‘Thanatology and its thesis of the repression of death: A discursive and generic analysis.’

by

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Abstract.
This thesis examines the emergence of thanatology as a discipline, paying particular attention to the key thanatological theme that death has become a taboo topic in modern society and to the rhetorical construction of early thanatological texts. In order to study these issues, the thesis uses a variety of different methods. First I used corpus linguistic methodology to study the way repression proper was constructed in *Time* magazine, one of the most popular American news magazines of the time. This analysis showed that by the late 1950-early 1960s when thanatology had emerged as a discipline, the concept of repression proper had not completely lost its ties with psychoanalysis and had not become an integral part of ordinary discourse. Also, in the 1950s repression was often constructed as a pathology and this perception was shared by the early thanatological authors.

In analyzing the publications by Geoffrey Gorer and Herman Feifel, the two important authors for the early history of the discipline, the methods of Discursive and Rhetorical Psychology, Critical Discourse Analysis and Genre Analysis were used, especially to analyse in discursive depth the essay “The Pornography of Death” by Geoffrey Gorer (1955) and the volume *The Meaning of Death* (1959) edited by Herman Feifel. Geoffrey Gorer in his essay “The Pornography of Death” contributed to the dissemination of the notion of repression and introduced to the public discourse the idea of the repression of death, death being the new taboo. Herman Feifel in his volume *The Meaning of Death* introduced the idea of repression of death as a characteristic feature of the Western society to the scholarly literature of the 1950s and 1960s. Feifel based his construction of the taboo on death on that of Gorer and legitimized the essay “The Pornography of Death” as a part of scholarly discourse on death. Using genre analysis it can be seen that neither the essay by Gorer, nor the volume *The Meaning of Death* can be viewed as conventional scholarly texts. Thus death studies as a scientific discipline can be viewed as originating at the essentially public level of communication. This has wider implications for understanding how new disciplines can be constructed and promoted both within and beyond the academic world.

Key words: thanatology, death studies, repression of death, death denial, taboo on death, Herman Feifel, Geoffrey Gorer, rhetoric, genre, Discursive and Rhetorical Psychology.
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1. Introduction.

Every year in May the UK Dying Matters Coalition organizes its annual Awareness week across the country. Many national and local newspapers cover this event. They produce headlines such as: “The real reasons why death is still so hard to talk about with your loved ones”\(^1\), “Talking about death is such a taboo that millions leave issues unresolved when they die”\(^2\), “Time to end taboo on talking about death as “dying well” and surrounded by love helps ease grief”\(^3\), “Dying for Life: Cambridge is breaking a taboo to talk death”\(^4\), “Milton Keynes residents invited to ‘break the taboo’ and talk about death”\(^5\). The *Guardian* newspaper reported that few Britons discussed dying\(^6\) and the *Telegraph* offered advice as to how to start this kind of conversation: to use humour to break the ice or recent celebrity deaths or topics in the media as a starting point\(^7\). The idea that death in today’s society is denied has not just become commonplace in the press. One can find it on the web-sites of many palliative care organizations both in the UK and abroad\(^8\) as well as in the popular literature on death, dying, and bereavement (Callanan and Kelley, 2012; Halifax, 2008; Nuland, 1995; Okun and Nowinski, 2011;). The ground-breaking book *On Death and Dying* by Elizabeth Kubler-Ross that “brought death out of the darkness” -so it was claimed on its back cover- was originally published in 1969 and become a bestseller. It has been in print until today. In this book Kubler-Ross described the Western society as a society “in which death is viewed as a taboo, discussion of it is regarded as morbid, and children are excluded with the presumption and pretext that it would be “too much” for them” (Kubler-Ross, 1969, pp. 6-7). The popular concept of a “death café”, an informal gathering of people to speak

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\(^8\) For example, this idea can be found at the webpage of the UK Dying matters coalition (http://www.dyingmatters.org), The Irish Hospice Foundation (http://hospicefoundation.ie/) and American Hospice Foundation (https://americanhospice.org/)
about death over a cup of tea that originated in 2004 in Switzerland and spread to 50 countries of
the world\textsuperscript{9}, is also based on the idea that death is repressed and requires specially set time and
space for discussion. In the words of its founder, Bernard Crettaz, death cafés are aimed at
breaking the "tyrannical secrecy" surrounding the topic of death\textsuperscript{10}.

In the scholarly literature modern Western society has been characterized as death denying since
the origin of death studies in the 1950s (Gorer, 1955; Feifel, 1957; Feifel, 1959; Kasper, 1959). Despite the growing research on the subject of death and emergence of such disciplines as
thanatology, suicidology, and gerontology, during the following six decades death has been
depicted as a taboo topic in the accounts of the history of death studies (Pine, 1977; Doka, 2003;
Bryant, 2007; Staudt, 2009). The proliferation of scholarly literature on the subject that claimed
d that death was denied allowed Simpson, the author of a bibliography of death studies, as far back
as 1979 to comment: “Death is a very badly kept secret; such an unmentionable and taboo topic
that there are over 750 books now in print asserting that we are ignoring the subject” (Simpson,
1979, p. vii).

The voices challenging the idea of the Western repression of death have been present in
academic thanatology since its early history. For example, in 1963 the distinguished sociologist
Talcott Parsons questioned the view that “American society was characterized by a kind of
“denial” of the reality of death” (Parsons 1963, p. 61) and instead suggested a typology of
orientations towards death. Almost ten years later sociologists Dumont and Foss took a closer
look at the idea of repression of death in the book titled \textit{The American View of Death. Acceptance or Denial?} (1972). They argued that the query “Do Americans accept or deny their
own deaths?” was a misformulation and set up “a false dichotomy of mutually exclusive
attitudinal alternatives” (p. 95). Rather the culture of the United States and the individuals in it
both accepted and denied death: they recognized their mortality on the rational level, but were
often unable to feel its reality. Thus it was possible to speak of varying degrees of acceptance or
denial or both, rather than of a dichotomy of denial versus acceptance. Similarly, the British

\textsuperscript{9} According to the website of Death Café, there now 4709 Death Cafes in 50 countries. Retrieved from http://deathcafe.com.
sociologist Tony Walter (1991) although not questioning the existence of the taboo on death, suggested that today this thesis could be modified and made less extreme: the modifications included the possibility that the taboo on death existed in the past, but has been gradually disintegrating or that death was rather hidden than denied, or that taboo was limited to certain occupational groups or that the society has possibly lost its language to speak about death.

A more radical approach to the problem of death denial in Western society was presented by Kellehear (1984), who strongly opposed the idea of the taboo and argued that in fact we were not a death denying society (p. 720). He grouped and critically discussed evidence in favour of the Western denial of death that could be found in the contemporary literature (the fear of death argument, the medicalization of death argument, the twentieth-century crisis of individualism argument, and the examples of death denying social practices like embalming, memorial gardens and reluctance to speak about death) and found these arguments unconvincing as sociological explanations, because they presented descriptions of individual motivations as explanations for group behaviour. This led to an oversimplified view of the relation between the individual, society and death. According to Kellehear, despite the rich variety of individual responses to death, societies as a whole do not deny it. Instead they organize for and around death: exert forms of social control by means of sanctioning different types of myths and rituals toward it, culturally determine the nature of death, etc. A similar approach was adopted by Zimmerman and Rodin (2004) who critically re-considered the main arguments in favour of the denial of death thesis (specifically, arguments related to alleged taboo on conversation about death, medicalization of death and segregation of the dying from the society). They found these arguments “simplistic if not altogether false” (p. 127) from the sociological point of view and also ethically questionable for palliative care professionals, who should focus on reducing suffering and improving quality of life of their patients rather than combating the alleged denial of death.

In my thesis I would like to contribute to this discussion. I came to be interested in the topic of repression of death while working as a volunteer in one of the Moscow hospices. My journey started with reading the English language literature on death, dying and palliative care that was donated to the volunteers of our hospice by the fellow volunteers from the UK. I read the story of the origin of death awareness movement and was fascinated by the pioneering work of the early
thanatologists, primarily Herman Feifel, who initiated the research on the subject of death despite the strong resistance of scientific community and the society in general. I was so interested in this topic that I decided to pursue it later on the doctoral level. First of all I was intrigued by the phenomenon of the Western repression of death that was described in detail by the early thanatologists and later by the historians of the discipline and wanted to know more about its origin and the reasons for its existence. Also, I was admiring courage and intellectual efforts of the first thanatologists and was interested in the resources that allowed them to create a new science in the society where even mentioning the subject of death was considered to be a taboo. The possibility of openly discussing a repressed subject (and even making it a topic of scientific research and a career choice) and the discursive resources used in talking about the repressed seemed to be a very interesting theoretical problem. I wanted to better understand this phenomenon and realized that one of the ways of approaching it might be to study the concept of repression proper, which allowed thanatologists to speak about repression of death. I thought it was important to know whether the idea of repression proper had become a part of public discourse by the time of thanatology had emerged as a scientific discipline, and how it had been constructed during this period. I decided to examine the notion of repression by looking at the American press of the time and chose *Time* magazine, the American weekly news magazine, as a source of data.

However my project developed as I moved on with my research. After I had finished the *Time* study, I moved on to the analysis of the key thanatological writings of the 1950s and 1960s, first of all to the works of Herman Feifel, one of the founders of the discipline, and then to the essay “The Pornography of Death” (1955) by Geoffrey Gorer. After closely reading these texts it became evident that they did not contain the claims that were being ascribed to them by the historians of the discipline and also looked rather problematic as scholarly tests. As a result, I became increasingly critical to the ideas expressed in these texts (especially to the idea of the Western taboo on death) and even more so because both texts seemed to be ideologically laden. Rather than considering the existence of repression of death proper and evidence (or lack of it) of death denial in today’s Western culture I decided to change the focus of my study and to adopt a social constructionist approach to the creation of thanatology as a discipline and to the role the
idea of repression of death played in it\textsuperscript{11}. Michel Foucault in the introduction to his book the *History of Sexuality* (1978) discussed the “repressive hypothesis”, the idea that the contemporary Western society repressed sex. Delineating his approach to this problem, he wrote:

The question I would like to pose is not, Why are we repressed? but rather, Why do we say, with so much passion and so much resentment against our most recent past, against our present, and against ourselves, that we are repressed? By what spiral did we come to affirm that sex is negated? What led us to show, ostentatiously, that sex is something we hide, to say it is something we silence? And we do all this by formulating the matter in the most explicit terms, by trying to reveal it in its most naked reality, by affirming it in the positivity of its power and its effects (pp. 8-9).

Following this line of reasoning, in my thesis I took a closer look at the repressive hypothesis as applied to the topic of death and at the role of this hypothesis in the history of thanatology. The main aims of my thesis are to investigate how thanatology emerged as a scientific discipline and also what role the idea of the Western repression of death played in it. In order to accomplish this goal it is necessary first of all to critically examine the existing accounts of history of thanatology paying special attention to the idea of repression of death in them. The second objective of my research is to examine the construction of the concept of repression proper in public discourse by the time thanatology emerged as a scientific discipline in order to find out whether the construction of repression proper affected the construction of repression of death in the early thanatological literature. Finally, the third objective of the thesis is to examine how the Western repression of death was constructed in the key early thanatological texts that promoted this idea, namely in the essay “The Pornography of Death” (1955) by Geoffrey Gorer and in the early publications by Herman Feifel (first of all in his contributions to the volume *The Meaning of Death* (1959)). This will make it possible to determine whether these texts were standard academic texts and as a consequence to better understand the emergence of thanatology as a discipline.

In Chapter 2 I discuss the existing accounts of the early history of death studies (Feifel, 1974; Pine, 1977; Feifel, 1990; Feifel, 1992; Doka, 2003; Bryant, 2007). I analyse how these accounts

\textsuperscript{11} For a general survey of social constructionist ideas see Burr (1995) and Burr (2015).
were constructed, what they have in common and generally how they depict the origin and development of death studies as a discipline. I argue that the idea of the Western repression of death plays a key role in these historical narratives and can be viewed as a part of the “origin myth” (Samelson, 1974) of death studies as a discipline.

In Chapter 3 I provide the historical background for the analytical chapters. In this chapter I discuss firstly the little known aspects of the biography of Geoffrey Gorer mostly on the basis of the archival information from the Geoffrey Gorer collection held by the University of Sussex. Secondly, I briefly outline the biography of Herman Feifel and discuss some important events in the history of death studies, which are associated with his name. The research of this part of the chapter is based on the information obtained from the various archives in the USA (The list of archives consulted can be found in the Appendix 3). In this chapter I try to show that the early history of death studies is far from being clear-cut and that the idea of the Western repression of death that formed an important part of the existing histories of thanatology might be anything else but unproblematic.

Chapter 4 is devoted to the methodologies I use in my analysis. I argue that it is important to use different methods because of the different goals and different objects of analysis in the research chapters. In the thesis I use Corpus Analysis, Critical Discourse Analysis and Discursive and Rhetorical Social Psychology, and also genre or generic analysis and in Chapter 4 I discuss why I adopt such a multi-methods approach, discussing the strengths and weaknesses of these methods.

In Chapter 5 I discuss the idea of repression proper and the way it was introduced to and constructed in public discourse in order to provide background for analysing the idea of repression of death in the early thanatological writings. I use Time magazine (1923-1979), one of the important magazines in the US media market of the time, as a source of data and apply corpus analysis to them. I argue that by the time the essay “The Pornography of Death” by Geoffrey Gorer and also the early articles of Herman Feifel had been published, the concept of repression was not fully incorporated in the public discourse and the early thanatological publications might have contributed to its dissemination. Also, in the 1950s repression was constructed in Time magazine rather as pathology and a medical phenomenon than a norm and this perception was shared by the early thanatological authors.
In Chapter 6 I examine the idea of the Western repression of death in the 1955 essay “The Pornography of Death” by Geoffrey Gorer. I consider the role of the topic of death in the work of Gorer up to 1955 and then present some information about Encounter, the magazine where the essay was first published. In the following part of the chapter I argue that the essay might not be a conventional anthropological article and I discuss the rhetorical construction of the idea of the Western taboo on death in the essay and the ideological implications of this construction.

In Chapter 7 I present the analysis of the way the idea of the Western repression of death was constructed in the early publications of Herman Feifel. I argue that it was Herman Feifel who introduced the idea of repression of death or taboo on death as a characteristic feature of the Western society to the scholarly literature on death of the 1950s and 1960s and trace the role of this idea in the works by Feifel published between 1955 and 1975. Then I consider how the idea of repression of death was formed in the early publications of Feifel and include in my analysis the unpublished 1956 symposium presentation, which formed the basis for his 1959 essay for the volume The Meaning of Death. The rest of the chapter is devoted to rhetorical analysis of the extracts from the Feifel’s contributions to the volume The Meaning of Death that contain the idea of the Western taboo on death. In my analysis I show how the idea of the Western repression of death was constructed in these texts and also argue that two voices, that of an academic psychologist and of an intellectual, might be viewed as a characteristic feature of Feifel’s writing. This allows us to conclude that the early writings by Feifel might not be typical examples of the scholarly writing and that the essay “Attitudes Toward Death in Some Normal and Mentally Ill Populations” cannot be classified as a research article proper.

Finally, in Chapter 8 I present my conclusions and argue that death studies might be viewed as a discipline that originated at the essentially public level of communication and that the idea of the Western repression of death played an important role in this process.
2. The origin of thanatology in the existing accounts of its history.

2.1. Introduction.
In this chapter I will discuss the existing accounts of the history of death studies and the way the early history of the discipline has been presented in them. The aim of this chapter is to trace the role of the repression of death thesis in the existing histories of the discipline and to provide a background for the analytical chapters. However first I would like to consider the terminology I will use throughout this chapter and the thesis in general. In the literature on death and dying, especially that published in the earlier period of the history of the discipline, the terms “death studies”, “thanatology”, “death education” and “death awareness movement” were often used as synonyms. For example, the 1977 article by Vanderlyn Pine “A socio-historical portrait of death education” despite its title dealt mostly with the history of academic research on death related topics. Pine defined “death education” as “an academic discipline”, “a fairly recent phenomenon dating from the early 1960s” (Pine, 1977, p. 57). The term “death education” is rarely used in this meaning today. Rather – as it is evident from the *MacMillan Encyclopedia of Death and Dying* -it is applied to education proper and refers to “a variety of educational activities and experiences related to death and embraces such core topics as meanings and attitudes toward death, processes of dying and bereavement, and care for people affected by death” (Wass, 2003, p. 211).

The term “death awareness movement” seemed to be coined by Herman Feifel and was first used in his 1974 article on the history of the discipline (Feifel, 1974). According to Wass (2004) the term “death awareness movement” can be considered a synonym for “death education” in the broadest sense. In the recent publications on this subject (Bregman, 2003; Bryant, 2007; Doka, 2003), “death awareness movement” refers specifically to the social movement, as Doka put it, to “a somewhat amorphous yet interconnected network of individuals, organizations, and groups (p. 50), which share a common focus (although not necessarily common goals, models or methods); that focus is dying, death, and bereavement. Multidisciplinary research on the subject of death is considered to be a part of this movement.

The more neutral terms which refer mostly to academic study of death and related subjects include “thanatology” and “death studies”, although in the early years of the discipline the second term was also sometimes applied to the movement as a whole. For example, Doka in his
early article wrote about the “death studies movement” (Doka, 1983). The word “thanatology” was coined by the distinguished immunologist Elie Metchnikoff in 1903 (Kastenbaum, 2003), but became widely used in social sciences in the late 1960s-1970s. According to the *Encyclopedia of Death and Dying* (2005), thanatology is the “multi-disciplinary academic study of death, dying, and bereavement, and of the psychological mechanisms for coping with death. Thanatologists study, teach, and conduct research into cultural patterns, attitudes, anthropology, sociology, and psychology of death and dying.” (p. 252).

In my thesis I will use the terms “thanatology” and “death studies” interchangeably referring to academic research on death related subjects (suicide, bereavement, etc.). This research in psychology could be traced back to the early years of the discipline (for example, in his work “Thanatophobia and Immortality” Stanley Hall (1915) discussed the psychology of death, fear of death, etc.). Throughout the first part of twentieth century there was a small but constant stream of publications on the subject of death (for example, Anthony, 1940; Bromberg and Schilder, 1933; Eissler, 1955; Eliot, 1946; Lindemann, 1944; Middleton, 1936; Schilder, 1942; Schilder and Wechsler, 1934; Stern et al, 1951; Zilboorg, 1943). Also, since Freud introduced the notion of the death drive to psychoanalysis in his 1920 book *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, this topic had been widely discussed by the psychoanalytic community (Alexander, 1929; Bernfeld and Feiftelberg, 1931; Carmichael, 1943; Federn, 1932; Ferenczi, 1929; Foxe, 1943; Friedlander, 1940; Jelliffe, 1933; Moxon, 1926; Simmel, 1944; Symons, 1927; Wilbur, 1941). The postwar boom in the development of social sciences in the USA related to the dramatic increase of federal funding (Herman, 1995) also affected the research on death, which resulted in the expansion of the field. However, as I will show in this chapter, the existing histories of the academic research on death connect this expansion with the lifting of the alleged taboo on death and trace the origin of death studies as an academic discipline to the 1956 symposium on the subject of death organized by Herman Feifel and to the 1959 volume *The Meaning of Death* edited by him. These histories also do not include many of the pre-war publications on death and pass over in silence psychoanalytic and existential contributions to the field. In this chapter I will follow the understanding of death studies or thanatology presented in the existing accounts of its history as a scientific field that originated in the late 1950s.

The first attempt to make sense of the origin and development of thanatology belonged to the clinical psychologist Herman Feifel, who described the key events in the making of this
academic discipline in his 1974 article published 15 years after his seminal volume *The Meaning of Death* (1959). After this sociologist Vanderlyn Pine authored two articles on the history of death studies (Pine, 1977; Pine, 1986), where he captured in detail the progress in the studies of death and dying up to the mid-1980s. The historical accounts that followed (Doka, 2003; Bryant, 2007) were relatively brief and also more analytical. There was also research on specific aspects of the death awareness movement, for example, Kastenbaum (2004) discussed the emergence of the *Omega* journal and its history and Clark (2013) traced the history and impact of the Project on Death in America (1994-2003), aimed at improving palliative care. Also, Bregman (2003) discussed the death awareness movement as an example of a religious movement. However the accounts of the early history of death studies as an academic discipline are not numerous and relatively brief. In the following sections I would like to take a closer look at them.

2.2. The existing accounts of the early history of thanatology.

Although death studies is now a well-established field of research with its professional associations (for example, Association for Death Education and Counseling, The International Work Group on Dying, Death and Bereavement), scholarly journals (for example, *Omega, Death Studies, Loss, Grief and Care, Mortality*) and research centres, there are surprisingly few accounts of its history. I would like to discuss four accounts of the early history of the discipline. The two of them were written in the 1970s by clinical psychologist Herman Feifel (1974) and sociologist Vanderlyn Pine (1977). The other two were published some thirty years later by gerontologist Kenneth Doka (2003) and sociologist Clifton Bryant (2007). Strictly speaking, only two accounts can be considered histories of the academic research on the subject of death proper, namely the accounts by Feifel (1974) and Bryant (2007). Pine (1974), as I will show later in the chapter, focused on the subject of death education and Doka (2003) discussed the history of death studies as a part of death awareness movement that included not only scholars, but counselors, volunteers, professional organizations, etc. In the following sections I will discuss these accounts in some detail.

2.2.1. The account of the early history of thanatology by Herman Feifel (1974).

One of the very first attempts to make sense of the origin and development of death studies belongs to Herman Feifel (1974). In his article “Psychology and the Death-Awareness Movement” Feifel devoted several paragraphs to the analysis of the research on death carried out
since the early decades of the 20th century up to the 1950s. According to Feifel (1974), although there were sporadic attempts to grapple with the problem of death in the 1920s and 1930s, “psychology's first organized hurrah” (p. 6) was a symposium "The Concept of Death and Its Relation to Behavior" held at the 1956 APA Convention in Chicago, which Feifel organized and chaired. The second milestone in the development of the discipline according to Feifel (1974) was the book The Meaning of Death (1959) edited by him, which was “perceived as having been a major spur and catalyst to the current explosive interest in the field by behavioral scientists” (p. 6). The symposium and the book, according to Feifel (1974), paved the way for the emergence of death studies as a discipline. A very similar and equally brief history of the origin of the Death Awareness Movement was presented by Herman Feifel in his article “The Thanatological Movement: Respice, Adspice, Prospice” (1992).

