that generate the emotions expected of them by society. Yet, recent studies have revealed that the relation between emotion and practice is not as self-evident and one-directional as assumed. The experience of loss by the bereaved – or the exhilaration at the death of one's enemies – may seem obvious, but Shepard (2002) showed that, for the Matsigenka people of Peru, the sense of loss exists not among the living but among the dead. The grief experienced by the living is an echo of the sorrow suffered by the dead who miss their living relatives. This ethnographic case sheds a different light on the emotions of loss. Grief can be regarded as an expression of empathy for the dead, and the imagination of loss experienced by the deceased who suffer from their departure from the living and the lonely journey to the afterworld.

Nancy Scheper-Hughes (1992) sharpened the anthropological debate about emotion through her research into infant death in a Brazilian shantytown. She concluded that not only mourning but also grief is a cultural product. The impoverished mothers in her study believed that babies with a weak life force would not survive, and therefore food was withheld from them that was given instead to babies with a stronger will to live. Scheper-Hughes emphasized that mothers felt pity but not grief for their deceased babies because shedding heavy tears of sorrow would hamper their flight to heaven. The combination of extreme poverty and high infant mortality in northeast Brazil resulted in a maternal triage among babies and the absence of grief, even though a very different emotional response to similar material conditions has been described for Guinea-Bissau (Einarsdóttir 2004). Improved material conditions in the 1990s (clean water, food programs, better health care, and readily available contraceptives) lowered infant mortality and made the Brazilian mothers regard every baby as capable of life (Scheper-Hughes 2013, 2014). Clearly, the classic dichotomy of grief and mourning deserves to be abandoned in favor of understanding

them as communicating vessels with different sociocultural expressions of intertwined emotions of loss.

Michael Lambek, in Chapter 7, also argues that grief and mourning should be analyzed together, as he explains in his reflection on a communal ceremony for his deceased adoptive parents. They had treated him as a son during his first fieldwork in 1975 on the island of Mayotte, located between Mozambique and Madagascar. Lambek's fictive Muslim siblings had buried their parents within 24 hours, said prayers, and postponed a *mandeving* ceremony for months as they were awaiting Lambek's arrival. The *mandeving* is a festive ritual during which the living are separated from the dead. The bereaved relatives, friends, and villagers alleviate the deceased's suffering in the afterlife through prayers – rather than commemorating their lives – and mend the broken social ties through eating, singing, and praying. Assiduous preparations and the show of hospitality take the place of personal grief. After the ritual for the deceased couple ended, the relatives talked with satisfaction about the communal event, and how it had engendered solidarity among the mourners. Unlike the Mahorais, Lambek expressed his tender feelings for the deceased couple openly, whereas the couple's children revealed their sorrow only to Lambek in private emotional accounts.

The emotions evoked by seeing a corpse are caused by the tension between its quality as an inert object and its status as a person. Beth A. Conklin (Chapter 8) examines the cross-cultural significance of the corpse as matter and metonym: matter as a decaying biological organism, and metonym as standing for social relationships. The intertwinement of the materiality and the personhood of the corpse make bereaved relatives engage in mortuary rituals to cope with the inert body, the loss of life, and the renewal of social relationships, as Hertz has argued. This intertwinement becomes particularly clear when violence damages the corpse, and disrupts the wholeness of body and person. Conklin demonstrates this with two very different examples, namely the compassionate cannibalism of the indigenous Wari' in Brazil and the terrorist attacks on New York's World Trade Center on September 11, 2001. Before the Brazilian authorities obliged them, in the 1960s, to bury the dead, the Wari' used to consume human corpses out of respect for the deceased and to allow the bereaved blood relatives to establish new relationships with the spirits of the dead loved ones. Seeing the dismembered corpse changed the remembrance of the deceased, and lessened the emotional attachment (Conklin 2001: 236). The deceased was not abandoned in a cold grave, and the roasted flesh was eaten by the affines as an obligation to the consanguineal relatives. The contagious diseases carried by the Brazilian contact teams swept through the Wari' settlements in the 1960s, and left so many dead that vultures could freely tear the abandoned bodies apart. The survivors were distraught not so much about the predatory disseverment as about their failure to treat the dead with the customary ritual respect. Thereupon they collected the scattered remains and still consumed some roasted parts so as to honor and mourn them. The distress over the assault on the body's wholeness and the deceased's ritual needs were manifested in a very different way after the 9/11 terrorist attacks. Relatives demanded that the New York authorities do everything possible to recover, identify, and bury all body fragments of the victims and firemen who had died in the collapsing towers (Colwell-Chanthaphonh 2011). The intermingling of human remains and debris turned this dust into an ambiguous whole of persons and matter that profoundly troubled surviving relatives, friends, and colleagues. Personal items such as wristwatches and pairs of glasses became metonyms for the disintegrated victims, and served to give material form to the continuing bond with relatives and comrades. Heated public disputes about the 9/11 memorial design was one way in which people mourned their loss in the absence of undamaged bodies (Aronson 2016). The fragmentation of the ravished corpses was harder for the grieving process in New York than among the Wari', who were less

troubled by the dismemberment itself but more by the nonritual way in which it had occurred. However, both suffered from the violent disengagement of corpse and personhood, and the absence of culturally specific mortuary rituals. Droz (2011) provides yet another variation in a study of the Kikuyu of Kenya who were forced by Christian missionaries to bury their dead instead of exposing them in the customary way to scavengers.