2.2.2. The account of the early history of thanatology by Vanderlyn Pine (1977).
Another account of the history of thanatology, the classic article by Vanderlyn Pine “A Socio-Historical Portrait of Death Education”, was published three years later, in 1977 and to this day has remained the most thorough and definitive account of the early history of academic research on death and dying (Bryant, 2007, p. 157). That is why I would like to discuss it in some detail. Although Pine defined death education as an academic discipline (p. 57), his main focus was on death education in the classroom: in Pine’s perspective, the early research articles and the first “big books” on death led scholars to evaluate what students needed (p. 59) and the later contributions to the field served as material for preparation of courses in death and dying. Besides the courses on death, academic articles and books, Pine allocated some slots in the history of thanatology to its milestones (conferences, foundation of scholarly societies, etc.) and mentioned the emergence of scholarly periodicals and their history. Also, Pine tried to go beyond the description of events and publications and offered sociological analysis of the practicing thanatologists: they were mostly male, ranged in age from 25 to 40, had distinctly academic orientations and considered themselves first and foremost to be scholars and educators (p. 58). In the concluding sections Pine discussed “critical issues in death education”, namely the types and functions of “death educators”, goals of death education, its quality and problems.
Pine was the first to suggest a periodization of the history of death studies\(^\text{12}\), which with minor variation was used by other historians of the discipline (Doka 2003, Bryant 2007). He singled out three periods that covered the early years of the development of the discipline: “The Era of Exploration” (1928-1957), “The Decade of Development” (1958-1967), and “The Period of Popularity” (1968-1977). The names of these periods allow one to suspect that it might not be a conventional periodization of a conventional scientific discipline: the “Era of Exploration” refers rather to the epoch of great geographical discoveries than to a period in the development of scientific discipline. Also, the “Period of Popularity” sounds rather unusual: a conventional scientific discipline would hardly view popularity as the high point of its development. At first glance it may seem that this periodization is based on the internal logics of development of the discipline (the so called “periodization by turning points” (Hollander, 2005)), however one may notice that the periodization goes exactly fifty years back from the date of the publication of the article. The “Era of Exploration” lasted exactly 30 years (1928-1957), and the other two periods lasted 10 years each. Apparently, the periodization of Pine was essentially decade-based, but Pine decided to label the periods. This may explain the choice (or lack of it) of their starting points: they were determined not by the internal logics of development of the discipline, but rather by chronology. Pine (1977), and after him other historians of the discipline, mentioned some events of political and social history that could have affected the emergence and development of thanatology, but Pine’s periodization does not seem to be bound to any of them and seem to be largely independent of the social and historical context.

The periodization of the early history of thanatology developed by Pine (1977) is presented in the table 2.1. In this table I included publications on death reviewed by Pine, the field they

\(^\text{12}\) There are several basic approaches to periodization (Gerhard, 1973, Hollander et al., 2005): historians often adopt calendar based periodization and use decades or centuries to organize their narrative (“chronological periodization”). They may also use external events as a benchmark for periodizing (“context-driven periodization”) or try to base periodization on the perceived internal logics of the events under study (“periodization by turning points”). Both the chronological and the context-driven types of periodization were criticized by the historian Marc Bloch (1992). In his opinion, the two types of periodizing are external to the historical events and it is the “phenomena themselves” that should define periodization. As applied to the history of science, Bloch stressed the incoherence of studies, which tried to bind together the periodization of scientific events and that of political and social history. However Foucault (1984) has shown that precisely this type of periodization could be used to clarify the relations between orders of knowledge and social systems of power. Foucault provided an example of psychiatry and psychiatric practice, which was linked with the whole range of institutions, economic requirements, and political issues of social regulation (p. 51).
belonged to, and also the important events in the history of the discipline mentioned by Pine. Pine did not comment on his criteria for choosing these publications and events and also did not offer any explanation as to how the periods were singled out. Instead he used the names of the periods (the Era of Exploration, the Decade of Development, and the Period of Popularity) to describe their essence.

Table 2.1. Periodization of the early history of thanatology developed by Pine (1977)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Publications reviewed by Pine.</th>
<th>Events in the history of thanatology mentioned by Pine.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Era of Exploration (1928-1957)</td>
<td>Gebhart, 1928 (economics); Eliot, 1930a; Eliot, 1930b; Eliot, 1933 (sociology); Anthony, 1940 (developmental psychology); Lindemann, 1944 (psychiatry); Kephart, 1950 (sociology); Habenstein &amp; Lamers, 1955; Habenstein &amp; Lamers, 1960 (sociology, history); Irion, 1954; Irion, 1966 (pastoral theology); Eissler, 1955 (psychiatry); Gorer, 1956 (anthropology); Jackson, 1957 (pastoral theology); Farberow &amp; Shneidman, 1957 (psychology)</td>
<td>1956: A session on death at the meeting of the American Psychological Association;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Decade of Development (1958-1967)</td>
<td>Faunce and Fulton, 1958 (sociology); Feifel, 1959 (multidisciplinary volume); Saunders, 1959 (nursing); Parkes, 1959 (psychiatry); Weisman and Hackett, 1962 (psychiatry); Lifton, 1963 (psychiatry); Choron, 1963 (physiophocy); Bowman and Harmer, 1959 (sociology); Mitford, 1963 (non-fiction prose); Glaser &amp; Strauss, 1963 (sociology); Quint &amp; Strauss, 1964 (nursing); Blauer, 1966 (social psychology); Sudnow, 1967 (sociology); Grollman, 1967 (theology);</td>
<td>1963: The first regular course on death was offered by R. Fulton at the University of Minnesota; Mid-1960s: series of lectures on death taught by Choron, Feifel, Irion, Jackson, Kalish, Kastenbaum, Leviton, Quint, Shneidman and Weisman; Spring 1966: The newsletter “Omega” was developed by Kalish and Kastenbaum; November 1967: Establishment of the Foundation of Thanatology;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Period of Popularity (1968-1977)</td>
<td>Weisman, 1967; Weisman &amp; Worden, 1971; Weisman &amp; Worden, 1972 (psychiatry); Glaser and Strauss, 1968 (sociology); Pine, 1969 (anthropology); Kuebler-Ross, 1969 (psychiatry); Brim et al., 1970 (psychiatry); Schoenberg et al., 1970 (psychology); Weisman, 1972 (psychiatry); Kastenbaum &amp; Eisenberg, 1972 (psychology); Parkes, 1972 (psychology); Shneidman, 1972 (psychology); Grollman, 1972 (psychology); Grollman, (multidisciplinary volume); Pine, 1975 (anthropology); Steele, 1975 (sociology); Knott &amp; Prull, 1976 (education);</td>
<td>1968: Omega project of the department of psychiatry at Massachusetts General Hospital. April 1969: The Centre for Psychological Studies of Dying Death, and Lethal Behavior at Wayne State University was organized; July 1969: the Center for Death Education and Research at the University of Minnesota was established; Early 1970: the Equinox Institute in</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As we can see, the “Era of Exploration” started with the 1928 book by John Gebhart, a relatively obscure and non-academic book on funeral costs, which contained “the first modern critique of American undertakers and funeral practices” (p. 59). Among the authors of the of the “Era of Exploration” Pine named sociologist Thomas Eliott (his articles on grief and bereavement (1930, 1933)), psychologist Sylvia Anthony (her book on children concept of death (1940)), Geoffrey Gorer and his essay “The Pornography of Death” (1955), Reverend Edgar Jackson and his book on grief counseling (1957), and psychologists Norman Farberow and Edwin Schneidman and their volume on suicide (1957). Besides publications on death and dying, Pine also mentioned the symposium on death (1956) organized by Herman Feifel within the framework of the APA annual convention.

The next period, the “Decade of Development”, (1958-1967) started with the article by sociologists Fulton and Faunce (1958), who discussed the importance of research in various aspects of death and dying. Pine reviewed some publications of the period paying particular attention to sociology. Among the publications under review were the volume *The Meaning of Death* by Herman Feifel (1959), several books on funeral practices (Bowman, 1959; Harmer, 1963; Mitford, 1963), works by Glaser and Strauss on dying patients (1963a, b), the book by Geoffrey Gorer (1965) on grief and mourning and some other works. Pine also wrote in some detail about the first university level course on death and dying offered by Fulton in 1963, the emergence of the first newsletter on death and dying, which later was formalized into the journal *Omega* and the establishment in the 1967 of the Foundation of Thanatology.

The article by Pine was titled “A Socio-historical portrait of death education”, however it is not easy to find the “socio-” part in it except for a brief discussion of socio-demographic characteristics of the researchers involved in death studies. Pine’s account was organized
The author briefly described nearly 70 publications on death in chronological order. Some of these publications were academic, some were not, the disciplines varied from pastoral psychology to anthropology, sociology, philosophy, economics and psychiatry, though some fields like psychoanalysis or existential psychology were not represented at all. The impression one may get from this account is of course that of the multidisciplinarity of death studies, but also of the sketchiness and lack of some organizing principle of the account itself: Pine did not comment on the criteria for the selection of publications for the review. Instead he widely used phrases like “his works had profound impact on future authors of psychiatric treatment of death” (p. 61) or “both of these works developed coherent theoretical frameworks which have contributed to present-day concepts of dying and immortality” (p. 63) without giving more evidence to support these claims. Pine allocated up to one paragraph to the description and discussion of the contents of almost every publication under review and understandably this could hardly do justice to individual piece of research because of lack of space. However Pine did not group the publications other than on the basis of chronology and did not identify trends or possibly schools in death studies, which could help to better understand the internal logics of development of the discipline. The publications were not grouped on a disciplinary basis either so it is difficult to understand the contribution of each discipline to death studies and to trace the progress of death related research in the various sub-disciplines that form death studies (for example, in psychology, sociology, anthropology of death and dying). Pine’s history seems to be lacking both “narrativity” and deeper critical analysis and as a result appears unsystematic.

However it is important to remember that the account by Pine was a revised version of a conference paper presented in 1976 at the International Work Group on Death, Dying and Bereavement in Yale (Pine, 1977, p. 57) and most probably the very first attempt to create a detailed account of the history of rapidly developing death studies. It is actually not surprising that the first history of thanatology was not free of some flaws, rather it is surprising that this account has remained the most detailed, thorough and cited during the following forty years.

2.2.3. The account of the early history of thanatology by Kenneth Doka (2003).

Next I would like to discuss two accounts of the history of thanatology, which were created relatively recently, but nevertheless heavily relied on the history of Pine. Kenneth Doka (2003)
published his account of the history of the discipline in the monumental *Handbook of Death and Dying* edited by C. Bryant. As I mentioned earlier, Doka used the term “death awareness movement” referring to the social movement that shared the focus on dying, death, and bereavement. Death studies as an academic field was a part of this movement. Unlike Pine (1977), Doka traced the origin of death studies to Freud’s essay on mourning and melancholia (1917), but other than that he followed the steps of Pine and his periodization. Speaking about the exploratory period in the research on death and dying, Doka singled out the (1944) article by Lindemann on the survivors of the Cocoanut Grove nightclub fire in Boston. In all the postwar research on death up to 1958 Doka selected for reviewing only the essay by Gorer “The Pornography of Death” (1955).

The next period Doka following Pine called a “Decade of Development” (1958-1967). The two books Doka mentioned as worthy of note during this period were the volume *The Meaning of Death* (1959) edited by Feifel and *The American Way of Death* by Jessica Mitford (1963). The former “clearly established death studies as an academic discipline” (p. 51), the latter was a scathing critique of both the funeral service business and contemporary funeral practice (p. 51).

Besides academic publications Doka discussed the foundation of death related associations and scholarly magazines and also considered death education (individual courses and programs). Unlike Pine, Doka did not limit his account to briefly reviewing the significant publications on death and dying published within a certain timeframe, but also suggested some factors that influenced “the easing of cultural taboos concerning death” and the emergence of death studies (p. 54). These factors were first (and in more detail) discussed in his 1983 article (Doka, 1983). They were firstly the increased proportion of the elderly population (which caused intensified interest in the field of aging and as a consequence in the field of death and dying). The second group of factors Doka called “historical”: the beginning of the nuclear era, the environmental crisis and the spread of AIDS. Also important was a sociological factor: Doka considered the death awareness movement to be aligned in goal with many of the social movements and trends of the 1960-s in that it asserted the rights and the dignity of the dying, their right for natural death as opposed to dehumanizing medical technology. Finally, the fourth factor was cultural. According to Doka, the death awareness movement has filled the void in a secular society that denied afterlife and as a consequence repressed death. Open discussion of death related issues by
mental health professionals made the topics of death and dying more acceptable for many people.

The account of Doka is less detailed and more analytical than that of Pine, it depicts the death awareness movement as an organized movement and offers analysis of its academic as well as non-academic components (for example, the hospice movement). The strong point of this account is the attempt to place death awareness movement in the broader historical and cultural context by suggesting possible reasons for its emergence. However the existence of a taboo on death in the 1940s and early 1950s and the emergence of death studies in response to it were taken somewhat uncritically and this made some of the Doka’s conclusions look problematic. The choice of significant publications also looks a little arbitrary and reflects the choice of Pine (1977). For example, Gorer’s essay “The Pornography of Death” (1955) can hardly be viewed as one of the two most representative works of the whole period between 1917 and 1958 (“The Era of Exploration”) and Gorer was hardly the first to suggest and especially “to analyze the reasons for modern society’s tendency to ignore or deny death” (p. 51) as I will show in the chapter 6 about Gorer. Doka chose academic (Parsons, 1963) and non-academic publications (Gorer, 1955; Mittford, 1963) as equally significant for a certain period. Also Pine’s periodization, which Doka used without discussing its validity, might not be the best instrument to structure the history of death studies, as I tried to show earlier in this chapter. All in all, the account of Doka does not seem to offer a significant breakthrough in understanding of the history of death studies; it repeats with minor variation the main points of Pine’s history, omitting its excessive detail and making the narrative smoother.

2.2.4. The account of the early history of thanatology by Clifton Bryant (2007).

A similar impression is created by another account of the history of thanatology, the article by Clifton Bryant (2007) “The Sociology of Death and Dying”. It contained a relatively large section titled “The past and present of thanatology”, which presented a historical account of its development. Like Doka, Bryant closely followed Pine (1977) in the way he presented and

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13 For example, in Doka’s opinion the increased proportion of the elderly population caused increased interest in the subject of aging and consequently the increased interest in and awareness of death and dying. The association of aging with dying is based on a premise that death is “normal” in the older age and “less normal” when people are younger, which might reflect a presentist bias in history writing. It is interesting to note the role mental health professionals here: they are depicted as “catalysts” of death awareness in society.
interpreted the history of the discipline, often quoting the article by Pine and discussing the original sources with reference to it. According to Bryant, during the first two decades of the twentieth century social scientific literature was silent on the subject of death and dying, but by the 1920s there emerged a modest interest in the subject, which resulted in a handful of books and articles. These publications defined some of the directions of today’s social research on death and dying, for example, today’s interest in the funeral home, funeral director and the social dynamics of the funeral goes back to the book by Gebhard (1928) on funeral costs. According to Bryant, by the 1950s, after half a century of cultural avoidance, death emerged as a topic of public discourse and academic scrutiny. The reasons for this were World War II with its enormous losses in civilian and military populations and the atomic bomb raids on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. These reasons were discussed in more detail by Doka (2003). Also, according to Bryant, the emergence of television, which allowed the public immediate access to wars, natural disasters and accidents contributed to the growing public awareness of death. In claiming this, Bryant again was following Pine (1977, p. 74).

In his historical account Bryant used the same pool of thanatological publications selected by Pine in 1977. Also, he adopted Pine’s periodization to structure his history. The alleged taboo on death played an important role in Bryant’s history (like in the histories of Pine and Doka) and World War II was credited for its lifting. In many aspects the account of Bryant might look somewhat “secondary” to that of Pine and Doka, because Bryant in his history mostly collected and analyzed different opinions on the key points of the history of the discipline, so it is understandable that these key points were preset by the previous historians and the opinions were also limited to the existing histories of thanatology, namely to the accounts of Pine and Doka. However the strength of Bryant’s history in my opinion lies precisely in this: by collating different opinions on the same events or simply attentive reading of the previous accounts, Bryant managed to find some inconsistencies in the established histories of the discipline and whether intentionally or not asked very valid questions about them. For example, speaking about the emergence of death studies, Bryant discussed the existing points of view on its precise timing: according to Doka (2003), the movement originated at the symposium on death arranged by Herman Feifel at the 1956 APA convention in Chicago, whereas Pine (1977) attributed it to the first empirical sociological study on status after death by Kephart (1950). However Bryant without openly questioning these ideas, noted that he considered it possible that the public
interest in death was reawakened in 1948 with the satirical novel *The Loved One* by Evelyn Waugh on funeral business in Los Angeles whereas the first evidence of scholarly interest in the subject of death was the 1949 Master’s thesis by Robert Habenstein on the cremation movement in the US. By writing this Bryant challenged the established idea, basically the axiom of thanatological history, that scholarly interest to death preceded the public interest and catalyzed it.

Also Bryant expressed surprise about the high status of the volume *The Meaning of Death* (1959) edited by Herman Feifel, which has been considered one of the most influential scholarly works of the time and a foundation stone of the modern death studies by the other historians of the discipline (Feifel, 1974; Pine, 1977; Doka, 2003). Bryant rightly noted that the volume was mostly a collection of popular essays that addressed a variety of death and dying related issues from different perspectives including the humanities and behavioral sciences, rather than a scholarly work, but attributed the high status of the book and its value to its interdisciplinary perspective. Basically, Bryant went against the current trend in the history of death studies and questioned contribution of the Feifel’s volume to academic knowledge on death. Unfortunately, at the same time Bryant’s history was not free from some factual mistakes. For example he claimed that the essay “The Pornography of Death” by Geoffrey Gorer first appeared in the book *Death, Grief and Mourning in the Contemporary Britain*. According to him, the book was published in 1955 and then reprinted ten years later and became one of the seminal works in the study of death and dying (p. 158). In reality the essay was published in the *Encounter* magazine in 1955 and later included in the book, which was first published in 1965.

Very similar pictures of the origin and development of the discipline were presented in the articles by Staudt (2009) and Wass (2004), however the sections devoted to the early history of death studies were very short and mentioned mostly the contribution of Herman Feifel.

2.3. Common features of the existing historical accounts.

After having described the existing histories of death studies, I would like to consider what these accounts have in common, what the established “consensus” in the field about different events and personalities is and what common ways of explanation and reasoning were presented. Firstly, all these histories of thanatology were written by the practitioners of the discipline, the insiders, the people who are or were active in the field of death studies. Herman Feifel belonged
To the first generation of thanatologists and is considered to be one of the founding fathers of the discipline. In 1988 he received the Distinguished Professional Contributions to Knowledge Award by the American Psychological Association for his pioneering research on death. The other three authors belong to the second generation of thanatologists, who have been active in the field since the 1960s. Vanderlyn Pine was a Professor of sociology at the State University of New York, published several books on grief and loss, and continues consulting on these topics. Kenneth Doka is Professor of gerontology at the Graduate School of the College of New Rochelle and Senior Consultant to the Hospice Foundation of America and author of many books on the subject. Finally, Clifton Bryant was a Professor of Sociology at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, who in his own words developed intellectual interest in death while in college (Bryant, 2003, p.xv) and authored many articles on death related topics.

Secondly, as I showed earlier, the four histories have a common vision of what key figures and key events in the development of the discipline were. They also share common ways of reasoning and explanation: no matter what starting point for their histories the four authors chose, it is possible to find some very similar elements in them. For example, they all mentioned the taboo on death attributed to the American society of the 1930s-1950s, which explained the dearth of academic publications on the subject during this period, the lifting of this taboo as a consequence of WWII, A-Bomb, and some other historical factors, the scholars of death and dying as catalysts of the societal lifting of the taboo on death, the 1956 symposium as the first organized attempt of psychology to make sense of death and dying, and the 1959 volume *The Meaning of Death* edited Feifel, which was considered to be a major contribution to the academic study of death and dying. It is interesting to note that the authors seem to be in “silent agreement” as to what to cover in their historical accounts, and also what to pass over in silence (for example, existential psychology and psychoanalysis were not mentioned in all the accounts). In other words, these histories seem to create a single relatively coherent picture of development of the discipline. The only attempt to write a relatively lengthy history of the discipline belonged to Pine (1977) and thirty years after the authors of the subsequent histories seemed to find it so unproblematic that they simply repeated it in its basic features and elaborated on something that Pine mentioned only in passing - reasons for development of thanatology as a discipline.
The four histories of thanatology are valuable, because they are based on the first-hand experiences of their authors, who were and are active in the death awareness movement. These accounts seem to reflect the established, “crystallized” outlook of the majority of thanatologists on the history of their discipline, its “historical self-understanding”. Thus, Pine (besides his own experiences as a second generation thanatologist) had an opportunity to share his ideas on the history of the discipline with his colleagues and received comments and suggestions on the content of his article from the leading thanatologists of the time like Herman Feifel, Robert Fulton, Robert Kastenbaum and others (Pine, 1977, p. 57). At the same time, these first-hand experiences and disciplinary “commonplaces” seem to be about the only thing these histories offer. They are not based on archival sources, do not use interviews with the pioneers of the discipline, do not offer in-depth social and cultural analysis, and generally seem to be uninformed about the methodology of history or history of science. This type of history writing can be labelled as “the insiders history” (Danziger, 1990) or “traditional history” (Furumoto, 1989): the historical accounts were written by practitioners of the discipline, who by and large viewed the history of science as a cumulative linear progression from error to truth and who tended to write history backwards from the present, concentrating on “great men” and “great ideas”. (Furumoto, 1989, p. 12). In the case of thanatology, as I showed earlier, the idea of progression from error to truth is additionally strengthened by the use of the thesis of repression of death, which all four historians adopted somewhat uncritically and included in their narratives.

2.4. The idea of the Western repression of death in the history of death studies.

The idea of a taboo on death being a characteristic feature of modern western society is an important part of the historical narratives presented in the four accounts under review, as I tried to show in the previous sections. Feifel (1974) in his history of thanatology mentioned the taboo on death in passing as something self-evident (which is not surprising taking into consideration that he discussed repression of death multiple times in his earlier publications (Feifel, 1957; 1959; 1961a; 1961b; 1962; 1963a; 1963b; 1965;) Feifel (1974) concluded his article with the remark that “our socially repressive outlook” encouraged neurotic anxieties about death and urged “to accept death as part of the human condition rather than strive to demote it to the level of accident” (p. 7). In this small passage one could find all the major features of the repression of death thesis, which are characteristic of the thanatological literature: societal repression of death,
pathological consequences of this repression for an individual (neurotic anxieties), and “death education in our schools” (mentioned later in the paragraph) as a remedy.

The account of Pine (1977) introduced the idea of taboo on death in its title: the words “death education” conveyed idea that society in general (and undergraduate university students in particular) should be educated about the reality of death and that this mission should be accomplished by a small group of academics who studied the subject. Pine further developed this idea in the body of the article: in his opinion, the institutions which traditionally provided socialization experiences for dying and death had changed dramatically and thus formal instruction in death-related matters provided an opportunity for the acquisition of experiential knowledge regarding death and dying, which could not be obtained otherwise. Pine stressed that “such death educational socialization seemed essential” (p. 77). Speaking about academic research on death, Pine credited Gorer with setting forth a seminal view of “why modern death had become an object of prudish aversion and a taboo topic” (p. 61) and mentioned the initial strong resistance to research on death even within the academic community (p. 62). However Pine drew attention to dangers to death education and research, which were characteristic of the “Period of Popularity” and were related precisely to the popularity of the subject: for example, “the nouveau arrivée” to the field who tended to approach the subject from the perspective of “pop death” and presented students with pre-digested material reporting on the most popular or the most extravagant issues in the field (p. 74). Also, because the subject of death gained in popularity, some academic departments offered courses on death in order to increase the number of students in under-enrolled disciplines (p. 77). Paradoxically, these very courses on death could, according to Pine, also be a means of denial of death (p. 79): they may be extremely abstract and lacking humanistic perspective or the teachers may believe that death education may somehow protect against grief and pain of loss.