In Chapter 9 Olivier Allard sidesteps the classic anthropological question of whether grief is a spontaneous emotional response to loss or a cultural expression of sadness by offering a third possibility: that the bereaved may intentionally prime their sorrow, and are then overwhelmed by uncontrollable crying. The Amerindian Warao in northeastern Venezuela keep photos of the dead, not to remember them but to evoke grief about their loss. Furthermore, emotional ritual wailing by close relatives provokes feelings of sorrow among more distant relatives as signs of attachment. This summoning of sorrow serves the ethical purpose of manifesting the importance of reciprocal exchanges with relatives through mutual care, but with the awareness that in a large community of kin one can never satisfy everyone's social, emotional, and material needs. This inevitable shortcoming becomes visible on the annual Day of the Dead when the Warao engage in excessive alcohol consumption, and generate sorrow by visiting the cemetery or looking at photos of dead relatives. People regret that they were unable to meet the reciprocal expectations of the dead, and express anger or sadness about their inability to ever make this good. These expressions are therefore performances of antisociality because the drunken villagers are behaving as if they were deceased relatives who cannot sufficiently reciprocate the care given by others.

Rising life expectancy and declining fertility rates in Japan have made family care of the aged increasingly important, but have also led to deserted elderly and neglected graves. Relatives can hand over the mortuary responsibilities to funeral companies, as Yokho Tsuji describes in Part I, but they may still choose to care for the elderly. The emotions of bereavement are then mobilized well before death sets in. In Chapter 10 Jason Danely analyzes how the affective relations between parents and children, and husbands and wives, change through end-of-life care. Not only are their lives entangled in everyday tasks and concerns, but the emotional impact of growing interdependency transforms their selves both during and after the dying process. Caretakers and caregivers shape one another through a mutuality of being or through entangled agency that continues after death when the deceased's spirit transforms, through the ritual attention of the bereaved, into a buddha and much later into a venerable ancestor because of the ongoing mortuary care. Danely shows that the bereaved remain caregivers because of the deceased's need for companionship, and a mutual desire to maintain the bond. Mourning becomes an open-ended process through attending to the domestic altar, with its bones and photographs, remembering the dead in personal stories, and engaging in practices that give meaning to the relationship. In other words, the bereaved are involved in an ongoing process of self-realization in fellowship with the deceased that becomes manifest in meaning-giving narratives, memories, and practices.

In Chapter 11 Carol Kidron argues that such bonds may also be experienced by descendants who never had any personal relationship with their long-dead relatives but who can still succeed in weaving intergenerational temporalities. Second-generation descendants of Holocaust and Cambodian genocide victims may reconstitute violently discontinued family relations and maintain reciprocal bonds with these dead through person–object relations, and dyadic, corporeal, commensal, and oneiric ties. These relationships become manifest in imaginary conversations, dreams, a sense of co-presence, and spiritual or interactional connections to objects such as photographs and clothes that are imbued with a sense of care and protection. Jewish Israelis may also perceive shared talents and personality traits, while

Buddhist Cambodians sense the familial obligations and daily attention to the dead ancestors. Because of cultural differences, Jewish Israeli descendants are principally occupied with reflective remembrance and commemoration of relatives murdered during the Holocaust, while Buddhist Cambodian descendants do not distinguish between violent and natural death but have a more quotidian, nurturing contact with the dead.

Anthropologists have commonly studied death as the rupture of interpersonal, family, and community ties, and have drawn generalizations about cultural ways of mourning. They have demonstrated how those ties can be disengaged during funerary rituals but also how they can be transformed into enduring bonds and spiritual relations. However, they have seldom examined the loss of personal contact and facial presence between the bereaved and the deceased as singular experiences of loss. Such scholarly attention requires the ethnographer's empathy to grasp how bereaved persons experience the passing of the deceased's unique face from being alive to being inanimate. Devin Flaherty and C. Jason Throop argue in Chapter 12 that a living face always foreshadows its inevitable death and interactional demise as the deceased and bereaved stop growing older together. The body becomes rigid and the face can no longer mediate a person's moods and emotions. Flaherty and Throop show in a comparative analysis of mourning on the Caribbean island of Saint Croix and the Micronesian island of Yap how inhabitants take photographs of just deceased relatives to arrest and somehow preserve their final face, and to re-experience the loss when the death is still recent. Such feelings of loss can also be invoked by relatives who are unable to attend the funeral, and who express their remorse over the deceased's immobile image in contrast to the person they once knew.

These chapters debunk, each in its own way, the stark dichotomy of grief and mourning as respectively intrapsychic and social reactions to death or as bioevolutionary adaptations and cultural constructions. Grief and mourning should rather be seen as communicating vessels that shape and reshape one another in a sociocultural medium that may assist, delay, or obstruct mutual influences. How people cope with the depersonalized materiality of the corpse influences how this process is experienced and mediated. Mortuary rituals are the most prominent expressions of loss. Other manifestations of the interaction of grief and mourning occur during the dying process, and through the continued bonds between bereaved and deceased.

Part III: Massive Death

Anthropology came late to the study of genocide and massive violence. John Bodley's examination of the lethal effects of colonialism, capitalism, and imperial encroachment on indigenous peoples, and Leo Kuper's conceptual work on cultural genocide were among the first studies that appeared (Bodley 1975; Kuper 1981). The emergence of the anthropology of violence in the 1980s helped spark research into massive violence; particularly about the Cambodian, Guatemalan, and Rwandan genocides, and recently also about the Holocaust (Burnet 2012; Hinton 2005, 2016; Rylko-Bauer 2014; Sanford 2003; Schafft 2004; Taylor 1999). In addition, studies have been written about the legacies of World War II, and death, disappearances, and mass graves during civil wars and repressive regimes (Kwon 2006; Lan 1985; Maček 2009; Nelson 2008; Nordstrom 1997; Robben 2005a; Sant Cassia 2005; Slyomovics 2014; Tishkov 2004). Genocide and massive death attracted attention from anthropology late because such violence could not be studied with participant observation, the discipline's defining research method. The anthropological study of genocide and of massive death has therefore been conducted mainly through the

analysis of their long-term sociopolitical consequences and of their manifestation in collective memory and public commemoration.

Essential to the understanding of massive death is how corpses are handled after the fatal violence is inflicted. In Chapter 13 Élisabeth Anstett distinguishes two interrelated regimes. In the regime of visibility, perpetrators decide either to conceal the dead through mass interment, cremation, or other destructive ways, but they may also display them openly in public places, preserve them as trophies, or distribute photographs of mutilated corpses. In the regime of property, corpses are appropriated by perpetrators through disappearance and burial in hidden mass graves or abandoned in fields, forests, and waterways. Burial in mass graves is the most common means of disposal worldwide. Generally, mass graves are understood as the unceremonious burial of multiple corpses. Anstett's comparative study challenges this common definition because mortuary rituals and commemorations are also known to have been performed at mass graves. Alternatively, corpses have been interred voluntarily without funerary rituals. Mass graves may thus become burial grounds, and vice versa, because of the difference between mortuary space and funerary space. The definition of mass graves must therefore include the perpetrator's ideological representation of the dead and their reason for choosing a particular burial location. Notably, the symbolic and physical dehumanization of the dead as vermin and insects pre-empts their ceremonious burial and helps explain their frequent disposal at garbage dumps.

The corpses of the victors and the vanquished of the Spanish Civil War between the Nationalist rebel forces of General Franco and the Republican government were treated very differently. The former were buried with state honors in pantheons and mausoleums while the latter were dumped in mass graves. In Chapter 14 Francisco Ferrándiz describes the evolution of the mortuary rituals conducted by descendants of the defeated when their mass graves were exhumed in the 2000s. These rituals were developed on the spot because there were no religious or secular prescriptions available for those who had been ostracized by the authoritarian state. What began in October 2000 as the search by a grandson of his disappeared grandfather grew into a grassroots movement that encouraged the exhumation, identification, and ceremonious reburial of the victims of summary executions. Individual funerals made place for collective reburials when the exhumed remains could not be identified. Two memory associations emerged that differed in their incorporation of the dead into Spanish society as rehabilitated patriots. Both held collective rituals that lacked religious symbols because of the support of the Roman Catholic Church for the Franco regime, but, whereas one association reconciled the Republican cause with the funerary needs of the families, the other organization turned the burials into political events that downplayed the ties of the dead and the bereaved relatives. Large numbers of unidentified remains were buried in communal pantheons that mentioned the political identity of the dead and their common fate in death. Eventually, successful forensic identifications allowed the descendants to move their dead from collective graves to family graves. The exhumations and mortuary practices helped dignify the ostracized dead, while the DNA sample taking and the storytelling about the victims became valuable rituals for the bereaved relatives.

The contours of a genocide are defined when the killing stops, and the onslaught is narrated by the people who flee their extermination, often with the help of others. Jennie E. Burnet (Chapter 15) focuses on Rwandans who saved the lives of fellow citizens labeled ethnically as Tutsis during the Rwandan genocide of 1994. The genocide claimed an estimated 800,000 lives, and was mostly carried out by Hutu perpetrators. Burnet distinguishes between the relatively few rescuers who were entirely dedicated to saving Tutsis, genocide resisters who refused to kill, and the much more common rescuer behavior of

people who either kept their distance or participated in the massacres while secretly providing assistance to Tutsis. According to Burnet, the latter occupied a morally ambiguous gray zone in which people navigated between collaboration, resistance, and indifference. Numerous Rwandans who protected Tutsis at home, smuggled them abroad, or paid a ransom to save them, also joined or were forced to join the killings out of self-protection. They were able to help Tutsis because of two external factors, namely their close communal ties with Tutsis and their access to the means and places that could provide safety. However, these conditions are insufficient to explain the protection of Tutsis by rescuers. Rescuers were also motivated by internal factors, such as an inner strength and moral convictions or religious beliefs, to risk their lives for the sake of endangered others. The value of life and the moral cost of death were weighed differently during limit situations, and the particular balance each person struck distinguished one from the other.

The total disregard for the living, as much as the dead, is shared by all genocides and mass killings. In Chapter 16 Hudson McFann and Alexander Laban Hinton analyze the Cambodian genocide as the categorization of increasing numbers of Cambodians as disposable enemies of a self-declared uniform society constituted of uniform human beings organized in agrarian cooperatives. This communist utopia was unattainable, and therefore continued to produce new abject misfits that carried what the authors call the threat of detritus. This enemy "other" was said to corrode the Kampuchean ideal, as if it were a contagious disease, and to pollute society as animate garbage; as a contaminant, it had to be removed. When the Red Khmer took power in 1975, it divided the population into new impure people who had been corrupted by the city, capitalism, and Buddhism, and old pure people who lived in the countryside and had been exploited peasants. First, the members of the defeated Cambodian regime and military were eliminated, and then the city people, capitalists, monks, and reactionaries, who had been contaminated by antirevolutionary ideologies. Their bodies were discarded as waste without ritual or ceremony. Finally, alleged enemies and traitors within the party were accused of sabotaging the economy and the revolution. Their confessions were extracted under torture in political prisons. Nearly 2 million people were killed during the reign of the Red Khmer. The skulls of some of them were put on display in macabre shrines erected by the Vietnamese troops that took control over Cambodia in 1979.