Kenneth Doka (2003) in his history of thanatology renders the idea of taboo on death in a very similar way. In the title of his article he uses the term “death awareness movement” for thanatology and related disciplines. As in the case of Pine, this term presupposes that society as a whole tends to have little awareness of death and that a small group of social scientists was trying to create this kind of awareness. The account of Bryant (2007) basically repeats the idea that death was denied for at least half a century after which came the reawakening of scholarly (and public) interest in death and dying. (p. 157). However as I mentioned earlier, Bryant made
an interesting addition to the explanations and interpretations that were used in all these histories to describe the emergence of death studies in the midst of the societal denial of death. Bryant ascribed the public and academic re-awakening of interest in death to the late 1940s and actually depicted public awareness of death as chronologically preceding academic death awareness.

In all accounts of the history of thanatology under review the idea of Western taboo on death was introduced early in the text of the article. Moreover, in the articles by Feifel (1974), Pine (1977), and Doka (2003) the titles might be viewed as containing the idea of taboo on death: as I mentioned earlier, the notions “death awareness movement” and “death education” as applied to academic research on death were based on presupposition that death in the society is denied. The thesis of the Western taboo on death was presented in the four accounts of the history of thanatology as a common knowledge, as a disciplinary commonplace accepted by the practitioners of the discipline. The historians of death studies did not offer any evidence of taboo on death or explanations of its existence, but instead referred to the essay by Gorer “The Pornography of Death” and credited him with suggesting and analyzing “the reasons for modern society’s tendency to ignore or deny death” (Doka, 2003, p. 51). Also the volume The Meaning of Death (1959) edited by Feifel was presented as groundbreaking work that contributed to lifting taboo on death in academic thanatology and provided “a landmark of legitimacy for the newly emerging field” (Pine, 1977, p. 62). Thus the idea of the Western taboo on death can be called central for the historical narratives under review because was constructed as related to the emergence of the discipline.

This idea is so persistent, so commonplace in the historical accounts under review that it seems possible to suppose that it forms a part of the “origin myth” (Samelson, 1974) of death studies as a discipline. However a typical origin myth according to Samelson (1974) “validates and legitimizes present views by showing that a great thinker ‘discovered’ these, our truths a hundred years ago, that our questions are ‘perennial’ ones. It gives an impression of continuity and a tradition to our discipline, including the place of final, supreme science.” (p. 223). In the case of thanatology the origin myth seems to do the opposite: it validates and legitimizes the present views by stressing the novelty and revolutionary character of the discipline and the role of its pioneers in answering the perennial questions despite the strong resistance caused by the societal repression of death.
The similarities in the existing accounts of the history of thanatology, the shared idea as to what its key figures and key events were, the common ways of reasoning and explanation that include the alleged repression of death in the West, may allow one to view these accounts as examples of “ceremonial history” (Harris, 1980). Ceremonial histories are “accounts without critical focus, stories or cautionary tales that have a symbolic function but do not help us understand the social forces with which we interact daily” (Harris, 1980, p. 219). The opposite of ceremonial history is “socially informed, critical history” and it might be helpful to take a look at the history of thanatology from this point of view and consider what the New History (Furumoto, 1989) has to offer to the historians of death studies.

2.5. “The New History” of psychology.
Within history proper the New History dates back to the book by James H. Robinson with the same title (The New History, 1912), where the author criticized what he called the “epic poem approach” to writing history, namely “the conception of history as a chronicle of heroic persons and romantic occurrences” (p. 10). Instead, he suggested the study of institutions which he considered to be the embodiment of national character as they reflected “the ways in which people have thought and acted in the past, their tastes and their achievements in many fields besides the political” (p. 15). By the end of the 1980s the New History (which by that time incorporated a variety of approaches such as psychohistory and cliometrics) had largely displaced the traditional one, according to the historian Gertrude Himmelfarb (1987), who considered herself belonging to the camp of the “old historians”.

The New History was also adopted by the historians of science, but according to Kuhn (1968, p. 77) the influence of this approach was evident mostly in physical and biological sciences. In 1966 Robert Young published a paper (Young, 1966) on the status of scholarship in the history of the behavioral sciences. There he gave rather a pessimistic estimate of the state of the discipline of the time and pointed out the limitations from which the history of psychology suffered: “great men (whom to worship?), great insights, and great dates” (p. 36). The history of psychology of the 1960s was dominated by the traditional approach, which I briefly described above and only by the mid1970s the New or Critical history, or rather critical histories, became a legitimate part of the history of psychology (Furumoto, 1989).
One of the important strands of the New History of psychology is thorough investigation of the original sources. This trend started in the mid-1970s, when the approaching anniversary of the Leipzig laboratory prompted historians of psychology to re-read and re-examine the works of Wilhelm Wundt (Blumenthal, 1975; Danziger, 1979). Blumenthal (1975) notes that “Wundt as portrayed today in many texts and courses is largely fictional and often bears little resemblance to the actual historical figure” (p. 1081). The differences concerned not just some minor issues of interpretation, quite the contrary, “these are claims about the very fundamentals of Wundt’s work, often asserting the opposite of what has been a standard description prevailing over much of the past century” (p. 1081).

Another important focus of the New History of psychology has been on social history. For example, a number of works were devoted to the contribution to psychology made by social groups other than white males (some of the early examples include the book by Guthrie (1976) on the black psychologists in America, and the articles by Bernstein and Russo (1974) and Furumoto (1979) on women’s contribution to psychology).

Finally, the New History emphasizes the importance of socio-political forces in the history of the discipline. As Samelson (1974) put it, the history of psychology no longer saw “its task as producing chronicles of scientific discoveries, or biographical accounts of its heroes, or the settling of priority claims. A new sensitivity for historical material has developed. It insists on respecting the integrity of the thought of past figures, on the need to understand them in their own terms, within their historical context, instead of mapping out straight lines of scientific progress or pointing to anticipations of the present” (pp. 223-224). Examples of this kind of scholarship include the works of Finison (1976, 1978) on the impact of unemployment on the American psychologists during the Great Depression or an article by Winston (1998) on E. G. Boring and antisemitism in the history of psychology from the 1920s to the 1950s.

To sum it up, the key features of the New History were summarized by Furumoto (1989) in her seminal G. Stanley Hall Lecture: “The new history tends to be critical rather than ceremonial, contextual rather than simply the history of ideas, and more inclusive, going beyond the study of “great men.” The new history utilizes primary sources and archival documents rather than relying on secondary sources, which can lead to the passing down of anecdotes and myths from one generation of textbook writers to the next. And finally, the new history tries to get inside the
thought of a period to see issues as they appeared at the time, instead of looking for antecedents of current ideas or writing history backwards from the present content of the field” (Furumoto, 1989, p. 18).

As I tried to show in the previous section on the existing accounts of the early history of thanatology, they seem to carry all the features of the traditional approach regardless of the year they were published. The more recent accounts (Doka, 2003; Bryant, 2007) tend to repeat in the main the history of Pine, which was published thirty years earlier. So it might be useful to consider, what the New History can possibly offer to the understanding of death studies and its subject. Definitely this history should be different from ceremonial (Harris, 1980), insiders (Danziger, 1990), and traditional (Furumoto, 1989) accounts and move away from history as a sequence of great men and great ideas. By analogy with the strands of new historical research singled out by Furumoto (1989), the New History as applied to thanatology should firstly mean the meticulous investigation of the original sources, in other words thorough and critical re-reading and re-examining of the early thanatological texts and archival documents. The important sources for the critical examination should include the works, which the traditional histories of death studies considered to be classical and fundamental for the development of the discipline, for example the publications by Geoffrey Gorer (his essay “The Pornography of Death”) and Herman Feifel (his early articles, the book *The Meaning of Death* (1959), etc.). These authors seem to be very visible and also very frequently quoted representatives of the early death studies, and that is why their work might need re-reading and reappraisal the most.

Also, it is important to consider socio-historical forces in the emergence and development of the discipline rather than to content ourselves with “the origin myth” of death denial. The emergence of thanatology should be considered within the broader social and political context of postwar America, in connection with the development of post-war social sciences in the US and taking into consideration their troubled relations with the federal government and its funding, the US army and its funding, etc. (Capshew, 1999; Herman, 1995; Pickren and Schneider, 2005; Baker and Pickren, 2007). I will briefly discuss this topic in the chapter 3 in order to set a stage for my analysis of the early thanatological texts.
2.7. Conclusion.

In conclusion I would like once more to stress that the existing histories of death studies shared a common vision of the key figures and key events in the development of the discipline. In other words, these histories seem to create a single relatively coherent narrative of development of thanatology. The idea of the Western taboo of death played an important role in this narrative: firstly, lifting of the taboo on death was linked to emergence of death studies as a discipline. Thanatology in turn contributed to creating awareness of death in wider society and provided socialization for dying and death, in other words provided an opportunity for the acquisition of experiential knowledge regarding dying and death, which could not be obtained otherwise. The works by Geoffrey Gorer and Herman Feifel were constructed as being important milestones in the early history of death studies precisely because they were credited with lifting the taboo on death and paving the way for the emerging discipline of thanatology. That is why the early publications by Gorer (first of all, his essay “The Pornography of Death”) and Feifel (the volume *The Meaning of Death* he edited) might deserve a detailed analysis. As I tried to argue earlier in this chapter, the New History approach (Furumoto, 1989) called for re-examining and re-considering key texts and documents of a scientific discipline and also for considering socio-political forces in its history. In the following chapter I would like to discuss some important events and figures in the early history of death studies in order to provide historical background for the analytical chapters.
3. The historical context: Geoffrey Gorer, Herman Feifel and their contribution to the early history of thanatology.

3.1. Introduction.
As I argued in the previous chapter on the history of thanatology, the existing accounts of the history of the discipline are scarce and relatively brief. They are lacking many details, are not based on archival sources or analysis of the early thanatological literature, do not offer in-depth social and cultural analysis, and generally do not seem to take to the account the methodology of history or history of science. That is why it does not seem possible to fully rely on them while discussing the early history of death studies. The aim of this chapter is to take a closer look at the biographies and contribution to the early death studies of its two key figures, Geoffrey Gorer and Herman Feifel in order to provide background for the analysis of their writings. In my account I use documents from the archives in the US and the UK¹⁴, and also historical newspapers and magazines, unpublished interviews with some of the first generation thanatologists, and other sources.

In modern textbooks on anthropology (Barnard, 2000; Erickson & Murphy, 2003) Geoffrey Gorer is often mentioned in passing as a second-rate member of the Culture and Personality group, famous or rather infamous for his “grandiose generalizations about the ability of childhood personality to shape the cultural behaviour of adults” (Erickson & Murphy, 2003, p. 82). His books on Japan and Russia are now considered to be “the theoretical lowpoints” in the national character studies (ibid., p. 88). However in the scholarly publications in death studies, history of anthropology, mass communication research, etc. Gorer is treated with greater respect: he is referred to as an “influential anthropologist”, “British scientist” (Feeley, 1998), “Oxford-trained anthropologist” (Pooley, 2008). His area of expertise is rather vague: although Gorer is usually considered to be an anthropologist, one can also find references to Gorer being a sociologist (Howarth, 2007). There is no detailed book length biography of Geoffrey Gorer.

¹⁴ The list of archival material used in this chapter can be found in Appendix 4
3.2.1. A biography of Geoffrey Gorer.

Geoffrey Gorer was born in 1905 into a prominent Anglo-Jewish family\[^{15}\] of an art-dealer. He was the eldest of three sons: the middle brother Peter was a well-known immunologist and geneticist and the youngest brother Richard was a musicologist and a researcher of horticulture.

In 1927 Geoffrey Gorer graduated from Jesus College, Cambridge, with a degree in classics and modern languages, and spent the following six years traveling across Europe, learning languages and enjoying opera and arts. His acquaintance with Edith Sitwell and the Sitwell brothers allowed him to mix with the literati of the time: Gorer was a close friend of W.H. Auden (Davenport-Hines, 1996) and George Orwell (Shelden, 1991)\[^{16}\]. He was also a good acquaintance of Lucien Freud and a surrealist painter Pavel Tschelitchev (Tyler, 1967). At that time Gorer’s ambition was to become a man of letters. Although his early plays and a novel were declined by the publishers, in 1934 he published a book on Marquis de Sade, which proved to be very successful and was reprinted several times (MacClancy, 2004). During the same year Gorer spent four months in a trip to French West Africa, accompanied by his friend, the famous Parisian black dancer François (Feral) Benga. This journey was described in his next book *Africa Dances* (1935/1962). The two books marked a successful start to his career of a man of letters.

In 1935 Gorer made his first trip to the US, according to Banner (2003), in order to promote his book *Africa Dances*. There he met Margaret Mead and Ruth Benedict, who agreed that Gorer, on

\[^{15}\] I traced the family history of Geoffrey Gorer by comparing the results of the 19\textsuperscript{th} century UK censuses stored in the National Archive in Kew. Lewis Gorer, the great grandfather of Geoffrey Gorer, was first mentioned in the 1851 census. He was born in 1801 in Prussia, migrated to England, settled in Middlesex and married Hannah Gorer, who was ten years his younger and had been born in England. Initially, the occupation of Lewis Gorer was listed as “general dealer”, but later he became vine and spirits merchant. His eldest son Solomon Gorer, moved to London and became an apprentice at an antique store. In the 1880s he started an antique business of his own, which was later developed and took to new heights by his son, Edgar Ezekiel, the father of Geoffrey Gorer. Edgar Gorer specialized in Chinese porcelain and was one of the most significant art dealers of the time. His company had offices in New York and London and Edgar Gorer authored a monograph on Oriental porcelain published in 1912. Edgar Gorer died on the Lusitania ship that sunk in 1915. When this happened, he was in the middle of a half a million dollar lawsuit against Sir Joseph Duveen, another prominent art dealer of the time. Duveen accused Gorer of defrauding a customer over a piece of antique porcelain. This story received wide publicity and affected his business. However Edgar Gorer died before he could do anything about it. Rachel Gorer (nee Cohen), the mother of Geoffrey Gorer, was an artist and a sculptor. She was a close friend of the poet Edith Sitwell who introduced her and later Geoffrey Gorer to artistic circles.

\[^{16}\] It is highly probable that Geoffrey was homosexual. He wrote about it in his unpublished fictionalized autobiography, where he traced his sexual orientation back to his years in Charterhouse school and the practice of fagging that was widely spread there. Besides this, Gorer’s contemporaries mentioned his sexual orientation in their memories as something self-evident. For example, American anthropologist David Schneider wrote in his autobiographical book *Schneider on Schneider* (1995) that he met Gorer quite often as a student, but only later he learned that Gorer was gay.
the basis of his African travel book, had the makings of a true anthropologist (Howard, 1984). So Gorer was “recruited” into anthropology, the subject that interested him so much, and underwent an informal four month anthropological training with Margaret Mead and Ruth Benedict (Gorer, 1937). A male collaborator was very welcome to the club because Mead and Benedict had difficulties accessing male Bosnians for their research (Banner, 2003). After the informal training, Gorer attempted an anthropological study of his own on the subject of American culture. A year and a half later this study was published as a book under provocative title *Hot Strip Tease and Other Notes on American Culture* (1937a).

The period between 1935 and 1940 was marked by very intense work and research for Gorer. He went ahead with his writing career and published his second travel book, *Bali and Angkor* (1936), as well as a satirical novel *Nobody Talks Politics* (1936). Also, Gorer followed his newly found anthropological vocation. After finishing the book on American culture (*Hot Strip Tease*), Gorer spent three months in the Himalayas and wrote an ethnography of Lepchas tribe, using the methodology Benedict and Mead taught him. His thorough, five hundred pages long study of the Lepchas tribe might be seen as Gorer’s initiation to anthropology (Gorer, 1938).

Quite fast for a person with a degree in classics and foreign languages, Gorer established himself in anthropological circles: he assisted Ruth Benedict in working on the *Handbook of Psychological Leads for Ethnological Field Workers*. Then in winter of 1939 he was invited by the Humanities Division of the Rockefeller Foundation to work on the project of the function of movies and radio in the US. Finally, in September 1939 he was invited to work at the Institute of Human Relations at the University of Yale, where he stayed until 1943. One may notice Gorer’s eclectic interests as well as his growing reputation as a researcher in the field of anthropology.

By the time the Second World War broke out in Europe, four years after Gorer had first met Margaret Mead and got interested in anthropology, he had become an established researcher and a respectable member of the Culture and Personality movement. The Second World War and the subsequent recruitment of anthropologists to serve the allied authorities changed his career: Gorer was no longer oscillating between two careers, and his name became firmly associated with anthropology. The mere list of positions Gorer occupied during the Second World War and the topics he was dealing with show that unlike many prominent anthropologist of the time, such as Franz Boaz, Gorer (as well as Culture and Personality movement as a whole) did not have any
objection against “governmental anthropology”. He willingly coopered with military intelligence and propaganda authorities, taking an active part in war time projects.

At the beginning of the war Gorer, while keeping his position at Yale University, took part in the meetings of the American Office of War Information (OWI). In 1942 he was appointed chairman of the Committee of Japanese studies at OWI\textsuperscript{17}. The result of this appointment was the report under the title “Japanese Character Structure and Propaganda” written by Gorer. It was presented before the Committee on Intercultural Relations in the early 1942 and mimeographed. The report, according to Gorer, had “a quite fantastic circulation and influence”\textsuperscript{18}. A year later it was published in the \textit{Transactions of The New York Academy of Science}. The method for analysis of national character, which was adopted in this study, had been developed by Mead, Gorer and Bateson back in 1940. It was called “Culture at a Distance” (Yans-McLaughlin, 1986): the war made field research in certain countries impossible, so it was decided to get information from educated foreigners, who could serve as analysts of their own cultures. It was also considered that child rearing practices defined and shaped the culture. Gorer did not speak Japanese and never visited Japan, but – in the words of Feeley (1999, p. 21) - published “some of the most slanderous stereotypes against the people he professed to have studied”. The harsh toilet training of Japanese babies, according to Gorer, created a compulsive-neurotic national character. His description of the culture was oriented toward psychological warfare: the Japanese were depicted as lewd, constantly anxious, predisposed to violence and deceit and generally untrustworthy\textsuperscript{19}. These ideas not only impressed military authorities and secured Gorer a permanent position at OWI, they also affected Japanese Americans as a group. This can be seen from papers in Gorer’s archives at the University of Sussex. His Japanese paper was presented only a few weeks after the infamous executive order 9066 was issued. That order laid the foundation for the relocation of Japanese Americans to internment camps, and Gorer’s paper provided an “anthropological ground” for this governmental decision and confirmed its correctness. The letters where Gorer discussed the trustworthiness of the Japanese Americans with the American military authorities

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\bibitem{Pope} Pope, A.U. (Jan. 8, 1942). [Letter to G. Gorer]. Geoffrey Gorer Archive (SxMs52/1/4/8/1/1, Box 32). University of Sussex Library Special Collections, Brighton, UK.
\bibitem{Gorer} Gorer, G. (1951). [Curriculum Vitae]. Geoffrey Gorer Archive (SxMs52/1/4/8/1/1, Box 63). University of Sussex Library Special Collections, Brighton, UK.
\end{thebibliography}
(and also “the most effective procedure in bombing Japan”) can be found in Gorer’s archive at the University of Sussex. The Japanese study made Gorer famous as it was widely quoted in the media (Feeley, 1999).

In 1943 Gorer was hired as an assistant intelligence officer by the British Political Warfare Mission in Washington, an outpost in America of the Political Intelligence Department of the UK Foreign Office. When he left the Mission in 1946 due to its closure, he was its Head. However, Gorer’s career with the Political Intelligence Department was not over: in February 1946 Gorer received an invitation to work at the German Personnel Research Branch, a division of the Control Commission for Germany. There he spent a year and prepared reports on the life conditions of German miners and political ideas of German students. He also participated in the design of a denazification questionnaire.

In 1947 Gorer took part in a large-scale anthropological project “Research in Contemporary Cultures” organized by Mead and Benedict. The project eventually expended around a quarter of a million dollars in funds. Gorer accomplished and published two studies for the project: in 1948 he authored a provocative study on the American character, which initiated heated discussion in the media. One year later appeared yet another book by Gorer, this time on Russian national character. The public reaction to the Russian study was far from being favorable. Its “swaddling hypothesis”, the idea that the allegedly cold and remoted adult personalities of Russians resulted from their practice of swaddling infants very tightly, was called “diaperology” (MacClancey, 2013, p. 123) and its authors were made fun of in the press. Mead was always loyal to her close friends and defended the study in *American Anthropologist*. However Gorer was a constant problem for the project because of his tendency to take extreme stands and to show contempt towards university professors who participated in it. In 1950 Gorer dropped out of the project and returned to England. He settled down in his house in Sussex as a freelance social scientist.

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21 Political Intelligence Department of the Foreign Office (April 5, 1946). [Letter to Geoffrey Gorer]. Geoffrey Gorer Archive (SxMs52/1/4/8/1/1, Box 63). University of Sussex Library Special Collections, Brighton, UK.

22 The evidence that Gorer was not an easy person to work with can be found, for example, in his correspondence with Leo Rosten, the chief of the OWI at the time Gorer was employed there. In his letter Rosten mentioned Gorer’s “profound hatred for children” and urged him to “give less violent comments” on the script of a radio program they were discussing (Rosten, L. (1942). [Correspondence with Geoffrey Gorer]. Records of the Office of War Information (1926-1951) (Record Group 208, General Correspondence of Leo Rosten, box 1 (232), NC 148 75, 956219). US National Archives, College Park, MD, USA).
and literary critic. There in 1954 he wrote the essay “The Pornography of Death” that has been widely quoted in the thanatological literature.

3.2.2. Gorer: an academic, a public intellectual, a gentleman-scholar?

The biography of Geoffrey Gorer might indicate that Gorer was not an academic in the traditional sense of this word: he did not receive any professional qualification in anthropology or social sciences though he often claimed to be anthropologist and was labeled as such by the media. Also he did not do what career academics usually do, namely he did not teach at university level, did not publish articles in academic journals and did not present his research findings at conferences. Instead he wrote novels and travel books, worked for the British Intelligence and published multiple essays on various topics in popular magazines and newspapers. Of course, Gorer was engaged in research, but for the most part it was applied social research for the military intelligence.

At the beginning of the war Gorer became very popular in connection with the media discussion of Pearl Harbor and the following persecution of the Japanese Americans. The books by Gorer published in the 1940s and 1950s (The American People (1948); The People of Great Russia (1949); Exploring the English character (1955)) strengthened his reputation of a “media personality”. They were mostly orientated at the mass reader and were reviewed in many popular magazines of the time, for example in Readers Digest, Time and Life. At this point Gorer obviously became a public figure and it might be fair to call him a public intellectual.

According to Russel Jacoby, who introduced the notion of public intellectual in his widely discussed book The Last Intellectuals (1987), public intellectuals were independent nonacademic intellectuals who wrote for educated readers. Unlike modern intellectuals, they did not situate themselves within academic disciplines and fields. In fact many of them did not even have a university degree like Lewis Mumford or Nathan Glazer, to say nothing about a doctorate. They were not particularly interested in becoming career academics and deliberately kept the university and its apparatus at arm length. Instead they were engaged in public affairs, wrote clear straightforward prose, accessible to any educated reader and as a result gained a large non-professional audience. In Jacoby’s opinion, the vanishing of public intellectuals is a generational problem. Since the early 1960s there has been almost no opportunity to become an intellectual other than being a career academic. The universities monopolized intellectual work and any
intellectual life outside them started looking suspicious. Being an academic nowadays means – according to Jacoby – detaching from public engagement and clear well written prose: academics are divided into increasingly narrowing fields and sub-disciplines, write for a narrow circle of their colleagues, participate in conferences and are mostly preoccupied with building their own career according to the rules dictated by the university world. The new generation of academics fail or often do not want to address the wider public and as a result they are little known outside their immediate field. Of course, this does not mean that the old school public intellectuals published only masterpieces and modern authors could not compete with them. Rather the “public component” in the public intellectual was more pronounced.

Returning to Geoffrey Gorer, I think it might be a potentially productive approach to view him not as a standard academic, but rather as a public intellectual at least in some aspects. Of course, as Posner (2001) pointed out, the public intellectual is not something that exists apart from the needs and purposes of human observer, so there is always a subjective component in classifying somebody as such. Although as a public figure Gorer could not be put on the same level with Gore Vidal, Lewis Mumford or other widely recognized public intellectuals because he was not that highly visible, he nevertheless enjoyed considerable popularity writing about political and ideological issues during the war years and at least a decade after the war was over. This makes him a public intellectual even according to the narrow definition suggested by Posner (2001). Moving to the US in the late 1930s allowed Gorer to join possibly the last American generation that so generously produced public intellectuals in that country and to occupy the niche that was not available in England at the time (Collini, 2006).

However Gorer probably could not be viewed as a public intellectual in every sense of the word, rather he was an “in-between figure” between the non-academic and academic public intellectual. On the one hand, Gorer did not obtain any degree in anthropology, the field he wanted to be associated with, he never held any long-term university position and generally was very hostile and sarcastic towards career academics (for example towards those participating in anthropological project “Research in Contemporary Cultures” organized by Mead and Benedict (Banner, 2003)). On the other hand, it is rather difficult to call Gorer an independent non-academic public intellectual, because his name was strongly associated with anthropology and thereby with an academic discipline. In the reviews of his books published in the newspapers and popular magazines of the 1940-s and 1950s Gorer was most often referred to as “anthropologist”
or “British anthropologist”, the latter being a cliché epithet applied to Gorer in the American press of the time. The model non-academic public intellectuals like Lewis Mumford are often difficult to classify as belonging to a single scientific discipline, usually they contribute to several disciplines. The fact that Gorer did not hold a degree in anthropology, but was hired to do anthropological research not only for educational organizations (for example for the Institute of Human Relations at the University of Yale), but also for the military speaks in my opinion more about pre-war academic anthropology than about the status of Gorer as a non-academic public intellectual. It is interesting that by the 1940s knowledge and authority had become more and more often associated with academic science and as a consequence with higher academic degrees and university positions. Thus, Gorer was often mistakenly addressed as Doctor Gorer in the official letters and referred to as Doctor and Professor in the documents of the military intelligence (for example, Pope, 1942; Katz, 1942; Hulse, 194223). This is not surprising because – as one can see in the archival documents- Gorer was often the only one without any academic title in the list of university professors who cooperated with the military authorities.

Also, there might be another way of looking at the personality of Geoffrey Gorer: Gorer once noted about himself that he had not dedicated himself exclusively to social scientific work because of his private income (MacClansey (2004). This allowed him to pursue his interests in such exotic subjects as African dances or writings of Marquis de Sade. Indeed, the social and financial status of Gorer family, Gorer’s interest in the exotic and essentially impractical matters, and even his secluded life in his house in Sussex, where the essay “The Pornography of Death” was written, might allow us to view him as a modern day gentleman scholar. As Shapin (1991) has pointed out, the notion of gentleman scholar in the 18th and 19th was rarely applied to practitioners of technically useful learning, rather gentleman’s knowledge should have distinctively non-utilitarian character. The status of gentleman also presupposed moral authority and civic duties. Unlike the public intellectuals, who had at times to write for living, depended for their income on their popularity and reputation and had to perform a task of social commentator, a commentator on current affairs or a pamphleteer, a gentleman scholars does not

have these concerns. As I will try to show in the chapter 6 on the 1955 essay “The Pornography of Death”, the voice or rhetorical persona of gentlemen scholar might be viewed as a characteristic feature of Gorer’s writings.

3.3. Herman Feifel (1915-2003).

In the following part of the chapter I would like to discuss another key figure of the early history of thanatology, Herman Feifel. Firstly, I would like to present a brief biography of Feifel and then to discuss the key events in the early history of the discipline that are associated with his name.

3.3.1. A biography of Herman Feifel.

The biography of Herman Feifel is much better known, than the biography of Geoffrey Gorer: the 1997 Festschrift in honor of Herman Feifel Death and the Quest for Meaning contained the detailed “Highlights of Herman Feifel’s Career” (Strack, 1997, pp. 383-387) which listed all the important events of his professional life. Also, the MacMillan Encyclopedia of Death and Dying (Strack, 2003) contained an entry on Herman Feifel, his biography and contribution to the field of death studies. In this section I will present a brief biography of Herman Feifel in order to provide a background for my analysis of his publications in the chapter 7.

Herman Feifel was born in New York on November 4, 1915. His father Jacob Feifel emigrated from the small town of Bar in Podolsky region in the former Russian Empire (now Western Ukraine) seven years earlier. In New York the family settled in Brooklyn, where Jacob organized his own small business, a grocery store. Herman Feifel, the first of the two children, graduated from the prestigious Franklin K. Lane High School in Brooklyn and received his B.A. degree from the City College of New York and his Master’s degree in psychology from Columbia University in 1939. In 1942 Feifel enlisted in the US Army Air Corps and served as an aviation psychologist dealing with selection and classification of the pilots. In 1944 he was assigned to the island of Tinian, where he witnessed the takeoff of Enola Gay bomber to bomb Hiroshima. After the end of the war Feifel continued his studies and in 1948 received a PhD in psychology from Columbia University. Two years later he joined the Winter Veterans Administration Hospital in Topeka, Kansas, as a clinical psychologist and also served as a lecturer at the

24 This information was obtained using the data from the New York Passengers Lists (1820-1957), US Federal Census Collection, US Naturalization Records (1840-1957), and US World War II Draft Registration Cards available at https://www.ancestry.com/.
Menninger School of Psychiatry in Topeka. In 1954 Feifel moved to California, where he joined Los Angeles Veterans Administration Mental Hygiene Clinic. In 1958 Feifel became Assistant Clinical Professor of Psychiatry at the University of Southern California, where he worked until his retirement in 1990.

In the accounts of the history of the discipline Herman Feifel is considered to be a pioneering figure and the father of the modern death movement (Lamers, 2012). His main contribution to the field was the breaking of “the prevailing taboo that discouraged scientific study of death and dying” (Strack, 2003, p. 286): in 1956 Feifel organized and chaired the first symposium on death that was held at the annual convention of the American Psychological Association in Chicago. The history of the modern death movement can be traced to this symposium (Doka, 2003; Lamers, 2012). Following the symposium, the volume *The Meaning of Death* edited by Feifel “galvanized the nascent energies of scholars and practitioners directed them into what would become the field of thanatology” (Strack, 1997, p. xii). Feifel continued working in the field of death studies and according to Strack (2003) was the only person who published seminal papers for five consecutive decades. For his work in thanatology Feifel received numerous awards, including an honorary doctorate from the University of Judaism (1984), a Distinguished Death Educator Award (1990), the Distinguished Professional Contributions to Knowledge Award by the American Psychological Association (1988), and a Gold Medal for Life Achievement in the Practice of Psychology by the American Psychological Foundation (2001). The award citations credited Feifel for the breaking the taboo on death. Herman Feifel was a founding member of the International Work Group on Death, Dying and Bereavement (IWG), an international, multidisciplinary group of professionals in the field of death studies. In 2004 the IWG established the Herman Feifel Award in Achievement in Thanatology for the individuals who have made distinctive contributions to field.

### 3.3.2. The 1956 symposium “The Concept of Death and its Relation to Behavior”.

In this section I would like to take a closer look at the symposium “The Concept of Death and its Relation to Behavior” initiated and chaired by Herman Feifel. In the history of death studies this symposium has been considered to be the first organized approach to death (Feifel, 1990).

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25 Breaking the taboo on death as a main contribution of Herman Feifel to death studies was for example mentioned in the citation of his 1988 APA award (“Psychiatrist Feifel cited for seminal work on death, dying”. Science 1988, September 19) and his 2001 APF award (Gold Medal Award for life achievement in the practice of psychology. *American Psychologist* (2001), Vol 56(8), 582-584).
Kenneth Doka pointed out that the death awareness movement in fact originated at this symposium (Doka, 2003). It is usually considered that the papers presented at the symposium formed the volume *The Meaning of Death* (1959). Pine (1977), for example, mentioned that “the session reflected Feifel’s belief in a multidisciplinary approach to the topic, and a number of the papers presented at the session were to have considerable impact over the next few years.” (p. 61). This idea was more explicitly expressed by William Lamers (2012). Discussing the symposium, Lamers noted that “half the invited panelists were noted psychologists; others were acknowledged experts in anthropology, psychiatry, art, literature, religion, philosophy, psychobiology and theology. The diverse backgrounds and specialties of this panel not only demonstrated the breadth of Feifel’s grasp of the importance of death to society but probably helped ensure that the APA would accept his proposal.” (p. 67). From this quotation it is clear that Lamers assumed that the majority of the contributions to the volume *The Meaning of Death* had been in fact presented at the symposium.

In his interviews (Coreless, 1994; Coreless, 2003) Herman Feifel stressed that the symposium served as a basis for the book “The Meaning of Death”. However its proceedings were not published, but “privately shared with interested individuals” (Feifel, 1994, p. 51). According to the Program for Sixty-Fourth Annual Convention the American Psychological Association, the symposium “The Concept Death and Its Relation to Behavior” took place on Saturday, September 1, 1956 between 8:40 and 10:40 am in Hotel Sherman in Chicago. The participants of the symposium who presented their papers included Arnold Hutschnecker, a celebrity psychiatrist and Richard Nixon’s psychotherapist, Jacob Taubes, philosopher and sociologist of religion, Herman Feifel, and the psychologist Irving Alexander. Also, Gardner Murphy, the distinguished academic psychologist and the director of research for the Menninger Foundation in Topeka, was presenting the concluding discussion. Initially, Gregory Zilboorg, a well-known psychoanalyst was supposed to deliver a paper on psychoanalytic interpretation of attitudes to death, but failed to submit his paper in time. Also, instead of Jacob Taubes, Reinhold Niebuhr, the prominent theologian, was initially supposed to participate in the symposium and present a

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paper on religious concepts and attitudes toward death\textsuperscript{29}. Two papers out of four presented empirical research (that of Irving Alexander and Herman Feifel), and the other two and the concluding discussion were theoretical. The papers by Hutshnecker, Feifel and Alexander were published in the volume “the Meaning of Death” along with the extended discussion by Gardner Murphy. The paper of Jacob Taubes seems never to have been published.

All in all, the symposium went well: Herman Feifel mentioned in the letter to David Mandelbaum in late September 1956, that he was still receiving gratifying comments about the symposium and “Many people felt it was the highpoint of the meetings”\textsuperscript{30}. The symposium was also covered by the Associated Press: a relatively lengthy (around 200 words) article about the event was written by Frank Carey, the renowned science writer, and first published on September 1, 1956 on the day of the Symposium in various local newspapers across the country\textsuperscript{31}, which might testify to the effect that the Western taboo on death did not prevent it from happening.

3.3.3. The volume \textit{The Meaning of Death} (1959)

In the accounts of the history of thanatology (Feifel, 1974; Pine, 1977; Feifel, 1992; Doka, 2003; Bryant, 2007) \textit{The Meaning of Death} was regarded as an important milestone in the early history of death studies. In the words of Kenneth Doka, it was one of the most significant books of this era, which “clearly established death studies as an academic discipline” (p. 51). Herman Feifel (1974, p. 6) remarked that the book had been perceived as having been a “major spur and catalyst to the current explosive interest in the field by behavioral scientists”. The historians of death studies noted that the volume was composed of the revised versions of the papers presented at the symposium “The Concept of Death and its Relation to Behavior” at the 1956 APA Convention in Chicago and that the essays “presented theories that had emerged largely as a result of empirical studies carried out by the authors” (Pine, 1977, p. 62). Another common belief about the book is that it “was produced against some considerable resistance” (Warren, 2012, p. 3). As Pine (1977, p. 62) put it, “Feifel initially experienced difficulty in finding a

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
  \item Feifel, H. (1956, March 8). [Letter to Gardner Murphy]. Papers of Gardner Murphy (1924-1987), Menninger Foundation Archives (Box Correspondence E-G misc, file 297184). State Archives, Topeka, Kansas, USA.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
publisher willing to publish the book, for although many editors thought that it was interesting, most felt that there would not be a market for it. Furthermore, he was the object of scorn and derision by many academic colleagues for studying death, let alone writing about it” Herman Feifel described the situation in a very similar way in his 1992 article^{32} and in his interviews^{33}. To illustrate this point, Feifel and other historians of the discipline (Feifel, 1990; Ansell, 1997, Feifel, 1996) provided an example of Contemporary Psychology, the official book reviewing journal of the APA: this journal refused to publish a review of volume the Meaning of Death because at the time death was not considered to be a legitimate subject for psychological research^{34}. However archival materials do not appear to fully corroborate these claims about the book.

Firstly, it seems that Feifel conceived the idea of organizing the symposium and the monograph roughly at the same time, and in early 1956 he was sending invitation letters to both potential participants in the symposium (which by that time had not yet been accepted by the Program

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{32} For example, in his article “The Thanatological Movement: Respice, Adspice, Prospice” (1992) published in the volume The Thanatology Community and the Needs of the Movement and edited by Elizabeth Clark and Austin Kutscher Herman Feifel wrote: “The symposium provided the groundwork for the 1959 book, The Meaning of Death, which I edited, and which most authorities agree was germinal in galvanizing regard for the field and familiarizing the scholarly community with issues and interests of dying, death, and grief. It seemed to provide a landmark of legitimacy to the newly emerging field. The book itself, however, did not see the light of day without some tribulations. It was rejected originally by both the Oxford University Press and John Wiley before McGraw-Hill took its death defying dive. Rejection was associated with “no potential market for it,” and “this belongs more in the realm of religion.” Indeed, even within the McGraw-Hill there was an ongoing bet between the Vice President, who favored publishing the book, and the Director of Advertising, who was not so sanguine, whether the book would sell four thousand copies, then a break-even point for the company. Fortunately, the bet was won by the Vice President more than thirty-fold” (p. 8).


{34} For example, Herman Feifel in his article “Psychology and Death. Meaningful Rediscovery” (1990) wrote: Despite these initial signs of recognition of the legitimacy of investigating the thanatological domain, numerous scientific Grundys still felt that the topic of death was not appropriate for psychology. Contemporary Psychology, for instance, rejected considering The Meaning of Death because the book had just received a review by Time magazine and, hence, had attained its allotted morbid fascination exposure. More significant was the communication that the subject was not germane to genuine scientific inquiry”(p. 538). Also, in his interview to David Clark (1996) Feifel recounted that: “Then when Time sent it in to the Contemporary Psychology which was the official book reviewing organ of the American Psychological Association, they turned it back, they said, “Look, you got a review in Time and so your exposure, your titillation exposure, already has been received and this is not a legitimate area for Contemporary Psychology to review - death.” In other words death was beyond the pale, it was not a subject for scientific contemplation or for scientific research and stuff like that, and so the book was never reviewed in Contemporary Psychology.”
Committee) and participants in the volume on death.\textsuperscript{35} By the time the symposium was accepted in June 1956 Feifel had received a preliminary agreement to participate in the volume on death (without participation in the symposium) from Paul Tillich, Martin Grotjahn, Abe Kaplan, Herbert Marcuse and others\textsuperscript{36}. The scope of the book and “the academic rank” of the potential participants seemed to be quite ambitious: besides the authors who actually contributed to the volume (Carl Jung, Paul Tillich, Herbert Marcuse, Arnold Hutschnecker and others) Herman Feifel invited to participate in it Bruno Bettelheim, Martin Buber, Marc Chagall, Martin Grotjahn, Erich Lindemann, Jacques Maritain, Karl Menninger, Meyer Shapiro, Hans Selye, Ludwig von Bertalanffy, Amos Wilder, Harold Wolff and others\textsuperscript{37}. Many of them gave preliminary agreement to participate, but could not deliver their essays for various reasons. The idea behind the monograph, as Herman Feifel pointed out in his letter to Erich Lindemann was “to encompass various outlooks which deal with the meaning of and attitudes toward death, namely: The psychoanalytic view; religionist’s view; philosophical view; the dying patient; empirical and experimental studies; children and death; socio-cultural aspects; etc.” (Feifel, 1956\textsuperscript{38}) The authors were expected to express their ideas in “non-technical language”.\textsuperscript{39}

\textit{The Meaning of Death} (1959) in its present form consists of eighteen essays, an Introduction by Herman Feifel and a Discussion by Gardner Murphy. Only three papers presented at the symposium appeared in the final version of the book in revised form (that of Herman Feifel, Arnold Hutschnecker, and Irving Alexander). Also, the Discussion by Gardner Murphy had several revised fragments from his Discussion presented at the symposium, but also contained

\textsuperscript{35} In his letter to Gardner Murphy of March 8, 1956 Feifel invited him to participate in the symposium “The Concept of Death and its Relation to Behavior” and three months later mentioned that there was a strong probability that the papers plus a few others invited ones like Martin Grotjahn, Herbert Marcuse, Paul Tillich etc. might be published in monograph form by one of the book companies or a University Press (Feifel, H. (1956, March 8).[Letter to Gardner Murphy]. Menninger Foundation Archives (Box Correspondence E-G misc, file 297184). State Archives, Topeka, Kansas, USA).

\textsuperscript{36} In June 1956 Feifel wrote to Erich Lindeman inviting him to participate in the monograph and listed “committed contributors” to the monograph (Feifel, H. (1956, June 27). [Letter to Erich Lindemann]. Erich Lindemann Papers, 1950-1974, Center for the History of Medicine (Box 55, folder 1). Harvard University Library, Cambridge, MA, USA).

\textsuperscript{37} Herman Feifel mentioned potential participants in the volume in his correspondence with Gardner Murphy (September 26, 1956), Martin Buber (October 17, 1956 and February 19, 1957), Paul Tillich (December 19, 1958), Erich Lindemann (June 27, 1956), David Mandelbaum (September 2, 1956). For more information see Appendix 4.


\textsuperscript{39} Mandelbaum, (1956, July 9). [Letter to Herman Feifel]. David Goodman Mandelbaum Papers (BANC MSS 89/129 cz, carton.5, folder 30). Bancroft Library Special Collections, University of California at Berkeley, Berkeley, USA.
large sections which were new to the book\textsuperscript{40}. Out of the remaining fifteen essays four were reprinted (that by Hoffman on mortality and modern literature, Nagy on child’s theories concerning death, Richter on sudden death in animals and Wahl on fear of death). Also, the essay by Carl Jung “The Soul and Death” was first published in German in 1934 (but its English translation by R.F.C. Hull first appeared in the book \textit{The Meaning of Death}), and the essay by Paul Tillich “The Eternal Now” was first delivered as a sermon\textsuperscript{41} and then published by Scribner’s in 1959 in the volume of the same name. Nine essays were written specifically for this volume. More than one third of the essays (seven out of eighteen) were written by non-psychologists (by the theologian Paul Tillich, philosophers Walter Kaufmann and Herbert Marcuse, art historian Carla Gottlieb, literature scholar Frederick Hoffman, anthropologist David Mandelbaum and a Methodist pastor, Reverend Edgar Jackson). Six out of eighteen papers presented a piece of empirical research in some form (that by Kastenbaum, Nagy, Feifel, Alexander and Adlerstein, Shneidman, and Richter). Thus, it can be seen that the volume was conceived as essentially interdisciplinary, rather than purely psychological, and substantial space in it was allocated to contributions from theologians and liberal art scholars.

As for the idea of the Western taboo on death, it can be found in the Introduction to the volume and the essay written by Herman Feifel. Also, August Kasper mentioned in the beginning of his essay that average American’s outlook on death seemed to have changed during the first quarter of the twentieth century: death was under the attack, and this attack was an elaborate denial of death (p. 259). Charles Wahl in his essay reprinted from the \textit{Bulletin of the Menninger Clinic} also claimed that death has always been a subject of human anxiety, however he stressed that in their attempts to handle this anxiety modern people were not much different from their primitive ancestors (p. 18) and thus attempts to denial death were a part of human culture. The other contributions to the volume either did not mention the taboo on death or stressed the “high visibility” of death in the society of the time. For example, Irving Alexander and Arthur Adlerstein opened their article with the following passage: “We live today in an era in which the problem of death is a part of the \textit{Zeitgeist}. The discovery of tremendous sources of power which,

\textsuperscript{40} Murphy, G. (1956). [Comments of Murphy as a discussant in the symposium “Concept of Death and Its Relation to Behavior, APA, Chicago, 1956”]. Gardner and Lois Murphy Papers (Folder “Notes for discussion of Feifel book’, M. 1078). Drs. Nicholas and Dorothy Cummings Center for the History of Psychology, University of Akron, Akron, Ohio, USA.

if used destructively, could obliterate nations and perhaps our entire planet has placed death in
the focus of human consciousness.” (p. 271). Also Carla Gottlieb in her essay on modern art and
death depicted death as highly visible in the society of the time because of mass murder and
mass death which had been overriding the disasters wrought by the plagues at the end of the
Middle Ages (p. 157).

The publication of the book took about three years, which did not seem to be extraordinary.42 In
the meantime Herman Feifel was receiving invitations to speak about the volume in various
academic meetings. For example, in January 1958, almost two years before the volume The
Meaning of Death had been published, Herman Feifel was invited to present a seminar talk about
the volume and contributions to it at the prestigious Centre for Advanced Study in the Behavioral
Sciences at Stanford University. The invitation was sent by Ralph Tyler, the Director of the
Centre. According to David Mandelbaum (Mandelbaum, 195843) there were quite a few people
at the Centre and also at Stanford who were interested in the subject of death and dying and
research possibilities it offered44.