How do ethnographers cope emotionally and psychologically with violent death during fieldwork, especially when their own lives are at risk? Ivana Maček conducted fieldwork in Sarajevo between 1992 and 1996 when the city was besieged by snipers and artillery fire from the Bosnian Serb Army. In Chapter 17 she emphasizes the importance of establishing trusting relationships in the field to keep death literally and emotionally at bay. Friends provided much needed companionship and good ethnographic working relationships. She established these relationships by being forthright about her ideological convictions and by showing a genuine interest in people's lives. Such empathy also made it harder to distance herself from the unpredictable environment, and raised doubts about the sense of her ethnographic enterprise where other undertakings seemed more meaningful. The dialectic of empathy or immersion and detachment or distance, which is crucial to all ethnographic research, helped Maček maintain her emotional and psychological stability in the war zone. The detachment, however hard in a war zone, resembled the indifference of Sarajevans to the daily losses and threats to life. People tried to simulate a normal life in the context of uncertain circumstances. At the same time, however, they were self-conscious about their insensitivity and numbness. They used black humor, art, and creative solutions to practical problems to acquire a sense of control over the precarious situation. Once back home in Sweden, Ivana Maček became overwhelmed by the stresses of fieldwork and feelings of guilt at having abandoned her friends in Sarajevo. She overcame these emotional and psychological

problems by writing about her experiences and by being conscious of her unelaborated cultural assumptions about death.

The construction of radical difference in times of war, repression, and violence makes the classification of people into the worthy and the abject of crucial importance to understanding the implications of massive death. The designation of other human beings as enemies, barbarians, or vermin gives people an excuse to exterminate them. This classification entails the abuse of their corpses in visible or concealed ways and the discarding of them as if they were trash. Societies cannot treat their members in such ways without creating the conditions for their future resurrection as memories of the dead are passed from one generation to the next. The morality of genocide and massive death, in both its righteous and its nefarious manifestations, becomes then a cultural force to restore the personhood of the victims.

Part IV: Regeneration

Beliefs in immortality, reincarnation, and the metamorphosis of life after death are common in many cultures. Death is not regarded as an irreversible ending because the corpse can transform into another body (Viveiros de Castro 1998) or the spirit reincarnates in another being and regenerates the cycle of life and death (Bloch and Parry 1982; Obeyesekere 2002). James Frazer, one of anthropology's founding fathers, concluded after a cross-cultural survey: "Men commonly believe that their conscious being will not end at death, but that it will be continued for an indefinite time or for ever, long after the frail corporeal envelope which lodged it for a time has mouldered in the dust" (Frazer 1994 21: 3). The existence of a surviving soul or spirit produces a contradictory attitude among people: "it is a compound of hope and fear, of affection and aversion, of attraction and repulsion" (Frazer 1994: 22.5). Frazer (1994: 21.10–11) argued that so-called primitive people are dominated by a fear of the spirits of the dead while civilized people, namely the faithful of Buddhism, Christianity, and Islam, have generally a great affection for the deceased and would very much enjoy reuniting with them in the hereafter. The fear of the former derives from the power of spirits to harm the living or to withhold the generative force that makes people and land fertile, whereas the latter do not believe in direct spiritual interventions. Frazer's distinction between primitive animism and civilized religion, or immanence and transcendence, ignores that different religious ontologies may be interwoven, and that animism and monotheism should be understood "as alternative understandings of the relation of divinity to the world" (Lambek 2013: 19).

Anthropologists today are not keen on drawing such grand conclusions about life and death as Frazer did because the inevitable decontextualization sacrifices the complex meanings of mortuary and generative rituals and practices. Frazer was, of course, aware of the risk of overgeneralization, and was careful to mention several exceptions to the rule. On the authority of Malinowski, Frazer (1994: 21.15) accepted that the Trobriand Islanders apparently did not fear the spirits of the dead but he added the caveat that their offerings to the spirits were probably intended to appease them. However, Malinowski was making a more fundamental point, namely that people's general fear of death is complemented by a general denial of death.

> The savage is intensely afraid of death … he cannot face the idea of complete cessation, of annihilation … And here into this play of emotional forces, into this supreme dilemma of life and final death, religion steps in, selecting the positive creed, the comforting view, the culturally valuable belief in immortality, in the spirit independent of the body, and in the continuance of life after death. (Malinowski 1954: 50–51)

This simultaneous fear and denial of death results in an ambivalent relation to the corpse. The bereaved cling to the deceased, sometimes physically, but are at the same time afraid of becoming contaminated with death or of having their spirit kidnapped to the afterworld by the departing spirit.

The fear of death and the belief in immortality continued to attract scholarly attention after Frazer and Malinowski. Ernest Becker (1973) gave a psychodynamic explanation. He argued that the fear of death is repressed to reduce people's anxiety, yet serves as a drive for self-preservation. In a similar vein, the philosopher Alfred Schutz (1973: 228) stated that people have a fundamental anxiety: "I know that I shall die and I fear to die." Nevertheless, people suspend the fear of death, and take the existence of the world and the reality of life for granted. The underlying fundamental anxiety then becomes the wellspring of the hopes, fears, and desires that make people undertake life projects and attempt to master the world. The fear of death is, for Schutz, therefore the origin of society and culture. The psychiatrist Robert Jay Lifton also pointed at the creative consequences of the fear and denial of death. People try to overcome their death anxiety by achieving symbolic immortality through natural reproduction; religious beliefs about rebirth, resurrection, or a spiritual afterlife; the creation of artworks; belief in a physical wholeness with the universe; and drug-induced altered states of consciousness (Lifton 1979; Lifton and Olson 1974). The psychological reductionism of these explanations is problematic because immortality and regeneration cannot be understood independently of the cultural models and social practices that conceive them.

The generative continuity of life and death is examined by Robert Desjarlais in his study of the Hyolmo people of Nepal in Chapter 18. The Buddhist Hyolmo believe that their mortuary rituals enable the regeneration of life after death or, as Desjarlais calls it, the vitagenesis of new life forms. The bereaved relatives carry out rituals that dissociate the deceased's consciousness from the body, and make it enter, for seven weeks, a liminal realm between one life form and its rebirth in another. The rituals dissolve the deceased's personhood, cut the attachments to the world and their relatives, while forging a new reality for the reborn consciousness. Effigies of the deceased are cremated during rituals that manifest the sequential cycles of rebirth and redeath. This poiesis or generative transmutation exists in all processes of living and dying, in joy and in suffering, but it can also be obstructed by the aspirations of others. According to Desjarlais, this anthropological understanding of how the Hyolmo practice the continuities of living, dying, and death may help us cope in a more transcendent way with the anxieties of living in a dying world troubled by global warming, poverty, and violent political conflicts. After all, dystopic conditions of life may change people's notion of death, as De Boeck (2005) showed in a study of Kinshasa, Congo.

People may perceive the continuity of life and death in a temporal but also a cosmological sense. The Chachi of northwest Ecuador claim that the numerous ghosts and animate dead beings that populate the rivers, mountains, and forests near their villages are representatives of death. Yet, from the position of these ghosts and nonliving beings, it is the Chachi that are considered as ghosts. Death, so argues Istvan Praet in Chapter 18, is for the Chachi less a spiritual or supernatural but more a tangible reality that influences their everyday lives. Ghosts and Chachi occupy inverse perspectives in relation to each other. For example, ghosts will inflict harm on people they care for, will refuse food eaten by humans, and may live underwater or underground in Chachi-like dwellings. The postmortem metamorphoses of Chachi into ghosts, and of Chachi ways of living into those of animate nonhumans, constitute perpetual regenerations of life and death. Such transformations become most apparent after natural calamities like storms and earthquakes, when deaths may occur and

weddings are held at graveyards to dispel further disaster. The inebriated Chachi attendees turn temporarily into ghosts – and thus into the dead – as collective representations of death. This inversion from good humans into evil ghosts will then save the world from a decline into the apocalypse. In a constructive critique of Amerindian perspectivism that assumes the metamorphosis of humans into animals (Viveiros de Castro 1998), Praet argues that the link between life and death is more fundamental in Amerindian cosmology than the link between humans and animals.

The rebirth of deceased Mapuche shamans occurs through a process of disremembering and re-remembering that ties personal biographies to collective histories. In Chapter 20 Ana Mariella Bacigalupo describes how the Chilean thunder shaman Francisca Kolipi was dissociated from her spirit's malicious qualities upon her death, and how she became re-remembered as a benevolent shaman. A Mapuche shaman must be disremembered by the community to allow her rebirth into a new shaman's body, and to prevent the transformation of her life force into an evil spirit. Mortuary rituals separate the deceased shaman from the Mapuche community, and end the shaman's personhood by disentangling the inert body from the spirit. Shamanistic regeneration becomes then both an individual and a collective rebirth. The regenerative cycle of shamans mediates the history of communities through the agency of their spirits, and offers the hope for a better future, in part by manipulating the forces and valued objects of Chilean colonialism and Catholic missionization. Clearly, globalization and the spread of modernity did not corrode people's religious beliefs and secularize their societies, as had been expected in the twentieth century, and new communication technologies will create innovative ways of disremembering, re-remembering, and immortalizing the dead (Walter 2015).

In Chapter 21 Ellen Badone challenges the common view that most North Americans regard death as a final ending without any hope of regeneration. She traces this belief to the Reformation, when Roman Catholic practices that enabled communications with the dead were dismissed as superstition. Religious doctrine about spirituality shifted from immanence to transcendence, a process that has also been witnessed among the Sora of India, where shamans became marginalized through Baptist proselytization (Vitebsky 2008). Badone has studied Americans who believe that there exists a universal truth among religions about the continuity of consciousness in life and death. They have after-death communications with deceased loved ones who often suffered bad deaths, such as traffic accidents, suicides, or terminal cancer. These communications assume sensorial manifestations, such as seeing a picture frame falling off a wall, smelling cigarette smoke, or hearing the deceased's favorite song on the radio. Badone argues that these communications ease the grief of tragic deaths, reincorporate the deceased into the bosom of the family, and comfort the bereaved's anguish about the bad death because the after-death messages speak of an afterlife of peace, love, and happiness.

The inevitability of death has been regarded as self-evident by Western science. Steeped in secularism and materialism, the existence of an afterlife is denied, and an individual lifetime is juxtaposed with unlimited cosmological time. Anthropology has shown that this secular eschatological axiom of the finality of death is contested by religious beliefs, and how rituals and technologies serve to create cultural temporalities (Christensen and Willerslev 2013). Nevertheless, the very notion of death organizes people's temporal existence, whether in the form of a time line divided between before and after death or as cyclical understandings of disintegration and renewal. Death and bodily decay, so argues Abou Farman in Chapter 22, materialize time irrespective of secular or religious beliefs. Cryonic technologies subvert this relation of death and time, and transform corpses into ambiguous organisms that undermine cultural dichotomies of life and death.

Cryonics radically alters the social and cultural meanings of the dead as deceased members of society. Inert bodies are preserved in vats of liquid nitrogen at –196° Celsius to halt the decay until future revival. Cryopreserved bodies are thus suspended between life and death, and translate life into indefinite time until reanimation allows them to participate in a distant secular afterlife.