Regarding the publication history of the volume The Meaning of Death, Herman Feifel in his
correspondence with the contributors did not mention any difficulties with the publishers,
especially difficulties related to the fact that the book was about death45. Quite the contrary, in
1956 he informed the authors that Oxford University Press and McGraw Hill were “definitely

42 For example, the volume Perspectives in Personality Research (1960) edited by David and Brengelmann, that
contained one of the articles on death by Irving Alexander and Arthur Adlerstein, had its origin in a scientific
conference, the 15 International Congress of the International Union of Scientific Psychology held in 1957 in
Brussels. The volume took three years to be published.
MSS 89/129 cz, carton 5, folder 30). Bancroft Library Special Collections, University of California at Berkeley,
Berkeley, USA.
44 In this letter David Mandelbaum wrote to Herman Feifel: “There are several Fellows here this year who are
intrigued by the possibility of doing further studies on death and bereavement, and who would like to know more
about what has been done in this field and what the principal opportunities for further research appear to be.
Professor Volkart of the Department of Sociology at Stanford is also much interested in this and will join our
discussion”.
45 It is possible to object to this line of reasoning, that Herman Feifel might have not been informing the authors
about the possible troubles with the publishing houses in order not to discourage them from writing and submitting
their essays in time. However the correspondence with Gardner Murphy about the book had very informal character:
Herman Feifel complained about the delays of other contributors, discussed their essays and quoted the words of the
editors. So I tend to think that he would not try to conceal such an important issue from Murphy, who could be
viewed as a co-editor of the volume.
interested”⁴⁶. One year later, in 1957 Feifel wrote to the authors that “matters were developing well with the book”⁴⁷, and in April 1958 he mentioned that matters “were entering the last lap” and that “McGraw-Hill, Basic Books, and Stanford University Press were all definitely interested in the book”, but the first two wanted to see the entire manuscript before making a final commitment (Feifel, 1958⁴⁸). Finally the contract with McGraw-Hill Publishing House was signed in December 1958. In January 1959 Herman Feifel shared with the authors⁴⁹ that McGraw-Hill people were “enthused about the book and it was possible that both a medical and a trade edition will be published”. Initially the volume was titled *The Psychology of Death and Dying*, but later (in January 1959) the title was changed to *The Meaning of Death* by the editors of the McGraw-Hill, which might indicate that the editors were intending the book for the wider audience. It is not easy to say, why finalizing the contract with the publisher took relatively long (around two years), however some clues could be found in the correspondence of Herman Feifel with the authors: it seems that the potential contributors to the volume, especially the renowned ones, failed to deliver their manuscripts in time because of their busy schedules. Herman Feifel had to send multiple reminders to them. In the letter to Erich Lindeman, for example, Feifel mentioned that he managed to receive the bulk of essays from the authors only by May 1958⁵⁰.

The volume *The Meaning of Death* was finally published in late November-early December 1959 and one month later was reviewed by the *Time* magazine, one of the most popular general interest magazines of the period. The lengthy and favorable review appeared in the Medicine section⁵¹ of the magazine and opened with the quotation of Herman Feifel on the Western taboo on death. According to the review, the book was supposed to “remedy this” with the help of the experts in religion, arts and sciences. However not all responses to the book were equally

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⁴⁷ Feifel, H. (1956, September 26). [Letter to Gardner Murphy]. Menninger Foundation Archives (Box Correspondence E-G misc, file 297184). State Archives, Topeka, Kansas, USA.


⁴⁹ Feifel, H. (1958, April 9). [Letter to Gardner Murphy]. Menninger Foundation Archives (Box Correspondence E-G misc, file 297184). State Archives, Topeka, Kansas, USA.


positive: in late December 1959, less than a month after the volume had been launched, the
Nation magazine published an indignant letter to the editor titled “Truths of the blood” and signed by George Woodruff from New York. In his letter Woodruff accused Carl Jung, whose essay opened the volume, of collaboration with the Nazis and sharing their ideas. He demanded an explanation to the fact that although Jung had defended Nazi concentration camps, his opinions on death, telepathy, time and space were considered valuable and were incorporated in the book. At the same time Herman Feifel, Gardner Murphy and also McGraw-Hill Publishing House received the clipping from the Nation attached to a letter from Albert Parelhoff, Carl Jung’s most persistent attacker in the press, who since 1940s had been claiming that Jung was pro-Nazi in his views and actions and contributed to creating the ideology of the Third Reich (Schoenl and Schoenl, 2016). As it is evident from the correspondence between Feifel and Murphy, the publication in the Nation and the letter by Parelhoff—although probably could not be called a full-blown scandal—were still viewed as quite damaging to the image of the book and the publishing house. Both Herman Feifel and Gardner Murphy answered Parelhoff to the effect that this matter was not related to the subject of the book. In addition to the reviews in the press, the volume was also selected by the Pastoral Psychology journal as a book of the month and acquired by many libraries across the country. Despite this the volume was passed over in silence.


The letter of Gardner Murphy to Parelhoff was as follows:

“Dear Doctor Parelhoff:
Thank you for your letter of the 21st. I do not know why Dr. Feifel included Dr. Jung’s notes on death, but they probably overlap with my own. I felt, as I said, that Jung had dealt with some important issues which needed to be included. I think Mr. Woodruff would have done well to document his statements. It seems to me that his letter was designed to arouse very strong feelings before stating any relevant facts. If the facts are correct, they would certainly bring strong responses and there would not be any need for the undocumented attack. I guess you know, that these issues about Carl Jung’s politics have been fought over for a great many years, and that a great many of them are not relevant to specific issues in Jung’s analytical psychology. To damn a whole man or a whole movement on the basis of specific beliefs or attitudes, even the fully documented, would apparently be alien to our whole modern way of trying to sift reality from self-deception.

Cordially yours, Gardner Murphy, Director of Research”

(Murphy, G. (1959, December 28). [Letter to Herman Feifel]. Menninger Foundation Archives (Box Correspondence E-G misc, file 297185). State Archives, Topeka, Kansas, USA.)

Also, Herman Feifel in the letter to Gardner Murphy (1959, December 31) wrote: “I answered Mr. Parelhoff in similar vein as you did- and, as far as I’m concerned, that takes care of it.” A little earlier in the same letter he noted: “I don’t have enough valid evidence to know whether the accusation made against Jung is true or not- Bruno Klopfer out here says it isn’t true- but be it as it may, I feel the point is completely tangential to the focus and purpose of the book”. (Feifel, H. (1959, December 31). [Letter to Gardner Murphy]. Menninger Foundation Archives (Box Correspondence E-G misc., file 297185). State Archives, Topeka, Kansas, USA.) The detailed analysis of these letters is beyond the scope of my thesis, however a rhetorical analysis of the response of the psychological community of the time to accusations concerning Jung’s alleged pro-Nazi views and contribution to the ideology of Nazism might be an interesting topic of research in its own right.
by the academic reviewers: as I mentioned earlier, the *Contemporary Psychology*, the official book reviewing journal of the APA, did not publish a review of volume *The Meaning of Death*. According to Herman Feifel and other historians of the discipline the volume was not reviewed by the *Contemporary Psychology* because death was not an appropriate subject for psychological research. However it is interesting to note that an article titled “The Birth of Death Psychology” (1960) can be found in the volume 5 (11) of *Contemporary Psychology*. It contained a review of another book on death, the monograph by Leroy Bowman *The American Funeral: A Study in Guilt, Extravagance, and Sublimity*, which was published in 1959, the same year as *The Meaning of Death*. Donald Patterson, the author of the review, welcomed the book as a “stimulus to rational interest in a subject which sooner or later, perhaps often, touches the life of every one of us” and called the bona fide psychologists to turn their serious attention to this serious but sadly neglected subject (p. 365). The review by Patterson might allow us to suppose that the subject of death most probably was not the reason why the volume *The Meaning of Death* was not covered by the *Contemporary Psychology*. Rather the reasons might have been related to the interdisciplinary and non-empirical character of the volume.

### 3.3.4. The first research grant on the subject of death.

Another milestone in the history of thanatology as a discipline was its recognition by the larger psychological community as a legitimate area of research. Federal funding of a research project on death might be seen as a step towards this direction. In the thanatological literature it is a commonplace that the first research grant on the subject of death was received by Herman Feifel in 1959. Feifel mentioned it in his 1990 article “Psychology and Death. Meaningful rediscovery”. After having discussed the volume *The Meaning of Death*, Feifel wrote “The same year I received what was probably the first research grant awarded to an individual by the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) to study attitudes toward death.” (p. 538). It is interesting to note that in this sentence Feifel used the adverb “probably” in order to present his statement as an opinion rather than as an accredited fact. He also provided some details about this grant: it was individual and it was devoted specifically to studying attitudes to death. The detailed description of the grant might be perceived as an expression of scientific rigor of the author or possibly as an attempt to protect this claim against the evidence of the contrary: in fact the author did not claim that he had received the first ever research grant on death, but the first individual grant on attitudes to death. This sentence was repeated verbatim in the next article.
by Feifel on the history of the discipline “The Thanatological Movement: Respice, Adspice, Prospice” (1992). However in his interviews Feifel omitted some of these details, for example, in his 1992 interview with Ida Martinson and Doris Howell Feifel claimed that he was the first person to receive a research grant on attitudes to death or on death proper. Similarly, in his 1996 interview with David Clark Feifel omitted the description of the grant as individual and said: “…I was the first person ever given, I got a three year research grant from the National Institute of Mental Health, the first time any kind of a grant was given to study attitudes towards death, which at that time was still considered a kind of a, you know, a ‘no-no’”. Finally, in the Festschrift Death and the Quest for Meaning. Essays in Honor of Herman Feifel. (1997) it was claimed that in 1959-1962 Feifel was “awarded a three-year research grant by the United States Public Health Service, National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH), to study “Attitudes Toward Death and Their Relation to Behavior.” This is the first time in history that NIMH supports research on the topic of death.” (1997, p. 384).

This statement contains several inaccuracies. Firstly, the information request from the historical database of the Reports and Analysis Branch of the Institute of Mental Health revealed that in fact the first grant on death was awarded by NIMH to Irving Alexander in 1956 to study “Covert responses to the concept of death in children” (grant 01334-01). Two year later, in 1958, Irving Alexander was awarded the second NIMH grant “Religion and reactions to death” (grant 01936-01). In accordance with the NIMH regulations, the publications by Irving Alexander contained mentions that the research they presented was funded by the NIMH (Alexander, Colley, and Adlerstein, 1957; Alexander and Adlerstein, 1958; Alexander and Adlerstein, 1960). The former article also contained the mention that this work had been presented at the 1956 APA symposium “The Concept of Death and Its Relation to Behavior” organized and chaired by Feifel. Herman Feifel cited these articles (for example, Feifel, 1974; Feifel, 1990), so it is possible to assume that he was aware of the fact that Irving Alexander received the NIMH funding in 1956 and 1958 and that the wording of his claims (the words “possibly”, “individual”, etc.) were indeed used to

55 Clark, D. (1996, June 10) [Interview of David Clark with Herman Feifel]. Hospice History Archive, University of Glasgow, Dumfries Campus, Glasgow, the UK.
56 US National Institute of Mental Health, Office of Science Policy, Planning and Communications (2014, October 16) Response to information request based on a historical Excel spreadsheet of the NIMH Reports and Analysis Branch.
protect these claims against the counterevidence. As it is evident from the interview with Irving Alexander conducted in 1999 by Wade Pickren as part of his study of the role of the NIMH in the history of the postwar American psychology\textsuperscript{57}, by 1959 Irving Alexander had been employed by NIMH and possibly contributed to the NIMH decision to award the research grant on death to Feifel.

Secondly, the title of the grant was not quoted correctly. According to the NIMH historical database, the grant awarded to Herman Feifel was titled “Attitudes Toward Death in Terminally Ill Persons”. Finally, it seems that Herman Feifel was not the only investigator in this research grant: in his early publications (for example, Feifel, 1962) he mentioned colleagues participating in the project. I could trace two psychiatrists who might have participated in it. In the 1959 publication by Feifel and Kasper “The Dying Patient: When, How, What to Tell Him” the authors invited physicians to take part in their research project and to introduce terminally ill patients to them. They claimed that they had a pilot study behind them and a three-year research grant from the United States Public Health Service (p. 25), so it might be reasonable to assume that August Kasper was another investigator at this project. The second psychiatrist who possibly took part in this project was Edward Stainbrook, then a chairman of the Department of Psychiatry at University of Southern California School of Medicine. Feifel mentioned his participation in the project in correspondence\textsuperscript{58} with George Klein, a distinguished psychologist and psychoanalyst, one of the organizers of the New York University's Research Center for Mental Health, and a university friend of Herman Feifel.

Speaking about the research grant in his interviews, Herman Feifel often mentioned that it was extremely difficult to get access to the dying patients, who were participants in his study (Feifel, 1992; 1996\textsuperscript{59}). Furthermore, Feifel devoted three publications (Feifel, 1962; 1963b; 1963c) to the description of the problems of getting access to the participants and this served as additional evidence in favor of the western taboo on death in his publications of the late 1960s - early


\textsuperscript{58} Feifel, H. (1958, July 11) [Letter to George Klein]. George Klein Papers (Correspondence, Folder F, M 870). Drs. Nicholas and Dorothy Cummings Center for the History of Psychology, University of Akron, Akron, Ohio, USA.

1970s. As it is evident from the interviews and also correspondence of Feifel, a big part of the research project on the terminally ill took place in the City of Hope Medical Centre in Los Angeles, an experimental hospital for cancer patients, where he had been working as a research associate since 1956\(^6^0\). Describing his experience at this hospital in the interview with David Clark, Feifel said that he was not permitted to get near the dying patients and that it took him a long time until some “understanding oncologist”, Dr. Kelly, allowed him to interview the mothers of leukemic children and that the participants thanked him for the opportunity to discuss death related issues with them, which they did not have before. It might be interesting to note that at the same time (1958-1960) another team of psychiatrists was working in the City of Hope on a death related project. The article "Observations Concerning Fear of Death in Fatally Ill Children and Their Mothers" that summarized this research was published in 1960 by Joseph Natterson and Alfred Knudson. From the text of the article it is obvious that the staff of the City of Hope was in fact quite supportive to the idea of research on death. In correspondence with me Dr. Natterson mentioned\(^6^1\) that he did not have trouble accessing the participants, moreover, most of the research data on this project were shared during the weekly staff meetings and that “the pediatric staff was enthusiastic, and the rest of the hospital staff was relatively indifferent” to this project (Natterson, 2017).

3.4. Conclusion.

In this chapter I provided the background for my analytical chapters, first of all for chapter 6 on the essay “The Pornography of Death” by Geoffrey Gorer and chapter 7 on the early publications of Herman Feifel. The information about life and career of Geoffrey Gorer might help us to better understand his 1955 essay and -more broadly- the role of the topic of death in his research and career. Additionally, this information might be helpful for the analysis of the concept of repression proper in the American press of the time presented in chapter 5: Gorer -as it is evident from his biography -was not a psychologist or psychoanalyst by training and did not write for a professional audience. In order to discuss repression of death in his essay, Gorer should have assumed that his readers would not only be familiar with the concept of repression, but also view it as something existing in the real word, as a part of the human psyche.


\(^6^1\) Natterson, J. (2017, March 4) Personal communication.
The biography of Herman Feifel and information about the key events in the early history of death studies associated with him might serve a similar purpose. Also, the information on the first symposium on death, the publication history of the volume *The Meaning of Death* and on the federal funding of the research on death might allow us to better understand how the idea of the Western repression of death was formed in the writings of Herman Feifel and what role it played in his publications and in the subsequent accounts of the history of the discipline.

Also, the archival research presented in this chapter demonstrated that the early history of death studies was far from being clear-cut: seemingly unambiguous facts and events that formed an integral part of the traditional accounts of the history of the discipline become anything else but unproblematic if we take a closer look at them. This may indicate that the history of death studies might indeed require re-consideration.
4. Methodological Discussion.

4.1. Introduction.
In this chapter I would like to discuss the methods that are used in my thesis. First of all I would like to stress that I used several different methods throughout my thesis because of the different goals and different objects of analysis in my research chapters. My first research chapter (chapter 5) on dissemination of the notion of repression in the American press originated early in the course of my studies. I was fascinated with the pioneering work of the early thanatologists, first of all Herman Feifel, who often characterized the American society of the time as death denying (Feifel, 1963b; 1963c; 1974b; 1992). I wanted to better understand the phenomenon of repression of death and to trace the origin of this idea in the scholarly literature as well as in the public discourse. However before approaching this specific task, I thought it was important to know whether by the time that thanatology had emerged as a scientific discipline the idea of repression proper had become a part of public discourse, how it had been disseminated, and how it had been constructed.

I decided to examine the popularization of the notion of repression by looking at the American press of the time and chose *Time* magazine, one of the most popular American magazines of the time, as a source of data. Its archive (between 1923 and the end of 1979) consisted of 2980 issues and more than 110,260,000 words. The aims of my study presupposed analysis of large amount of data. I was interested in the general pattern of the spreading of the notion of repression (and less interested in individual cases and fine details of the analysis) and sought to obtain a very broad picture that could provide a background for understanding the dissemination of the idea of repression of death. So I decided to turn to quantitate linguistic methods that were designed to handle large amounts of data, specifically, to corpus analysis. I will discuss corpus analysis methodology further in this chapter.

After this stage of my research was over, I moved on to the analysis of the key thanatological writings of the 1950s and 1960s, first of all to the works of Herman Feifel, one of the founders of the discipline, and also to the essay “The Pornography of Death” (1955) by Geoffrey Gorer. However after close reading of these texts, I realized that in fact they did not claim what was ascribed to them by the historians of the discipline and also did not seem to match the role in the
history of the thanatology they was allocated to them. As a result, I became increasingly critical of the ideas expressed in these texts and even more so because both texts seemed to be ideologically laden. Since the focus of my research had changed, I decided to use different methods that in my opinion were better suited for the analysis of the thesis of repression of death in these texts. As I tried to show in chapter 1, within the traditional approach to study of the idea of repression of death in thanatology (Dumont & Foss 1972; Walter, 1991; Zimmerman & Rodin, 2004) the researchers discussed whether this thesis corresponded to reality, in other words, whether the taboo on death or repression of death existed in the Western culture and if so, in what form. Many authors, for example, Kellehear (1984), Zimmerman & Rodin (2004), were very critical of the idea of the Western taboo on death. However they viewed repression of death as a phenomenon that existed (or could have existed) in the mind of the people and treated the notions of evidence in favor of repression of death and “objective facts” as unproblematic. This realist and essentialist approach to the study of repression of death limited the scope of research questions that could be asked within it and also reduced the possible criticism of the idea of the Western repression of death to the analysis of evidence in favor of its existence. These problems can be resolved if we turn to constructionist perspective (Burr, 2003), which stresses the constructed nature of social phenomena and the performative role of language. The main focus of social constructionism is examining the ways in which people and social groups construct their own social reality. In the words of Hewer (2018, p. 22), social constructionism involves “looking at the ways that constructs are created, maintained, institutionalized, and how they eventually become tradition”. Similarly, the constructionist approach to the thesis of repression of death presupposes that this concept is viewed as a social construct rather than a mental trait or fact of social life and allows the scholars to put aside the investigation as to whether it exists or existed in reality and instead to concentrate on the way it emerged in early thanatological publications, on how it was discursively constructed and what goals were possibly achieved with its help.

Within the constructionist perspective there is a broad spectrum of methods of analysis of discourse, ranging from Conversation Analysis, Discursive and Rhetorical Psychology, Foucauldian analysis, and Critical Discourse Analysis and others. The choice of the specific method is based on many factors, first of all on the methodological stance of an individual researcher, his or her understanding of the notion of discourse and research focus, and also on the
research question and the type of data studied. In my thesis I use Discursive and Rhetorical Psychology, Critical Discourse Analysis and also genre analysis (or generic analysis), a type of rhetorical analysis that allows researchers to analyse texts and other artifacts (for example, images or films) in terms of their genre. This type of analysis originated in the works of rhetorical scholar Edwin Black (1965). In the following sections I will discuss the methods of corpus analysis as well as CDA and Discursive and Rhetorical Psychology and then consider the method of generic analysis.

4.2. Corpus analysis for studying dissemination of the notion of repression in the American press.
According to Biber et al. (1998, p. 4), corpus analysis is a type of empirical linguistic analysis that deals with the actual patterns of use in natural texts, utilizes a large and principled collection of natural texts (known as a corpus) and makes extensive use of computers for analysis. The advantages of corpus analysis come from using large sets of natural data and from using computer software for storing, processing and analysis of these data. Researchers can use the existing corpora of written or spoken language. These corpora are large collections of texts balanced by types of texts and annotated (for example, words are tagged for part of speech or lemmatized (their stem is indicated)). The most important existing corpora of modern English include the Brown Corpus of written American English, the Lancaster Oslo-Bergen corpus of written British English, the Australian Corpus of English (ACE) and others (Lee, 2010). Alternatively, linguists can create their own corpora tailored to the needs and goals of their research (Koester, 2010; Reppen, 2010). As Reppen (2010) has pointed out, building small specialized corpora could be an advantage, when the research task required combining of quantitative and qualitative analysis because it allowed closer links between the corpus and the context in which the texts in the corpus were produced and made it possible to study language in a particular setting. An example of tailor-made corpora can be an archive of a magazine or a newspaper, which can be used for researching written language in media studies. Thus, Baroni and his colleagues at the University of Bologna (Baroni et al., 2004) developed a corpus of modern Italian containing all the articles published between 1985 and 2000 by the national daily La Repubblica.

Corpus analysis software allows the researchers to make sense of the large amounts of textual data. The key analytical steps usually involve two related processes: generation of the so called
concordances (examples of particular items in context) and the production of frequency lists in rank order or sorted alphabetically (Evison, 2010). Corpora can be used not only for analysis of the modern language use, but also for analysis of historical language. The major corpora that help to accomplish this task are the diachronic part of the Helsinki Corpus of English, ARCHER (A Representative Corpus of Historical English Registers), and COHA (Corpus of Historical American English) (Lee, 2010). Historical corpora also make it possible to study diachronic variation in language (McEnery and Hardy, 2012).

One of the possible applications of corpus analysis is studying the vocabulary of a language. In the words of Moon (2010), “for corpus linguists, it is difficult to see how anyone can learn much about lexis without using a corpus, or could fail to learn something from each new corpus search.” (p. 197). Corpora can provide information about individual lexical items, about the vocabulary as a whole or be used in testing a linguistic theory. Speaking about research of individual words, corpora can help the linguists to obtain information about their frequencies, their formation, and pattern of their usage (for example, about their collocates (words with which they co-occur), their typical subjects and objects (in the case of verbs), synonyms and antonyms, idioms and fixed expressions in which they are used, etc.). This allows linguists to study the meaning of individual words and to reflect on how the meaning of words depends on their contexts. Corpus linguists also study the creative use of language, for example, how individual words appear in metaphors.

Corpus analysis methodology is widely used to study different types of linguistic problems and in different linguistic subfields as well as in the social sciences, for example, in methodology of first and second language teaching (Cheng, 2010), in research of translation (Kuebler and Aston, 2010), in sociolinguistics (Andersen, 2010), in studies of political discourse (Adel, 2010), in forensic linguistics (Cotterill, 2010) and also in media studies (O’Halloran, 2010). In my study corpus analysis is used for diachronic analysis of dissemination of psychological concept of repression in the media. Following the basic analytical steps described earlier, I calculated the frequencies of the lemmas repress* and repression* (sorted by decade and by the topic of the article where it was found). Also, I created lists of collocates, synonyms, objects of the verb “repress”, markers and consequences of repression and also collected other information that helped me to analyze the construction of the notion of repression in the magazine. In my analysis
I used the freeware program AntConc, designed by Laurence Anthony of Waseda University, Japan.

4.3. Discursive and Rhetorical Social Psychology and Critical Discourse Analysis as methods for studying the thesis of repression of death in the early thanatological writings.

In this section I would like to discuss the methods that were used in the chapters 6 and 7 of my thesis devoted to the analysis of the works of Geoffrey Gorer and Herman Feifel. As I mentioned earlier, I turned to constructionist perspective (Burr, 2003) that made it possible to study how the idea of the Western repression of death was discursively constructed, what goals were achieved with its help and also what role it played in the early history of thanatology. The choice of the specific methods of analysis depended on the type of data I used (published essays, books, archival material, etc.) and also on the research goals.

Conversation analysis (CA) did not seem to be applicable to the subject of my research and also to the type of data I used. This type of analysis emerged in the late 1960s and early 1970s in the works of Harvey Sacks, Emanuel Schegloff and Gail Jefferson (Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson 1974; Schegloff and Sacks 1973). According to Atkinson and Heritage, the main goal of conversation analysis is “the description and explicication of the competences that ordinary speakers use and rely on in participating in intelligible, socially organized interaction” (1984, p. 1). In other words, CA analysts do not start with a theory and proceed with the data analysis with the help of this theory, rather this method is data-driven. The researchers do not want to impose their theoretical preconception on the participants and analyze the properties of naturally occurring conversations (with the help of very detailed transcriptions), first of all the sequential organization of talk. Conversation analysts consider the context of conversations to be constructed in conversation itself and stress that those aspects of context that do not appear in conversation, should not be object of analysis. This means that research questions that are related for example to social identity, power or gender are studied in CA by close examination of naturally occurring interactions rather than by references to larger social structures or ideologies, in other words, the notion of discourse here is understood on the micro-level of conceptualization (Willig, 2013) that deals with action orientation of interactions. As I mentioned earlier, the

62 The program is available at http://www.laurenceanthony.net/software/antconc/.
narrow definition of discourse adopted by CA makes it difficult to explore the issues of power and ideology involved in the construction of the idea of repression of death and also the type of data I analyze in this thesis (published essays, books, archival material, etc.) is not suitable for conversation analysis. However the method of conversation analysis might be used in the later stages of my project, for example in analysis of the videos containing interviews with Herman Feifel where he discussed the early history of thanatology and the Western repression of death in the 1950s and 1960s.

The method that is often used by the researchers interested in the issues of power and ideology is Foucauldian analysis. In this type of analysis discourse is considered on the macro-level of conceptualization as a set of historically produced normative meanings (Willig, 2013). Foucauldian approach to discourse analysis does not offer set rules or procedures for conducting and avoid formalization, however, Arribas-Ayllon and Walkerdine (2008, p. 91) have singled out three broad dimensions in analysis of “discursive practices” that are used by Foucauldian analysts: Firstly, this kind of analysis presupposes historical inquiry or genealogy. Secondly, it pays attention to mechanisms of power and suggests a description of their functioning. And thirdly, Foucauldian analysis studies “subjectification”- the material and signifying practices in which human subjects are made up. An example of genealogical analysis can be found in the study by Carabine (2003) on illegitimacy and unmarried motherhood as reflected in historical social policy documents of the 19th and 20th century England. The aim of the study was to examine the role played by sexuality discourses in poverty policies and debates in constituting welfare subjects and eligibility for benefits. Another example of Foucauldian analysis is represented by work by N. Rose (1979) on genealogy of psychological complex which is defined as a “heterogeneous but regulated domain of agents, of practices, of discourses and apparatuses which has definite conditions and specifiable effects” (Rose, 1979, p. 6). As we can see, discourse in Foucauldian analysis is understood very broadly. As Arribas-Ayllon and Walkerdine noted, when Foucault speaks about discourse, “he is not referring to a particular instance of language use -a piece of text, an utterance or linguistic performance - but describing rules, divisions and systems of a particular body of knowledge.” (2008, p. 99). Foucauldian analysis, as Carla Willig puts it, is typically dealing with the research questions like “What characterizes the discursive worlds people inhabit and what are their implications for possible ways-of-being?” (Willig, 2008, p.127). In my opinion, Foucauldian discourse analysis might be the method of
choice in the later stages of my project on construction repression of death, for example in a study of functioning of the thesis of repression of death in institutional setting such as hospice or hospital and issues of power involved in it. However it does not seem to match the research questions of this study and does not provide the tools for analysis of the idea of repression of death in academic discourse. These considerations prompted me to turn to Discursive and Rhetorical Psychology and Critical Discourse Analysis in order to better understand the construction of the RoD thesis and the role it played in the emergence and development of thanatology.

Discursive Social Psychology (DSP) originated in the UK in the late 1980s when the books *Discourse and Social Psychology* by J. Potter and M. Wetherell (1987) and *Arguing and Thinking* (1987) by M. Billig were published (Augoustinos and Tileaga, 2012). Discursive Social Psychology can be viewed as a part of the critical movement that was a reaction to the prevalence of cognitive psychology, its methodology and its vision of psychic phenomena, in the discipline of psychology. Unlike cognitive psychology with its realist and essentialist perspective, DSP suggested another view of human mind: rather than studying internal mental processes in order to understand how people think, what emotions they experience, and also how view themselves and others, DSP suggested re-conceptualizing psychological topics as “discourse practices” (Edwards, 2005, p. 260). In other words, according to DSP people do not use language in order to express their internal states or their thoughts and opinions, rather the psychological processes of thinking, identification, intention are accomplished by language use and are essentially social.

According to Wiggins and Potter (2008), Discursive Social Psychology is based on three core observations about the nature of discourse: firstly, discourse for DSP scholars is both constructed and constructive. This means that discourse is made of linguistic building blocks like words, idioms, repertoires, etc., which are used in various ways to present a certain versions of the words. Discourse is also constructive because these versions of the world are produced within the talk itself and do not exist outside this talk or prior to it. Secondly, discourse is action-oriented, in other words, in speaking or writing people carry out actions, they blame, justify, invite, etc. These actions do not exist separately from the talk in which they are produced. Finally, discourse is situated, which means that discursive actions do not exist in vacuum, they
are understood according to what precedes or follows them. They are also situated within certain institutional setting or within a particular argumentative framework. Thus in order to understand discourse fully, we should examine it as it happens and take into consideration its context.

Discursive Social Psychology shares much in common with Rhetorical Social Psychology developed by Billig (1987; 1991), which might be viewed as a sub-section of a more general discursive psychology. As Billig (1995) noted discussing the differences between the two approaches,

“Discursive psychology” aims to produce a general account of how psychological phenomena are constituted within language. “Rhetorical psychology” concentrates on a particular form of language - rhetorical or argumentative discourses (p. 67).

Discursive Rhetorical Psychology following Aristotle stresses that discourse is rhetorical in the sense that everything that is said or written is produced in response to the competing versions of reality, actual or potential, and each argumentative move is potentially contestable by counter-move (Billig, 1991). These strategies for arguing can be considered as building blocks of thinking and thus our private thoughts have a structure of public arguments and are essentially dialogic. Methods of Discursive Rhetorical Psychology were used to study such issues as mind and repression (Billig, 1999), beliefs and attitudes (Billig, 1992), construction of collective memories and manipulation (Billig and Marinho, 2014), prejudices (Tilesaga, 2005), argumentation (Jowett, 2014), etc. Gibson (2013, 2015) applied the methods of Rhetorical psychology to historical material and analysed the Milgram’s obedience experiments and the strategies used by its participants who resisted the directives of the experimenters. In my thesis I will use the methods of Rhetorical psychology as applied to the thesis of the Western repression of death in the early thanatological literature in order to understand what made this thesis persuasive. I will discuss arguments in favor of this thesis offered by the early thanatological authors and analyze rhetorical strategies that helped to introduce this idea to the discourse on death and dying and were used in its construction.

In my analysis I also draw from Psychoanalytic Discursive Psychology (Billig, 2006) that unites two seemingly opposing psychological approaches: discursive psychology and psychoanalytic theory. Discursive Psychology, as I mentioned earlier, stresses the action orientation of language
and considers the traditional objects of psychological research like cognition, emotion, identity, etc. to be discursively constructed. Psychoanalysis focuses on understanding repressed phenomena and on the way the act of repression produces the unconscious, which can be important not only for understanding the human psyche, but for finding out of how ideology works. Psychoanalytic Discursive Psychology views repression as discursive activity, which is constituted within everyday language. As Billig (2006) pointed out, “language is repressive as well as expressive” (p. 22). Language creates the necessity of repression in that it distinguishes between what is appropriate to say and what is considered to be inappropriate. It also provides the means for repression (for example, changing the topic of conversation). The propensity of language to be repressive also creates the possibility of repression in internal dialogue or thought. In my analysis of the construction of the thesis of repression of death in the works of early thanatologists, I pay attention not only on how this idea was discursively constructed, but also on what was repressed in the process of constructing of the idea of the repression of death by the key thanatological authors, first of all by Herman Feifel (1959). In particular, I try to discuss absences, inconsistencies, ambiguities, irony in the early thanatological texts and try to show that these absences may have ideological overtones.

In addition to Discursive and Rhetorical Psychology in my analytic chapters I also used Critical discourse analysis (CDA). This method originated in the late 1980s- early 1990s and stems from the works of the prominent European linguists Norman Fairclough, Teun van Dijk, and Ruth Wodak, who studied the way language, ideology and power were interrelated (Billig, 2003, p. 35). As van Dijk (1993) has pointed out, CDA focuses on the role of discourse in the (re)production of, and challenge to dominance, which is defined as “exercise of social power by elites, institutions or groups, that results in social inequality, including political, class, ethnic, racial and gender inequality” (pp. 249-250). There are several strands in CDA, associated with the works of Fairclough (1995; 2003) and van Dijk (2008), who studied the role cognition in maintaining oppressive social practices and reproducing ideologies. Wodak and her colleagues (Wodak and Meyer, 2001) have developed the discourse-historical approach, that deals with the in-depth analysis of hegemonic discourse practices within a particular social domain and pays particular attention to studying diachronic changes in discourses. Although CDA is not homogenous, in the words of Weninger (2008), “what unites all scholars engaged in CDA is a critical perspective that is geared toward examining the subtle ways in which unequal power
relations are maintained and reproduced through language use” (p. 145). Critical discourse analysis is widely used outside the field of linguistics in the social sciences (psychology, sociology, cultural studies, etc.). Research problems that can be studied with the help of this approach are related to understanding of how discourse contributes to and reproduces various forms of social inequality (for a detailed overview of CDA research see Flowerdew, 2008; Weiss and Wodak, 2003;). Research projects in CDA usually start with identifying a social problem that has a discursive aspect. This problem is often related to unequal power distribution in the society and oppression and marginalization of particular groups by dominant groups (for example, nationalism and racism). The data for analysis are written texts (articles in newspapers and magazines, textbooks, written advertisement, etc.) or transcripts of oral interactions. These data are examined for properties that are considered to contribute to their ideological shaping. According to Fairclough (2001, pp. 241-242), doing CDA involves working with the texts on different levels of their organization, for example, on the level of whole text (its narrative and argumentative structure), clauses combination, simple sentences (use of transitive or intransitive verbs, passive or active voice, mood, modality, etc.), and words (choice of vocabulary, synonyms, metaphorical uses of words).

In my study elements of CDA are used in the analysis of the early thanatological writings, namely the essay “The Pornography of Death” by Geoffrey Gorer (1955) and the contributions of Herman Feifel to the volume The Meaning of Death (1959). In my opinion, application of CDA to the analysis of these texts is useful because both texts to a certain extent deal with the issues of power and ideology. In the essay by Gorer, the stance of the author and his treatment of the mass culture of the time reflected his social class bias. Classism, a form of oppression based on class privilege (unearned advantage and conferred dominance) and power is most often studied in psychological literature as applied to psychotherapy and counselling psychology (Appio et al., 2013; Smith, 2005; Smith, 2008;). However the issues of class domination are also involved in the construction of psychological knowledge (Prilleltensky, 1994). In his essay Gorer constructed the violence in the media as “pornography of death”, associated the repression of death with the popular mass culture of the time, and contrasted it to the culture of the elite, to which he belonged. Thus the idea of the Western repression of death in the essay by Gorer becomes highly ideological as I try to show in Chapter 6. Critical Discourse Analysis allowed me to uncover how the issues of ideology, class and power featured in this essay.
CDA was also used in chapter 7 to analyse the early writings of Herman Feifel. In my opinion, the use of CDA here is relevant and useful because the construction of the idea of repression of death in these essentially popular texts was reinforced by the dominant “ideology of science” – attributing social authority and power to science as the guardian of the truth in the popular discourse (Edmond and Mercer, 1999). Critical approaches to the issues of power and ideology involved in presentation of science and scientific findings in the non-scientific texts is usually connected with studies of their representation in the news media (Carvalho, 2007; Edmond and Mercer, 1999). In chapter 7 I use CDA in order to bring to light the way Herman Feifel in his volume *The Meaning of Death* draws from scientific discourse in order to introduce the notion of repression of death and to construct it as a scientific fact.

### 4.4. Generic analysis for studying the genre of the early publications of Geoffrey Gorer and Herman Feifel.

Finally, my interest in the early thanatological writings by G. Gorer and H. Feifel started from questioning the way they were constructed in the history of the discipline, and one of the problems I faced was related to difficulties in classifying these texts as belonging to scholarly discourse. This made me interested in the notion of genre. In my opinion, the question of a text belonging or not belonging to a certain genre (in case of my study, to the genre of scientific prose or scientific research article) cannot be satisfactory resolved using the approaches I mentioned earlier. That is why I decided to turn to the rhetorical analysis of genre or generic analysis/generic criticism, which originated in the works of rhetorical scholar Edwin Black, (1965), who coined this term.

The notion of genre is a key term for generic criticism. The traditional definitions of genre focus almost solely on the formal features of the texts (Devitt, 2004). They are associated with literary criticism and are applied mostly to literary genres (Bawarshi and Reiff, 2010). The current genre studies concentrate on non-literary texts and take into account the larger historical and socio-political forces that affect rhetorical practice and thus shape the genre. The origin of these ideas can be found in the works of Aristotle, who took what today might be considered a “social approach” to genre, in that he stressed the functions of oratory. In his book Rhetoric (Book 1, Chapter 3 (Kennedy, 1994, p. 58)) Aristotle described the three genres of oratory: judicial,
deliberative and epideictic. He used characteristics of the audience as a basis for his classifications of genres and thus linked the notion of genre to the rhetorical situations under which the speeches were to be delivered. The idea of importance of rhetorical situation for the definition of genre was later developed in the works of rhetorical critics of the 1960s, first of all by Edwin Black. Black suggested that there were distinctive recurrent situations, in which discourse occurs and that these situations shape the discourse produced in response to them. According to Black, there was a limited number of such situations and also there was a limited number of ways, in which a rhetor could respond to a given situation type. The task of a critic thus was to study the recurrences of a given situational type through history and rhetorical responses available in these situations as well as audience effects resulting from the constellation of particular situations and rhetorical strategies. The information about correspondence between situations and historically available rhetorical responses became a basis for understanding and evaluating any specific rhetorical genre (Black, 1965, p. 133).

Similar ideas were expressed by Lloyd Bitzer (1968), who considered rhetorical situation to be a key factor in defining the genre because it “generated” rhetorical action. Rhetorical discourse according to Bitzer comes into existence as a response to situation, in the same sense that an answer comes into existence in response to a question. The rhetorical situation consists of amalgamation of “persons, events, objects, relations, and an exigence which strongly invites utterance” (Bitzer, 1968, p. 6). Thus, rhetorical discourse according to Bitzer is reactive rather than proactive. Some situations are recurrent and give rise to typified responses, which are genres. The subsequent theorists of genre continued the line of thought suggested by Black and Bitzer. For example, Campbell and Jamieson summed up the results of the 1976 conference on genre in the introduction to the book Form and Genre: Shaping Rhetorical Action (1978) they edited. These authors viewed genres as “stylistic and substantive responses to perceived situational demands” (Campbell and Jamieson, 1990, p. 334). These situational demands serve as the basis for the definition of genres. The important feature of definition of genre suggested by Campbell and Jamieson was that they viewed genre as an interplay or constellation of

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63 The distinction was made on the basis of the function of the audience: the audience might be either a judge or not a judge. In the former case the audience might be required to make a decision either about the past or about the future. If the audience is supposed to make a decision about the past and this decision concerns what is just, the genre of the speech is judicial. If the decision is related to the future and concerns the best interests of the community, the speech is classified as deliberative. If the audience is not making a decision in a court, the speech addressed to it is called epideictic. It deals with the issue of what is honorable and involves praise or blame.
substantive and stylistic forms that in isolation appear in other discourses. Thus, genre according to them is a dynamic response to a recurrent situation. What makes a certain genre distinctive is recurrence of these forms together in fusion or constellation. Substantive and stylistic forms together create a certain effect in a particular situation, thus genre becomes pragmatic category, it combines certain perception of situation by the speakers with their response to it. These ideas were further developed by Caroline Miller in her seminal essay “Genre as a Social Action” (1984). She was also influenced by the rhetorical theorist Kenneth Burke’s (1973), in particular by his ideas on identification as a key factor in defining rhetorical situation or by the role of motivation in rhetorical action. Miller argued that definition of genre should be based on the action performed by discourse and should contribute to understanding of how discourse works. In the words of Miller, this definition should reflect “the rhetorical experience of the people who create and interpret the discourse” (Miller, 1984, p. 152). If genre represents action, its definition should also include situation and motive, because human actions can be interpreted only taking into consideration their context and possible motives. One of the recent definition of rhetorical genre suggested by Hyland (2009) incorporates the ideas of genre theorists that I discussed earlier and defines genres as “rhetorical actions that writers draw on to respond to perceived repeated situations; users see certain language choices as representing effective ways of getting things done in familiar contexts” (p. 210). Genre analysis according to Hyland (2009) is therefore based on the assumption that the features of a similar group of texts depend on the social context of their creation and use, and that those features can be described in a way that relates a text to others like it and to the choices and constraints acting on text producers.

The debates on the nature and properties of genre influenced the practice of generic criticism. Rhetorical scholars often analyse not only discourse, but also variety of other factors in order to define the genre of the texts (or other artifacts like images) they study. Benoit in his article on genesis of rhetorical action (2000) categorized the studies within the field of generic rhetorical criticism into four groups: the first group considered the purpose of the discourse to be the defining feature of the genre. To the second group belonged the studies where attention was focused primarily on the situational features as defining characteristics of the genre. The third group of studies viewed the characteristics of the rhetor as foundational in conceptualization the genre. Finally, a large group of genre studies focused on the form of the message as key feature constituting the genre. Using this categorization as a basis, I would like to briefly overview how
genre scholars perform rhetorical analysis of genre focusing on the situational characteristics, purpose, rhetor and text.

All generic critics dealt in some way with text analysis. Some studies (Black, 1978; Cali, 1999; Carpenter, 1978; Clark, 1977; Clark, 1979; Gustainis, 1982) presented only text analysis. As Rowland (1991) noted, text remains the main object of analysis because we have the most developed methods for it. There are two things that might be important to notice here: firstly, the critics use different units of analysis, or units of analysis of different degree of generality in order to define the genre. The most large-scale unit of analysis is the “general theme” of an artifact (published text, image, etc.) or a group of artifacts. This unit is used for example in Aly’s analysis of gallows speeches (1969) or in the study of apologias by Downey (1993). Among the units of smaller scale are “rhetorical move” and “rhetorical strategy”\(^\text{64}\). These units are used in the studies by Brummett, 1984; Buehler, 1998; Carpenter, 1978; Downey, 1993; Gunn, 2004; Hoover, 1989; Johanessen, 1986; Johnson, 2004, etc.). Finally, some authors (Black, 1965; Campbell, 1986; Downey, 1983) analyse rhetorical style or rhetoric. This is the most fine-grained type of analysis, which deals with the discursive peculiarities of the texts. When speaking about style, rhetorical scholars analyzed types of arguments and evidence, the use and avoidance of certain terms, the use of namecalling, descriptions, quotations, forms of dialogue, references to the Bible, metaphors and figurative analogies, personal pronouns, and also rhetorical questions, modes of speech organization, tone and rhetorical persona. Also some genre critics worked with different units of analysis simultaneously: for example Downey (1983) in his description of the genre of apologia defines the general themes of this genre, then discusses typical rhetorical moves in this genre and then proceeds to the analysis of rhetorical style. The second thing that one can notice here is that generic critics use various methods of analysis. Of course first of all they use rhetorical methods and look at different aspects and topics of rhetoric such as analysis of rhetorical moves and strategies, themes, style, “dialectics of

\(^{64}\) The notions of rhetorical move and rhetorical strategy are sometimes used by generic critics interchangeably. However I would like to follow understanding of these concepts suggested by Bhatia (1993). According to Bhatia, rhetorical move gives genre its typical cognitive structure and serves a certain communicative intention which is subservient to the overall communicative purpose of the genre (p. 30). By rhetorical strategy Bhatia understands an individual choice made by the author in order to realize a particular rhetorical move in a particular text. Apparently, when generic critics attempt to describe the genre, they speak about rhetorical moves, which serve as a rhetorical backbone of the genre, especially if they work on the level of generality described by Fisher (1980) as “the level of conventions”. However when the task of generic analysis is to establish generic participation or perform generic application, the critics tend to analyze generic strategies of individual artifacts.
permanence and change” inspired by Burke (Buehler, 1998), and “movements of arguments” inspired by Tulmin (Clark, 1977; Clark, 1979). However generic critics also employ some elements of corpus analysis (Clark, 1977; Clark, 1979), content analysis (Schryer, 1993; Gustainis, 1982) and narrative analysis (Murphy, 2009) in order to buttress their arguments.