The fluidity of processes of life and afterlife, and the porosity of material and spiritual realms, are much greater than was assumed by the founding fathers of the anthropology of death, who tended to treat life and death as separate realms that were connected through mortuary rituals. Life and death, however, may be imagined as coexisting ontologies that constitute one another through symbiotic interaction and communication. Cultural models and practices of these dynamic regenerative processes may also serve as reflexive modes to give meaning to the decline and regeneration of nonhuman forms of life. Remembrance and disremembrance of the dead may be part of such reflexive modes and may regenerate life in multiple forms of animate being.

Part V: Corporeal Materiality

The smell of putrefying human flesh provokes disgust among most people. Recent research is suggesting that pyridine marks the specific odor of decomposing human corpses (Rosier et al. 2017). This disgust existed even among people who practiced mortuary cannibalism, such as the Wari' Amerindians: "they emphasize how repulsive the stench of a rotting corpse is … Elders say that sometimes it was only with the greatest effort that they managed to force themselves to swallow the flesh" (Conklin 2001: 78, 82). Nausea is only a physical reaction. Instead, disgust, according to Menninghaus (2003: 1) in his cultural history of the term, "is a state of alarm and emergency, an acute crisis of self-preservation in the face of an unassimilable otherness, a convulsive struggle, in which what is in question is, quite literally, whether 'to be or not to be.'" Disgust is also an emotional reaction to the disintegration of the social relationships for which a decaying body stands. Here lies one possible explanation for the preservation of bodies through mummification and embalmment, in peat bogs, or with cryonic technologies. Such efforts may harness the feared decay of the corpse and temporarily halt the dissociation of corpse and personhood. Natural decomposition is slowed down, and dead bodies are rematerialized into cultural artifacts that can have political meanings, educational values, and aesthetic qualities.

Dead bodies leave numerous material traces that provide clues about how their owners lived and died. Liv Nilsson Stutz emphasizes in Chapter 23 that the death and decay of human bodies is understudied and undertheorized. Archaeothanatology is filling this gap by examining bodies as both objects and subjects that disintegrate through biological degradation and transform through mortuary practices, turning the dead person into a corpse with a liminal status as an abject cadaver suspended between the cultural categories of life and death. Nilsson Stutz describes how archaeology interprets these traces of object- and subject-hood through the examination of skeletal remains – their position, condition, pathology, and resting place – and the various objects of material culture that accompany them. Archaeothanatology rematerializes human remains through the relation with their material context, the imprint of practices on bones and artifacts, and the cultural, material, and experiential transformation from inert bodies to human remains. The attention to the material context may indicate distinct burial practices that reveal the gender, ethnicity, and social status of the dead, whereas the absence of mortuary rituals may reveal unusual circumstances of death. A bioarchaeological study of bones can tell a detailed story about

the biological characteristics, physical health, and biocultural identities of the deceased. Finally, of particular interest is how the human body was shaped through a complex interaction between the biological organism and its sociocultural and ecological circumstances. Crossland (2009) demonstrates how these different disciplinary perspectives were mobilized to interpret the alleged remains of the nineteenth-century Australian outlaw Ned Kelly. Conklin and Morgan (1996) compare how body and personhood are constructed differently in the United States and among Amerindians in Brazil.

Joost Fontein examines the materiality and agency of human remains resting in mass graves in Zimbabwe in Chapter 24. The dead had been killed during the nineteenth-century struggles against the British colonizers, and the guerrilla insurgency against the ruling white minority in the 1960s and 1970s. In addition, Fontein studies the remains of people massacred during domestic conflicts between Robert Mugabe's ZANU party and Joshua Nkomoh's ZAPU party, and the assassinated opponents of the Mugabe regime in the twenty first century. Many of the dead are confined to mass graves in Zimbabwe and neighboring countries. The impact of their remains is felt in the public disapproval of the consecration of certain dead as national heroes, and through the natural misfortunes, AIDS epidemic, and economic crises that are believed to be caused by restless spirits. These spirits are haunting Zimbabwe because they want to be reunited with their ancestors at home. Relatives and former comrades have been demanding the exhumation, commemoration, and memorialization of the victims of political violence. Fontein demonstrates how the corpses, bones, and remains have agency through their material indeterminacy, spirituality, and people's demand for their proper burial and commemoration in Zimbabwe. The consequences of this agency are complicated by a dispute between forensic scholars and diviners about the identity and cause of death of the exhumed. These unsolvable tensions demonstrate the destabilizing agency and ontological uncertainty of human remains.

The rematerialization of human bodies can also take place during people's lifetime and then continue into death. More than 10,000 First Nation children were subjected to cultural genocide at the Carlisle Indian Industrial School in Pennsylvania between 1879 and 1918. Jacqueline Fear-Segal, in Chapter 25, describes how this boarding school intended to assimilate its students into the ways of Anglo-American culture, obliging them to shed their Native language, culture, and identity. The pictures of Carlisle students taken before and during their residence demonstrate their assimilation in terms of dress, appearance, and demeanor. These images resemble the portraits of Native captives in prison photographs, and show how both students and prisoners were subjected to a colonial disciplinary regime (Bernardin et al. 2003: 8–11). The underlying racism of this civilizatory campaign became clear when students died in residence. They were not buried in the town's cemetery, next to Carlisle's white residents, but interred in the segregated Indian school cemetery. Paradoxically, the nearly 200 dead children were given Christian funerals, instead of being buried with their Native mortuary rituals. Parents and relatives never attended the funerals because they were generally not informed of the deaths. The Native cemetery was relocated in the 1920s, and the human remains were reburied carelessly. These remains acquired new meaning when in 2000 Native Americans from many parts of the country performed mortuary rituals in Carlisle that rematerialized the dead as refound ancestors. The repatriation to Wyoming of three deceased children of the Northern Arapaho in August 2017 marked a new phase in their existence as publicly recognized victims of an invisible genocide (Scheper-Hughes 2001).