Genre scholars also analyse rhetorical situation or – more broadly- the context in order to define the genre of texts they are working with. However, as Rowland (1991) had noted, non-text based criticism is associated with many problems. First of all it is not easy to define what the notion of context includes. In Devitt’s (1993) words, not everything about the surrounding environment (the temperature, what is happening in the next block) is relevant for the language use and some things outside the surrounding environment (potential readers, previous texts) are relevant. When speaking about the notion of context in rhetorical criticism it might be convenient to distinguish between the broader and narrower context or “the context of culture” and “the context of situation” in terms of Malinowski (1923). The context of situation (or the immediate circumstances of speech delivery) for genre scholars included place (Buehler, 1998; Gronbeck, 1978) and time (Murphy, 1990) of speech delivery, audience and its reaction of the speech (Aly, 1969; Buehler, 1998; Downey, 1993), behaviour of a rhetor (Aly, 1969; Ritter, 1980), etc. All these characteristics could be applied mostly to a certain category of discourse, namely to the actual speeches delivered in response to recurring occasions like inaugurals, eulogies, State of the Union addresses, etc. The context of culture has been analyzed in the literature much more often than the context of situation. Some genre scholars focused mainly on the social, historical and economic situation of the time (Aly, 1969; Buehler, 1998; Johanessen, 1986; Murphy, 1990), governmental policies towards the subject touched upon in the speeches (Buehler, 1998), important political events of the time and public reaction to them (Martin, 1976), and also history and image of the political party or radical group the rhetoric of which was analyzed (Johnson, 2004). The others were more interested in the intellectual climate and analyzed ideology and doctrines crucial for understanding of the artifacts (Gunn, 2004; Hoover, 1989; Quimby, 1964) and the history of a particular genre (Schryer, 1964).

Speaking about the construction of the author (or rhetor) in generic criticism, I would like first of all to note that rhetors have been relatively rarely considered by genre scholars. Generic critics presented information about rhetors’ identity and the events of their lives, which were viewed as relevant to the discourse production and defining the genre. A brief political biography was
often considered to be important for understanding the gene of the speeches of political leaders (Hoover, 1989; Johnson, 2004; Murphy, 1990). Also such characteristics as social class (Campbel, 1986), educational background (Schryer, 1993), criminal history (Aly, 1969; Hoover, 1989;), roles in academia (Schryer, 1993), and topics of the previous speeches (Campbell, 1986) were viewed as important factors shaping the genre.

Finally, a small number of genre studies based their definition of genre on the purpose of the analyzed artifacts. This might be related to the fact that it is not easy to define the purpose in any precise way. As Rowland (1991) noted, we had no window into the mind of the rhetor and thus no simple means of specifying his or her purpose. According to Rowland (1991, p. 137), the purpose may be identified on the basis of external data (memoirs, letters, statements of goals, survey material, and so forth), a consideration of shared social functions (for example, the generally accepted functions served by eulogies), or from the text itself. For example, the purpose of apologetic discourse according to Kruse (1981) was reparation of one’s damaged public image. Similarly, the purpose of resignation was identified by Martin (1976) as an attempt to reconcile conflicting interests of the resigner and the survivor and to meet public expectations. Apparently, the purpose of a certain category of discourse, namely of the actual speeches, which have generally accepted functions are relatively easy to identify. However the purpose of other types of discourse might not be so obvious and identifying it requires analysis of the context. For example, Murphy (1990) in his study of political jeremiad analyzed the context of R. Kennedy’s speeches and focused on the political events of the time: racial tensions, death of M.L. King and public reaction to it. The purpose of jeremiad was identified as restoration of social harmony in times of crisis and also social control. In another example, Gunn (2004) discussed the genre of exorcism. When speaking about the context, he described in detail the demonic rhetoric in the popular culture and the reasons for its increase in the recent years. The purpose of this type of rhetoric is identified by Gunn as demonization of entire nations and justification of violence.

Besides the differences in focus of analysis, studies of genre also differ in their tasks and strategies. As Foss (2004) has pointed out, the main purpose of generic criticism is to understand rhetorical practices by discerning the similarities in rhetorical situations and the rhetoric constructed in response to them, to discover how people create individual instances of meaning and value within structured discursive field (p.193). This task, as Harrell and Linkugel (1978) showed in their article on genre, can be accomplished by adopting several strategies. These
strategies are generic description, generic participation and generic application. *Generic description* is essentially inductive and involves examination of several texts, which leads to generalization about their rhetorical similarities. Genre critic tries to determine, whether a specific genre, which unites these texts exists in reality, and then tries to describe this genre. The other two strategies (generic participation and generic application) are deductive. *Generic participation* is an opposite operation to generic description: genre scholars move from the definition and description of an established genre to the text under analysis in order to understand, whether it participates in this genre. Finally, *generic application*, similarly to generic participation, involves application of a specific genre model to the text. However instead of simply determining, whether a particular text belongs to a particular genre, we need to assess, how well the text (which has been already labeled as an example of a particular genre) conforms to this genre and how it functions in the context of this genre.

Generic analysis is rarely applied to the problems of psychology proper, although the genre of academic publications in psychology as compared to that of other academic disciplines or popular psychological articles is often discussed in linguistics (Bruce, 2008; Bruce, 2014; Loi and Sweetnam Evans, 2010; Moshtaghi, 2010;). The concept of genre is sometimes used in studies of the history and theory of psychology and other “psy-disciplines” (Rose, 1998). For example, in the article by Berkenkotter (2008), generic analysis was used in the diachronic study of psychiatric case reporting. She examined “the rise and near demise of psychoanalysis through a genre-based historical lens” (p. 189) and suggested that there could be two “revolutions” in psychiatry that were reflected in the specific features of the genre dynamics of the psychiatric case reports. As applied to the analysis of academic discourse in psychology, generic analysis might be useful because it allows the researchers to take a closer look at the construction of psychological knowledge in the context of genre. In other words, generic analysis makes it possible to trace genre specific ways of reasoning and forms of argumentation that affect the choice of topics that can be discussed within academic psychological discourse and also the ways these topics are rendered there. As Thomas Luckman has noted, “Once one has ‘chosen’ a genre for a communicative project, it is the genre that ‘chooses’ the parts for its accomplishment” (Luckmann, 2009, p. 73). Thus, the notion of genre might be an important concept for understanding the interrelations between scholarly and public discourse on the self and
eventually for understanding the way human mind, character traits, etc. are constructed in the scholarly and public discourse.

Returning to the topic of my thesis (the early history of death studies and its key texts), I would like first of all to consider the task and strategy of generic analysis of these texts. As I tried to show in the chapter 2, the 1955 essay “The Pornography of Death” by Geoffrey Gorer as well as the 1959 volume *The Meaning of Death* edited by Herman Feifel (and his contributions to the volume) were constructed as belonging to the genre of academic prose by the historians of the discipline (Feifel, 1974; Pine, 1977; Doka, 2003; Bryant, 2007), but did not seem to fit very well into it. Following the conceptualization of Harrell and Linkugel (1978), which I discussed earlier, I would consider the strategy of my analysis to be *deductive*: I will compare the early thanatological texts with the pre-existing model of academic discourse. The concrete strategy of my analysis can be defined as “generic participation” (Harrell and Linkugel, 1978): I will move from the definition and description of the established genre of academic article to the texts authored by Gorer and Feifel in order to show that these texts might not belong to (or participate in) this genre.

My analysis of the genre of the early publications by Geoffrey Gorer and Herman Feifel will be based primarily on the analysis of their discourse, which will be supplemented by an analysis of the context in which these texts were written and published and also by the analysis of the biographies of their authors. The aspects of discourse to be analyzed are largely defined by the existing literature on the genre of academic article and academic prose. I will analyse these texts paying attention to the small scale and intermediate units of analysis. The latter include analysis of the specific rhetorical moves, which are typical for the genre of academic article (Swales, 1990), and the former are often defined as “rhetorical style” of the text (Black, 1965; Campbell, 1986; Downey, 1983). This involves a fine-grained type of analysis, which does not deal with the rigid structure of the text, but rather with its discursive peculiarities. In my analysis I will discuss the style of the texts by Gorer and Feifel paying attention to the types of arguments they use, metaphors and figurative language, use of quotations, personal pronouns, use of verb (tense, voice, types of reporting verbs), variety of textual characteristics of academic prose like stance, engagement, self-referencing (see for example, Hyland 2001; 2005; 2009; Hyland and Guinda, 2012), rhetorical persona, etc., in order to establish whether these texts participate in the genre of academic article. I will also use quantitative methods of analysis of these texts (corpus analysis)
in order to support my argument. As I mentioned earlier, quantitative linguistic methods combined with rhetorical analysis are often used in genre analysis (Clark, 1977; Clark, 1979; Schryer, 1993; Gustainis, 1982). In addition to textual analysis, I will also analyze the context of the publications by Gorer and Feifel, paying attention not only to their immediate context and publication history, but also to the broader social and historical context (as reflected for example in the history of *Encounter* magazine where the essay by Gorer was published). My analysis will also include a discussion of the biographies of Geoffrey Gorer and Herman Feifel, which as I mentioned earlier, can be used as an additional argument in determining the genre of their writings. I would like to exclude the analysis of purpose of the works by Geoffrey Gorer and Herman Feifel from my analysis. As I mentioned earlier, analysis of the purpose of a text is often based on a detailed study of the personal documents of its author (diaries, correspondence). In the case of my research, although I performed archival research aimed at uncovering the publication history of the essays by Gorer and Feifel, I did not come across any documents that could reliably indicate their purpose.

**4.5. Conclusion.**

In conclusion, I would like once more to stress that in my thesis I use different methods of analysis because of the different goals and different objects of analysis in my research chapters. Corpus analysis methodology was applied to the study of the concept of repression in the American press (*Time* magazine). The analysis presented in this chapter provided background for the study of the key early thanatological texts presented in chapters 6 and 7. I used Discursive and Rhetorical Psychology and Critical Discourse Analysis in order to analyse the way the idea of the Western repression of death was constructed in the early publications by Gorer and Feifel and also method of generic analysis in order to be able to consider the genre of these texts. In my opinion, this multi-method approach might be useful for examining the construction of “multidimensional” themes like the repression of death in both scientific and lay publications, as well as those like the essay by Gorer which are situated in-between.
5. The notion of repression in everyday discourse: the history of its dissemination by Time magazine (1923-1979).

5.1. Introduction.
In this chapter I discuss the notion of repression proper, the way it gradually lost its ties with psychological discourse and entered everyday speech and also the way it was constructed in ordinary discourse (as reflected in Time magazine). The idea of this chapter emerged early in the course of my research: reading the works of early thanatological authors like Geoffrey Gorer and Herman Feifel, who claimed that death in the Western society of the time was repressed made me interested in exploring this concept. I was interested in the very origin of thanatology as a science that according to the historians of the discipline had to overcome strong resistance on the part of scientific community and society at large in order to be able to openly study and discuss the subject of death. The possibility of a new branch of science, thanatology, emerging despite societal repression of its subject seemed to be an exciting topic for research, and the thesis of repression of death (RoD thesis) put forward by the early thanatological authors deserved a detailed study. However before approaching the analysis of the RoD thesis I thought it was important to analyze how the notion of repression proper became a part of public discourse, whether the notion of repression has been already spread in the public discourse and how the construction of repression might have affected the construction of repression of death.

Another consideration regarding the importance of studying the notion of repression proper before repression of death might be the following: as I mentioned in the Chapter 2, in the existing accounts of the history of the discipline Gorer had been credited with “setting forth a seminal view of why modern death has become an object of prudish aversion and a taboo topic” (Pine, 1977, p. 61). However Gorer’s essay cannot be viewed as a conventional scholarly article, as I will try to show in the next chapter (chapter 6), rather it was essentially a popular text. Also, Gorer, as it is evident from his biography (chapter 3), did not receive any formal training in psychoanalysis or psychology and did not write for the professional audience of psychologists. This might mean that the concept of repression in his essay was not used as a professional term, as a part of professional psychological or psychoanalytic discourse. Rather, by the time the essay was written, repression had become a familiar and widely used word, a part of public discourse on the self. If it were not so, Gorer in his essay possibly would not be able to discuss this idea
with such ease and especially to refer to repressed sexuality as a model of repression that preceded the repression of death. In this context if we compare the word “repression” with terms that are less known by the general public such as countercathexis or mortido, we may notice that the use of these words in a popular text without providing a definition or an explanation might be a little awkward, to say nothing about building the whole popular essay around one of them.

In order to obtain some preliminary information about the construction of repression proper in public discourse I turned to the Merriam-Webster’s dictionary. According to the 2003 edition of the dictionary, the stem “repress*” in the English language can be traced back to 14th century. The most common meaning of the verb “repress” is “to put down by force”, as in “repress a disturbance”. The next in popularity meaning refers to the processes that take place within the human psyche and can be viewed as referring to self-control (“hold in by self-control, “to prevent the natural or normal expression”). The combination of political and personal in the meaning of this verb might suggest that there is a link between governing the society and governing the self (similar to the notion of inhibition studied in detail by Smith (1992)). It suggests that these two applications of power are interrelated and that control over human beings on individual or group levels is exercised in essentially the same way. The second meaning of repression, “repression as holding in by self-control or preventing from expression” (like in repression of laughter or anger) can be perceived as “folk-psychological”. It carries an idea of disciplining the self: the self is viewed as an entity that ought to be controlled. Repression here is a voluntary action aimed at managing one’s self and this idea presupposes the existence of “locus of power” within the individual. The third meaning of repression as “excluding something from consciousness” reflects a transition to a different concept of the self. It presupposes the existence of the unconscious and signifies transfer of power over the human psyche from the subject of repression to an authority figure outside it. Our alleged ability to repress and to be unaware of the repressed presupposes that we may deceive ourselves about our own thoughts and feelings, but there are qualified others, who know better than we do what was repressed and why. Thus our unconscious becomes “accountable”, “transparent” for the professional gaze. The word “repression” defined in this way allows us to think of ourselves as capable of repressing, in other words, it induces us to think that our self is divided and that there is a certain part of ourselves that we cannot account for. Thus psychological words that we usually pick up from the popular press and talk shows turn out to be instruments of self-control and at the same time instruments
of control over us on the part of mental health experts: it is those who “own” the self-words and have the right to define and redefine their meaning. It is up to them to judge, whether the popularised psychological knowledge we possess is valid as applied to our situation. Thus the notion of repression might be an important part of the current “regime of the self”, which following Rose (1998) can be viewed as

a common normativity - a kind of family resemblance in the regulative ideals concerning persons that are at work in all these diverse practices that act upon human beings, young and old, rich and poor; men and women, black and white, prisoner, mad person, patient, boss and worker: ideals concerning our existence as individuals inhabited by an inner psychology that animates and explains our conduct and strives for self-realization, self-esteem, and self-fulfilment in everyday life. (p. 3).

The noun “repression” is presented in the *Merriam-Webster’s Dictionary* as a part of psychoanalytic system of concepts and defined with the help of the notions “anxiety”, “exclude”, “operate”, “consciousness” and “the unconscious”. However the dictionary does not mark this entry as belonging to some specific field of knowledge (other than by means of concepts used to define “repress” and “repression”) and tacitly presents it as a something existing in the real word, something objective.

If we go back to the previous editions of the dictionary, we may notice that the words “repress” and “repression” in the 1970s edition of the Webster’s New 20th Century Dictionary were marked as belonging to psychiatry. The definitions of these words included psychoanalytic terms such as “unconscious impulses”, “conscious mind”, “dynamic”, “level of consciousness”. The 1960s edition drew upon psychoanalytic theory even more. It defined repression as an “ego-defence process” (this may reveal the influence of Anna Freud on the authors of the dictionary) and used psychoanalytic terminology (“conversation”, “neurosis”, “sublimation”, “symbolization”). The 1913 edition of Webster’s did not include repression in its “psychoanalytic meaning”. These four entries from the different editions of the dictionary might indicate the gradual popularization and legitimization of “repression”: we may notice that with time it progressively lost its ties with psychoanalysis and analytic terminology and was presented in the dictionary as something self-evident, as a common knowledge.
In this connection it might be possible to invoke the ideas of Serge Moscovici. In his seminal book *Psychoanalysis: Its Image and Its Public.* (2008) Moscovici showed how psychoanalytic ideas, which were initially intended for the professional audience, were popularized and what changes occurred to them in the process of popularization. According to Moscovici these changes include first of all “objectification”, the process when “ideas are no longer perceived to be products of the intellectual activity of certain minds, and are seen as something that exists outside” (p. 55). In other words, the psychoanalytic ideas started being perceived as a part of objective reality, a legitimate part of the human psyche, and were integrated with familiar themes in common sense. In the words of Burr (2002) objectification gives them their “characteristic and reassuring feeling of solidity” (p. 110. For example, talking about anorexia or dyslexia people are referring not to some abstract concepts, but to the presence of the real entity, possibly in the form of genes or part of the brain. At the same time these concepts have not been a part of public discourse on the self until recently.

Moscovici in his study concentrated mostly on the process of dissemination of specialist psychoanalytic knowledge. The opposite process, when popular ideas on gender, race, sexuality, social relations, etc., are adopted and tested by scientific psychology, often non-reflexively, is considered in the literature much less often. According to Myers (2003), it is hard for us to see the interconnections between scientific and public knowledge because we are culturally conditioned to view science as separated from lay knowledge and also as knowledge that has higher status. But drawing from the popular discourse is not unusual for scientific psychology especially if we take into consideration the history of institutionalisation of this discipline: psychological knowledge emerged to a lesser extent in universities, and mainly in psychological laboratories in industry. This means that rather than being a purely academic endeavor, psychology absorbed the norms, ideas, and values that have already existed in the public discourse (Rose, 1997). As will be argued in chapters 6 and 7, this process can also be applied to death studies: Geoffrey Gorer in his essay made use of the concepts and explanatory models that had originated in psychoanalysis, but became essentially popular and belonged to the realm of common sense. Herman Feifel built on the essay by Gorer and upgraded these concepts (first of all, the idea of the Western repression of death) to become a part of the scientific discipline of thanatology. The presence of the repression of death thesis in thanatological literature might be seen as an example of this “bottom up” movement of the ideas.
In this chapter I will make an attempt to examine, how the concept of repression had been popularized and become a part of our everyday speech. I will consider the articles published in *Time* magazine, one of the key publications in the American media market of the time, in order to trace, how the words “repression” and “repress” were used throughout its history, starting from the first 1923 issue of the magazine up to the late 1970s, when many seminal works in thanatology were being published. The research questions I was interested in were the following:

- How did the concept of repression become a part of public discourse? How did the process of transition of repression from the professional psychological discourse to public discourse occur?
- What role did experts play in this process?
- By the mid-1950s-early 1960s when the classical articles on thanatology by Geoffrey Gorer and Herman Feifel were published, did the concepts of repression become a part of popular discourse?
- How was the notion of repression constructed in the popular discourse by the late 1970s?

In the following section, I will present a diachronic analysis of the distribution of the words “repression” and “repress” in *Time* magazine. It might help us to better understand, how the notion of repression came to be diffused in public discourse. After this I would like to discuss how the notion of repression was constructed in the magazine and also what role experts (first of all psychologists and psychoanalysts) played in its popularization. The research in this chapter is based mostly on the corpus analysis methodology (Biber et al., 1998; Kennedy, 1998). The importance of corpus linguistics methodology for discourse analysis, which is often accused of making arbitrary conclusions on the basis of insufficient data was stressed by Orpin (2005).

5.2. *Time* magazine as source of information about dissemination of the notion of repression.

*Time* magazine is one of important newsmagazines on the English language media market. First published in 1923, the magazine became increasingly popular and by 1940s was “one of the most widely read and quoted publications in the United States” (Firebaugh, 1940). During the last decades *Time* was one of the two most popular magazines, sharing this position with the *Newsweek*. In 2007 the average circulation of *Time* within the US amounted to 4 million copies, its audience counted 29 million readers worldwide, and the number of unique visitors to the
website of the magazine came to 5.2 million (“The State of The News Media”, 2008). This means that *Time* magazine can provide us with a plethora of examples of how the words “repression” and “repress” were used. The first issue of the magazine was published in March 1923. The web-site of *Time* contains archive of all its back issues, which makes it possible to perform a diachronic analysis. This makes *Time* a valuable source of information about disseminating of the notion of repression and generally about dissemination of psychological concepts by the media.

The status of a *Time* magazine may also prove to be important in studying dissemination of the notion of repression. *Time* is considered to be a highly authoritative magazine not only because of its wide circulation, but also due to the status of its audience. According to the recent “State of the News Media” report, its American readers are at average 43-45 years old and have an income that allows us to classify them as middle-middle or upper-middle class (Cashell, 2007). *Time* is a conservative general interest magazine for mature socially active professionals and as a consequence might be considered to be more authoritative as compared to many tabloids or youth periodicals. This power might also be viewed as an asset in popularisation of psychology.

*Time* magazine viewed as a corpus consists of 2980 issues (between 1923 and the end of 1979) and more than 110 260 000 words (with the average issue of approximately 37 000 words). All this allows us to perform a diachronic analysis of the way the words “repress” and “repression” were used in the magazine. However *Time* as a corpus has shortcomings that the professional linguistic corpora are lacking. The most important of them is that unlike linguistic corpora *Time* is not balanced by type of text, registers of speech, etc., and thus cannot be representative for the English usage in general. Another shortcoming might be connected to the fact that *Time* is a newsmagazine. This genre presupposes that journalistic prose (for example, news reportages, comments on political events, analytical materials) will appear there more often than the other types of written speech. Thirdly, *Time* magazine is famous for its specific style (Firebaugh, 1940; Yates, 1981) often described as flamboyant and pretentious. The authors of *Time* were encouraged to use complicated, often unnatural grammatical constructions, to prefer words of Latin and Greek origin to their Germanic synonyms and also to create new words. All this may affect the usage of the word “repression”, that is why we should keep it in mind when performing our research and estimating its results. It may be helpful to complement this study with similar work performed on a larger linguistic corpus of spoken and written English and
particularly British English. Finally, unlike linguistic corpora the *Time* archive is “untagged”, its words are not annotated for their grammatical category, so we can use only simple concordancing programs\(^{65}\) while working with this corpus and cannot perform more complex analysis. Nevertheless *Time* magazine as a corpus might provide us with important information about the way the notion of repression was used in public discourse and about changes that occurred to this notion over time.

Downloading all the issues of *Time* magazine in order to form a corpus was relatively difficult due to publishers’ restrictions. Instead I performed a search in the online archive of the magazine that contained all its issues, and then manually extracted all the entries containing the words “repression”, “to repress”, and “repressed” in all their grammatical forms. The minimum length of an entry was one sentence, when the meaning of the word was easy to understand without additional context. In case some extra context was necessary I copied up to three paragraphs of text from the archive. After this I worked with this list of entries in context.

5.3. Transition of the notion of repression from scientific to public discourse: repression across six decades of *Time* magazine (1920s-1970s).