Chapter 26 by Sophie Bolt shows how corpses could become rematerialized as study objects for teaching and medical research, but still be remembered in mortuary ceremonies. Since there are no standard rituals for absent human remains, the relatives of body donors

improvised funeral ceremonies in whatever way they thought proper. These ceremonies often resembled Dutch Christian or secular mortuary rituals with speeches, poems, music, and personal condolences to the nearest bereaved relatives. These social gatherings often centered on the belongings of the deceased. These personal items stood for their identity and how the mourners remembered them. In addition, home shrines and memorial monuments for body donors have been erected in the Netherlands to offer relatives and friends a place to commemorate the absent dead and to express the lasting bonds publicly.

The ultimate rematerialization of the corpse and the obliteration of the deceased's personhood are being accomplished by plastination, a technique that dehydrates the corpse and replaces the body fluids with plastics. Where relatives of body donors struggle to create meaningful ceremonies for an absent loved one, the bodies donated or purchased for plastination reappear as depersonalized objects without ritual or ceremony. In Chapter 27 Uli Linke demonstrates how the German anatomist Gunther von Hagens has turned defaced corpses into objects of eroticized entertainment under the pretense of a pseudo-scientific pedagogy of the human anatomy. In worldwide exhibitions, hyperrealistic plastinated bodies are displayed in active poses, with enlarged genitalia and breasts, as if living another life after death. These organic artifacts deny our common sense understanding of death, and raise serious bioethical concerns (Lantos 2011). Bereft of smell, skin, and decay, the plastinated bodies have become art pieces according to von Hagens, but for Linke they are commodities bought on a murky market, and sold as medical spectacles, that pretend to offer people an authentic experience of death. Their death was not accompanied by mortuary rituals but the human remains became products in the global economy, even though the public have a more benign opinion (Walter 2004). The depersonalized plastinated bodies are as much stripped of their protective skin as of the subjectivities and life histories that made them human. In an additional step from subjectivity to objectivity, the computerization of human cadavers has pushed the transformation of deceased persons to rematerialized representations into the realm of virtual reality (Csordas 2000).

The materiality of a human body implies its eventual decay and its ritualization upon death. The inert body becomes a corpse and the deceased person may become an immortal spirit. Rituals dissociate the deceased's bodyhood and personhood, as Hertz argued, and the rotting body often provokes fear and disgust among the living, as Frazer described. Clearly, not only spirits but also corpses may have afterlives through rematerialization. The objectified body enters into a complex relation with the surrounding social and material world that can provide agency to human remains as they acquire actionable meanings. These meanings may establish a renewed relationship between the previously separated corpse and spirit, and have extensive consequences on the living. Finally, this corporeal rematerialization and resignification can also be sought by the deceased-to-be who destines their body for educational, investigative and aesthetic purposes.

Part VI: Biomedical Issues

Biomedicine has been shifting the boundaries of life and death ever since the first kidney transplant in 1953, the first heart transplant in 1967, and the first *in vitro* fertilization in 1978. Life can be conceived in a test tube and prolonged through organ transplants. However, life can also be ended through physician-assisted death, while comatose patients are suspended between life and death in a permanent vegetative state (Kaufman 2000). Life and death have become malleable. Biomedical interventions therefore enter into moral and ethical dilemmas that include the commodification of body parts, embryonic stem cell

research, transplant tourism, and xenotransplantation (Ikels 2013; Sharp 2000). These dilemmas affect issues as diverse as new technological developments, state interests, the right of bodily integrity, and cultural understandings of illness and health. There is a political economy of biomedicine that distributes the services and benefits unevenly between countries and nations. The uncomfortable tension between the successes of biomedicine and the uneven health care of the world's aged reveals clearly the global differences in medical facilities, state control, and individual rights (Buch 2015).

Charlotte Ikels demonstrates in Chapter 28 how technological advances, popular medicine, and the Chinese state have clashed over blood and organ donations. Voluntary organ donations were uncommon in China until recently because death is understood as caused by heart failure, while brain death is confused with euthanasia or a permanent vegetative state. Furthermore, the popular understanding of the human body as an integrated whole consisting of a vital essence (*jing*), a vital energy (*qi*), and the circulation of blood and *qi* through veins and organs, has made people reluctant to make donations. The Chinese state maintained its blood stockpiles, therefore, by forcing quota on universities, state factories and bureaucracies and by allowing the purchase of untested blood from rural sellers, which led to an AIDS epidemic in the 1990s. The commercialization of blood was discouraged, and the state's monetary compensation for blood donation was regarded as the reciprocation by the state for the patriotic sacrifices of its citizens. Attempts at persuading people to donate blood out of altruism failed. Likewise, human organ donation has been historically very low in China, and organs were therefore mainly acquired from the prison population, including executed convicts and political dissidents. Such organ extraction became illegal in 2015 but there exist doubts about the enforcement of the new law. People are reluctant to donate their organs. They suspect doctors and hospitals of financial motives, and maintain that the family and not the individual holds the rights over the body. Furthermore, people want to fulfill the Confucian obligation of burying the body as it was conceived by the individual's parents.

The tension between local and medical knowledge also appears in the treatment of diseases, as is illustrated by a case from South Africa, as detailed in Chapter 29. The death of Jimmy Mohale did not come as a surprise to Isak Niehaus. Niehaus thought that Mohale had died from AIDS. The 15-year-long relationship between Niehaus and his South African research associate Jimmy Mohale raises complex questions about professional ethics, social and moral responsibility, and spiritual versus biomedical explanations of death. Was Niehaus's offer to test Jimmy for HIV and to facilitate medical treatment a reciprocal obligation to a friend and assistant? Or should he have accepted Mohale's belief in witchcraft and paid a diviner to cure him? The latter response would have had the additional benefit of providing a deeper ethnographic understanding of witchcraft in a rapidly changing South Africa. The relativist stance of respecting local knowledge, even against better judgment, rubs uncomfortably with a more interventionist attitude that could be defended equally. This dilemma raises necessary questions about the relation between ethnographers and research participants, and the professional choice between detachment, intervention, and engagement. Torn between a spiritual and a biomedical intervention, Jimmy Mohale's siblings organized a therapy management group to protect him from the witchcraft that had made his body imitate the symptoms of AIDS. Family support eased the dying process but did not soothe the ethnographer's conscience about perhaps having given too much weight to local meanings of disease and death.

The more life is prolonged by medical technologies, the more cornered death becomes. In Chapter 30 Helen Stanton Chapple addresses the invisibility of dying in the United States and the vulnerability of terminally ill people as fellow human beings in need of care

and protection. There exists a tendency to blame the terminally ill of drawing on scarce medical resources, even though there is a widespread societal desire to keep dying people alive at the highest cost. However, the chasm between moral principle and everyday reality is great. Care standards for the dying are excellent but are regularly not maintained because of a lack of accountability. Suspicious deaths at institutions and at home are insufficiently monitored. Instead, hospices, palliative care wards, and physicians who assist death respect the dying process but are reluctant to publicize such dignified care for being accused of trying to reduce medical spending. Chapple advocates greater social awareness of the dying process and more societal support for dying persons through an open acknowledgment of death and a solidarity with dying persons.

The most advanced biomedical care is not available universally – in rich or in poor countries – but the difference between private and public hospitals is particularly great in poor countries. Kenya's private clinics are among the best in Africa but its public hospitals are short of facilities, medicines, and medical and nursing staff. Ruth J. Prince (Chapter 31) conducted fieldwork in the pediatric oncology ward of a public referral hospital in Kenya, where gravely ill children arrive, often after considerable delay because their parents are too poor to afford an earlier hospital stay. Patients receive standard chemotherapy for lymphoma, even when they have entered a terminal stage, because doctors and nurses consider it their duty to offer hope to the relatives. Many cancer patients recover, but there are also many deaths due to inadequate treatment. Overworked as a consequence of the structurally inadequate facilities, the staff give scant attention to the dying process and their relatives. Family members are not informed about the medical treatment or even the imminent death of their loved ones. Doctors and nurses are aware of falling short and wrestle with the moral dilemma of balancing an empathic engagement with patients and their detachment from the insufficient medical care.

Euthanasia became regarded as an unethical medical practice after World War II because of its association with the killing of mentally and physically disabled persons during the Nazi regime. In Chapter 32 Frances Norwood describes how euthanasia became legally permitted in three European countries since 1984. Such physician-assisted dying has also become possible in several US states since 1997, and many more states are considering legalization. How has the American cultural conception of death and dying permitted such voluntary deaths? Norwood argues that death became a mediated experience for most Americans in the twentieth century because of declining mortality rates and people dying away from home in hospitals. Today, under the influence of television and the internet, dying is seen as caused by extreme violence or as prolonged by spectacular medical treatments. However, ordinary death is different. Most people die from insufficient health care, untreated diseases, or untreatable conditions. New legislation about physician-assisted dying has become a response to the gap between the unrealistic expectations of death and dying in the media and the harsh world of ordinary health care.

Part VI touches upon many key issues discussed in the previous parts. National states tend to take away people's bodily integrity and to regulate the procurement of human organs. Changing cultural attitudes about the body are making people skeptical of biomedical practitioners and creating a desire for treatment from traditional healers with a more holistic understanding of the human body. The unequal distribution of medical services within and between countries influences such choices and affects the differential attention to the dying process. The professionalization of health care and the use of advanced technological treatments in the world's wealthiest countries have marginalized dying patients from their familiar surroundings. Hospices and home-care centers have sprung up in reaction. The appeal to scarce medical resources has even recast the terminally ill as a burden to

society. The growing legalization of physician-assisted dying has therefore been criticized for giving relatives and public opinion the opportunity to put moral pressure on the aged and incurable to end their lives prematurely.

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This volume collects the most recent scholarship in the anthropology of death and is intended as a companion to the reader *Death, Mourning, and Burial* (Robben 2017), which contains the field's principal foundational texts. Five anonymous reviewers made helpful comments on the book proposal, including the suggestion to add a section on biomedical issues and to provide an introduction that would not simply summarize the chapters but relate them to foundational texts in the anthropology of death as a pedagogical aid for instructors and a springboard for researchers to explore new theoretical trends. I have followed this advice and taken advantage of the opportunity to present six recent theoretical interpretations in the form of a critique of the anthropology of death's founding fathers. This is not to say that their seminal ideas have not been criticized before but I believe that general reverence for their work is holding back the field's development. This collection of essays owes much to the generosity of the contributors, many of whom I know only through their published work and our email correspondence. In particular, I want to express my gratitude to Yohko Tsuji for her moral support during the work of putting this volume together. This book was solicited by Wiley's Anthropology and Archaeology assistant editor Mark Graney, and carried forward decisively by associate editor Tanya McMullin. I thank Elisha Benjamin for bringing this project to its successful completion.

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