In this section I analyse the usage of the words “repress” and “repression” in all their grammatical forms (in other words, lemmata “repress” and “repression”) in *Time* magazine across the six decades starting from the first issue published in March 1923. Between 1923 and the end of 1979 “repress*” and “repression*” appeared in the *Time* magazine 878 times, and their normalized frequency in the whole corpus comes to 7.96 per 1 000 000 words. In order to better understand the usage and meaning of “repression*” I obtained the list of its most frequent collocates in the whole corpus. For this purpose I used a corpus analysis program AntConc, designed by Laurence Anthony of Waseda University, Japan\(^ {66}\). This freeware program along with its other features allows the user to obtain a list of right and left collocates of a specific search term. The 15 most frequent collocates (in decreasing order of frequency) in the whole corpus are presented in the table 5.1.

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\(^{65}\) Software that turns electronic texts into databases, which can be searched.

\(^{66}\) The program is available at [http://www.laurenceanthony.net/software/antconc/](http://www.laurenceanthony.net/software/antconc/).
Table 5.1. Left and right collocates of the lemma “repression*” in *Time* magazine (1923-1979) in decreasing order of frequency.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Left collocates</th>
<th>Right collocates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Of</td>
<td>Of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>And</td>
<td>And</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The</td>
<td>In</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political</td>
<td>Is</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soviet</td>
<td>That</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For</td>
<td>But</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual</td>
<td>Was</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>To</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brutal</td>
<td>As</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That</td>
<td>Has</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police</td>
<td>By</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By</td>
<td>Which</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Its</td>
<td>At</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Savage</td>
<td>Or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harsh</td>
<td>Not</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As it is easy to notice, the majority of these collocates are auxiliary words: prepositions “of”, “in”, “for”, “at”, “on”; conjunction “and”; auxiliary verbs in different tenses “is”, “has”, “was”. However the group of left collocates comprises some entries that allow us to make conclusions about the meaning of “repression*”. Collocates “political”, “brutal”, “government”, “soviet”, “savage”, “police” and “harsh” repression refer to repression as “putting down by force” (as indicated by Merriam-Webster). Collocate “sexual” indicates that besides “political” the word repression has another meaning, which can be called “psychological” or “psychoanalytic”. It refers to some other type of repression, repression “within a person”, while “political repression” describes the social situation. The other meanings of the word “repression” mentioned in Merriam-Webster’s Dictionary were seldom to be found. The list of the most frequent collocates shows that indeed the usage of “repression” in *Time* magazine differs from that of spoken English (represented for example in the dictionaries). In *Time* the “political meaning” of repression can be found more often than other meanings of this word, which is understandable for a newsmagazine.
As a next step, I singled out all the entries in the corpus that referred to “psychological” and “political” repression (here I used the corresponding definitions that can be found in Meriam-Webster’s Dictionary) and placed them into separate files. The verb “repress” was also included in the file. The decision about whether a specific entry can be classified as an example of “political” or “psychological” repression was made on the basis of the context. For example, I classified the following entry as an example of the word “repression” in its “political meaning”:

In many non-Communist lands, a Sakharov would not be allowed to speak out at all, or an Amalrik to leave the country. Still, the policies of most of these countries, however reprehensible, often pale in comparison with Soviet practices. Few nations, in fact, can match the institutional framework of repression embodied in the prisons and insane asylums of the Soviet Union’s Gulag archipelago. (07.03.1977)

To the category of “psychological repression” I ascribed all the entries that openly mentioned psychology or psychoanalysis or included other psychological concepts and also the entries that mentioned repression “within the self” and were corresponding to the definition of repression in the Meriam-Webster’s Dictionary. For example, I marked the word “repression” in the following extract as referring to psychological repression:

New Zealand’s brown Maori children, descendants of proud warriors and seafarers, live by the rules of "take, break, fight and be first," writes Teacher Ashton-Warner. As a "force of energy" that swings from love to hate in seconds, they drive teachers batty. Most teachers aim to tame them by putting "your foot on their neck," and by spooning out futilely alien education from pap-filled primers that extol civilized white virtues. As a result, Maori kids tend to hate reading, fall behind in school, and wind up being labelled "stupid." It is just such frustration (or repression), argues Teacher, that leads some Maoris to become neurotics, brawlers, defeatists and alcoholics. (06.09.1963)

The following table (Table 5.2.) presents normalized frequencies (per 1 000 000 words) of the lemmata “repress*” and “repression*” in their psychological and political meanings in Time magazine across six decades (1920s to 1970s).
Table 5.2. Distribution of the lemmata “repress*” and “repression*” in their psychological and political meanings across six decades.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1920s</th>
<th>1930s</th>
<th>1940s</th>
<th>1950s</th>
<th>1960s</th>
<th>1970s</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em><em>Repress</em> and repression</em> (per 1 000 000)**</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>14.9</td>
<td>22.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em><em>Psychological Repress</em> and repression</em> (per 1 000 000)**</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>16.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em><em>Political Repress</em> and repression</em> (per 1 000 000)**</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One may notice that the frequency of “repress*” and “repression*” grew steadily between 1940s and 1960s and reached its maximum in 1970s (22.6 per 1 000 000 words). The normalized frequencies for psychological repression more than tripled between 1920 and 1960s-1970s. This may reflect both the role of a “Kulturtraeger” undertaken by the magazine, its willingness to popularize psychoanalysis and also popular demand to know more about it. However the fact that “repress*” and “repression” were used increasingly often in the magazine does not indicate that it was used more and more often in people’s speech. The following section can add more details to the general pattern of distribution of the words “repress” and “repression” in their psychological meaning in *Time* magazine across six decades.

5.3.1. Psychological repression in the different sections of the magazine across six decades (1920s-1970s).

Like many other magazines, *Time* magazine contains thematic sections that reflect difference in contents of the articles published there. Taking a closer look at distribution of lemmata repress* and repression* across these sections might help us to better understand how the notion of repression was disseminated by *Time* magazine. The core sections of *Time* magazine were introduced in the 1920s and did not change since that time. These sections include “Nation”, “World”, “Health and Medicine”, “Society”, “Press”, “Religion”, “Sport”, “Business”, “Education”, “Law”, “Arts and Entertainment”, “Milestones”, “Letters”, “To our readers”, and “Also in the issue”. The changes in the structure of the magazine introduced in the following years were minor: for example, in the 1960s the section “essay” was added to the list. The information about distribution of the words repression and repress in their psychological
meaning by decades and sections of *Time* magazine is presented in the table 5.3. (in normalized frequencies per 1 000 000 words).

Table 5.3. Lemmata “repress*” and “repression*” in different sections of the magazine across the six decades.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section of the magazine</th>
<th>1920s</th>
<th>1930s</th>
<th>1940s</th>
<th>1950s</th>
<th>1960s</th>
<th>1970s</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Art and Entertainment/Books</td>
<td>0.34</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.26</td>
<td>0.35</td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art and Entertainment/Cinema</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>0.35</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art and Entertainment/Music</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art and Entertainment/Theatre</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art and Entertainment/Time Listings</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.43</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essay</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.43</td>
<td>0.35</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health and Medicine/Medicine</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>0.68</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>0.67</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letters</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nation/</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Press</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Society</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.34</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special section</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World/World and Terrorism</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total (normalized frequency per 1 000 000)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One may notice firstly that the lemmata “repress*” and “repression” have appeared in an increasingly wider number of sections over time. This may reflect the fact that the journalists of the magazine broadened the number of situations to which “repression” might be applied and provided their readers with increasingly various examples of its usage. While in the 1920s journalists used the words “repress” and “repression” mostly in connection with art, medicine
and law, by the 1960s the list of possible situations that required usage of “repress*” included also education, religion, home politics, social issues, etc.

Secondly, attention should be paid to the section “Art and Entertainment” and its subsections “Books” and “Cinema”. These are the oldest columns of the magazine and the distribution of the words “repress and repression” in their psychological meaning there can provide us with interesting information about literature and cinema as channels for popularizing psychoanalysis. The authors of this section, literary and art critics or writers, increasingly more often spoke about repression as applied to their field. By the 1960s and 1970s the number of references to repression reached its top in the subsection “Books” and two decades later “repression” became quite popular among cinema critics.

The data presented in the section “Health and Medicine” may also help us to understand how psychoanalytic ideas were spread by health care professionals. Between the 1930s and the 1960s the authors of this section used the words “repress” and “repression” much more often than the authors of the column “Art and Entertainment”, and the number of mentions of repression was steadily growing. This may indicate that in Time magazine the authors, who promoted psychoanalysis were mostly related to medicine and during 1930s -1960s the readers learned to associate psychoanalysis with medicine and repression with psychiatry and psychic illnesses. However by the 1970s repression was no longer perceived as a medical term. The number of its mentions in the section “Health and medicine” became insignificant, and the concept started being applied to the society in general.

By the 1960s “repression” started being mentioned in the section “Society”. It was also very often mentioned in the section “Art and Entertainment/Cinema”, while between the 1920 and the 1960 it was most often used in the sections “Medicine” and “Books”. This pattern may reflect the initial channels of popularization of psychoanalysis, which later were replaced by application of this notion to a wider range of social phenomena. In a sense, “repression” outgrew the fields of its origin (medicine and psychiatry) and was applied to an increasing number of social situations, which was reflected by its more frequent usage in the section “Society”. At the same time, cinema (especially presented on the pages of a general interest magazine) also deals mostly with social problems and presents plenty of real-life situations to which the notion of repression can be applied.
Finally, it is important to note that since the 1940s the words “repress” and “repression” in their psychoanalytic meaning started appearing in the section “Letters”. This means that these words indeed became a part of everyday speech of the readers of Time magazine, and they spoke out their concerns to the magazine in the language, suggested by the magazine itself.

5.3.2 Some characteristics of psychological repression in Time magazine across six decades (1920s-1970s).

In the previous section I considered how lemmata “repress” and “repression” in their psychological meaning were distributed in Time magazine by decades and columns, and used these data to support the idea that Time magazine was an important channel for dissemination of the concept of repression. In this section I would like to discuss some characteristics that were attributed to psychological repression in Time magazine.

Repression: voluntary or involuntary?

Attribution of locus of control is one of the dimensions that shape perception of psychic phenomena in public discourse: We view these phenomena differently if we consider them simply happening to us or if we see ourselves as being responsible for them. This might also be applicable to the phenomenon of repression. The discussion of voluntary or involuntary character of repression in the scholarly literature of the time is beyond the scope of my investigation. Rather I am interested in how repression was constructed in journalistic discourse and presented to the readers of Time magazine. According to Hodge and Kress (1993), voice of a verb might serve as one of the indicators of the perceived voluntary/involuntary character of an action, so I decided to examine the distribution of the verb “repress” (in its psychological meaning) in passive and active voice in Time magazine. In the table 5.4, I presented normalized frequencies of verb “repress” in the corpus sorted by decade as well as the frequencies of the active and passive constructions.

Table 5.4. Frequencies of the verb “repress” in the active and passive voices across the six decades.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1920</th>
<th>1930</th>
<th>1940</th>
<th>1950</th>
<th>1960</th>
<th>1970</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Psychological Repress* and repression* (per 1 000 000)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychological Repress as a verb (per 1 000 000)</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>0.32</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>0.65</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As I mentioned before, the verb “repress” (in its “psychological” meaning) was used in *Time* relatively seldom, especially in comparison with the noun “repression”, so the figures shown above might not be suitable for making broad generalizations. However they may help us to get an idea as to what usage of the verb was promoted by *Time* magazine. Between the 1920s and the 1950s the frequency of using the verb “repress” was very low and passive constructions prevailed. Starting from the 1960s the active constructions outnumbered the passive ones. One may conclude that repression was indeed viewed as voluntary and people as responsible for repressing things. By constructing people as responsible for repressing their memories and emotions, journalists on the one hand empower them, contribute to the image of rational, selfpossessing and self-controlling individual in accordance with Cartesian idea of human being. On the other hand, presenting repression as an active, self-guided and self-controlled process paradoxically undermines the whole idea of repression and pathologises it. If one can choose, whether to repress negative events or to endure them and to work them through, repression becomes a sign of weakness, psychological instability and acquires a negative meaning.

**Repression: norm or pathology?**

The discussion of normal or the pathological nature of repression will be continued through this section. In order to better understand whether repression was indeed constructed as something morbid in *Time* magazine, I decided to analyse its immediate environment and to take a look at approximately 5 to 6 words to the right and to the left of the lemmata “repress*” and “repression*”. If “repression” and “repress” were surrounded by at least two words like “all, every, any, most, everybody, thousands, us, we, our, people, child, children, society, man/men, common, human, conventional, normal, familial” and the whole sentence conveyed the meaning of “normalization”, the lemmata were scored as “normal”. If on the contrary the lemmata were surrounded by the words “delinquent, delinquency, deviant, psychosis, insanity, mental, neurotic, victim, patient, psychiatrist, symptom, disease, sadist, sadistic, paranoia, paranoiac, schizophrenia, schizoid, trouble, problem” and the like and conveyed the meaning of pathology,
they were scored as “pathologizing”. Not all entries could be considered normal/pathological, to some of them this opposition was not applicable. The results of this study are presented in the table 5.5.

Table 5.5. Words “repress” and “repression” constructed as a norm and as a pathology across the six decades.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1920s</th>
<th>1930s</th>
<th>1940s</th>
<th>1950s</th>
<th>1960s</th>
<th>1970s</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Psychological Repress* and repression* (per 1 000 000)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repression as a norm (per 1 000 000)</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>0.42</td>
<td>0.37</td>
<td>0.35</td>
<td>1.43</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repression as pathology (per 1 000 000)</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>0.37</td>
<td>0.51</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td>0.55</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results show that between the 1920s and 1950s the number of entries pathologizing repression was greater than that of normalizing repression. After 1960 the situation changed and repression in *Time* magazine was mostly constructed as something normal, common to all people. These data contradict my conclusions made in the previous paragraph, and thus the whole issue requires more thorough investigation. At the same time it is interesting to note that in the both sections the pattern of the data changed around 1960s. In the previous section, 1960 was a landmark for switching from understanding repression as passive to understanding it as active process. In the present piece of research, the 1960s were crucial point for changing its construction from being pathological to normality. This may be linked to growing popularity of psychoanalysis in America at this period (Zaretsky, 2004). Psychoanalysis stopped being a province of medicine only, and became a part of daily life. Similarly, concepts drawn from psychoanalysis started being perceived not as something exotic or pathological, but as parts of human psyche existing in reality or objectified in terms of Moscovici (2008).

5.4. The role of experts in dissemination of the concept of repression: repression in reported speech.  
In this section I would like to discuss how the notion of repression was disseminated by *Time* magazine and what role experts played in it. One way of approaching this problem might be to view it as an example scientific popularization, however unlike popularization of a scientific
discipline or a new scientific discovery, here we deal with the case of popularization of a single concept, the concept of repression. Between 1923 and the end of 1979 lemmata “repress*” and “repression*” in their “psychological” meaning appeared in Time magazine totally 193 times and their normalised frequency came to 1.76 per 1 000 000 words. The question might be raised as to whether all of these entries can possibly count as examples of popularisation. The answer to it depends on the definition of popularisation. On the one hand, it possible to define popularisation very broadly and regard all entries that contain lemmata “repress*” and “repression*” as cases of popularisation. This approach can be useful when the study is focused on the role of media in popularisation of psychology. In this case we view media as something monolithic and consider it to be the main agent of popularisation. At the same time, we are less interested in tracing the individual voices of experts and their role in connecting scientific and public discourses. However if we view popularisation as a mediated interaction between the experts and the public aimed at bridging the gap in knowledge between them, it is impossible to ignore the role of individual experts in it. It is the experts who “do the business of popularisation”, because even popular articles written by science journalists refer to the opinion of the experts in the field. According to Calsamiglia (2003), quoting is recommended to science journalists to obtain credibility of their texts. It allows them to certify the validity of the expert opinion. Tracing all the entries when the notion of repression appeared in reported speech might be a way to operationalize the concept of popularization of repression. Further in this chapter I will analyse the articles where the terms “repression” and “repress” were used in reported speech, however first I would like to discuss the notion of reported speech and different types of reported speech.

There are several ways of presenting the words of other people in the printed media. Firstly, one can choose reporting them verbatim and use quotation marks to separate direct reported speech from the surrounding text. Alternatively, journalists use indirect quotations, which convey the meaning of what the experts have said or written, but not their exact wording. Also, the so called integrated quotations are often used in the press. They bear characteristics of both direct and indirect speech: the exact words of an expert are incorporated into journalistic text, however neither quotation marks no other formal indicators are used to separate one type of speech from the other. The following examples of types of reported speech were borrowed from the article by Redeker (1996, p. 223):

Direct reported speech: She said: “Well, all right, I’ll go”
Indirect reported speech: She said she’d go.

Integrated quotation: Oh, well, okay, she would go then.

Finally, inserted quotations contain only a brief reference to an expert often in the form “according to …”. The last three types of quotation can be classified as indirect reported speech as opposed to direct quotation of the exact words of an expert.

In the following part of this section I will try to trace, how the popularisation of the notion “repression” occurred. For this purpose I will use the articles published in *Time* magazine, where the words “repression” and “repress” were used in reported speech. Totally between March 1923, when the magazine was first published, and the end December 1979 the words “repression”, “repress” and “repressed” in there psychological meaning were used in all types of reported speech 168 times. In the table below (Table 5.6.) I present information about the distribution of the words with the stem “repress*” in reported speech across the six decades.

Table 5.6. Words with the stem repress* in reported speech across the six decades in normalized frequency per 1 000 000 words.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Decades</th>
<th>1920s</th>
<th>1930s</th>
<th>1940s</th>
<th>1950s</th>
<th>1960s</th>
<th>1970s</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Totally Per</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 000 000</td>
<td>0.36</td>
<td>0.95</td>
<td>1.37</td>
<td>1.65</td>
<td>2.33</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We may notice that the normalised frequency of the words “repression” and “repress” grew steadily between 1920s and 1950s and reached its peak in 1960s (2.33 per 1 000 000 words). This may reflect the growing efforts of the media to popularise this notion as a part popularisation of psychoanalysis. By 1970s the frequency of these words came down to the level of 1940s and 1950s. Paying attention to distribution of entries across the types of reported speech may help us to better understand the figures presented in this table. The table 5.7. presents distribution of the words with the stem “repress*” across decades and types of reported speech.

Table 5.7. Distribution of the words with the stem “repress*” across decades and types of reported speech (in normalised frequencies per 1 000 000 words).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1920s</th>
<th>1930s</th>
<th>1940s</th>
<th>1950s</th>
<th>1960s</th>
<th>1970s</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Direct Quotation</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>0.47</td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>0.57</td>
<td>0.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(75%)</td>
<td>(22%)</td>
<td>(34%)</td>
<td>(27%)</td>
<td>(24.5%)</td>
<td>(30%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indirect quotation</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.26</td>
<td>0.26</td>
<td>0.35</td>
<td>0.52</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As we may notice, the proportion of direct quotations is at its highest during the 1920s when the concept of repression was still considered to be a part of professional psychological discourse. Between 1930s and 1970s this proportion hovers around 20-30% of all quotations, which might be explained by the fact that the main role of direct reported speech in scientific popularization might not be delivery of psychological knowledge to the audience. Rather it may serve as a means of establishing a boundary between lay and scientific knowledge that attaches authority to the experts and makes popularisation- as we understand it in our culture- possible. In other words, only one third of all quotations, where the words “repression” and “repress” were mentioned, belonged to direct reported speech and the main “business of popularisation” is accomplished with the help of indirect, inserted and integrated quotations.

Also of interest might be the proportion of inserted quotations. By using inserted quotations, journalists refer to the authority of the experts only indirectly. Basically, they merely attach the names of the experts as symbols of authority of science to their own utterances. Mentioning the experts might be necessary in this context to legitimize the journalists’ statements and to support their truth claims. This might mean that the high status of science in the society allows journalists use it in order to support their knowledge claims. Also this might mean that scientists, whose names were used in this type of quotations, were well known and respected by the general public and a mere mention of their names made the utterances of the journalists look more credible. Thus psychological knowledge about repression had indeed penetrated into the public discourse. The normalised frequencies of the words “repression” and “repress” in inserted quotations between 1940s and 1970 hovers around 0.5 per 1 000 000 words with the peak (0.76) in 1960s. It is interesting to note, that the frequencies of inserted quotations during these four decades is higher than that of direct quotations. We may suppose that it might be related to the “stability” in the process of popularisation: a certain share of utterances is aimed at maintaining the authority of science, but a larger part of utterances are attributed to the experts, well
established in the field and recognised as such by the public. A more detailed analysis of larger corpora, a study of correlations between the type of quotations and quoted experts, and also detailed qualitative analysis of specific examples may help us to better understand the process of popularisation of a single concept.

5.4.1. How was the demarcation between scientific knowledge and lay knowledge established?

In this section I would like to take a closer look at another aspect of popularisation of the concept of repression, namely at how the authority of the people who wrote about repression (or were mentioned as experts on repression) was constructed as well as how and the truthfulness of their utterances was established. In order to do it I decided to consider two factors that could affect the authority status ascribed to the utterance: the first factor could be described as the image of experts to whom the utterance was attributed. The second factor is the way information was presented in the speech of the experts.

How were the experts presented in Time magazine?

The first issue I would like to examine in more detail is how experts were constructed by the journalists of Time magazine. Quoting the status of experts in scientific hierarchy, namely their title, qualification, area of specialisation and affiliation might be viewed as primary means of attaching the authority of science to them. Also of importance may be characteristics that describe professional success and achievements of experts like for example “well-known”, “noted”, “expert in…”, or “authority in …”. Affiliation of the experts (for example belonging to reputed University of Harvard) or their position (head of a department, director of a research centre) might sometimes perform the same function. In the following study I tried to consider how the experts that popularised repression in the Time magazine were constructed. I counted how many mentions of repression in reported speech of the experts were accompanied by reference to their degree, position, affiliation or “achievements”. I would like to present these data separately for two groups of experts: psychologists and other scientists. Totally, psychologists, psychiatrists and other mental health professionals were mentioned as subjects of reported speech that contained words “repression”, “repressed” and “repress” 65 times. In the table 5.8. I provide information about the number of mentions of repression accompanied by the reference to the title of the expert in psychological sciences, his/her degree, affiliation and
achievements. These categories were not mutually exclusive, so the same expert can be referred to as a PhD holder, head of the department and a distinguished scientist.

Table 5.8. Mentions of repression in connection to the title, degree, affiliation of the experts in psychological sciences.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of words with the stem “repress” mentioned by psychologists/psychiatrists</th>
<th>Raw score (Totally 65)</th>
<th>% of the total number (100 %)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PhD holders</td>
<td>16 (raw score)</td>
<td>24.6 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professors</td>
<td>4 (raw score)</td>
<td>6.1 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experts with affiliation</td>
<td>20 (raw score)</td>
<td>30.8 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experts with “achievements”</td>
<td>6 (raw score)</td>
<td>9.2 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experts without affiliation, title, degree or achievements</td>
<td>28 (raw score)</td>
<td>43.1 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As it is evident from the table, more than 40 % of all experts were described simply as psychologists/analytics or psychotherapists. Achievements of the experts were mentioned 6 times, reference to their degree (PhD) appeared 16 times, affiliation was referred to 20 times and title (professor) was cited 4 times. Relatively high number (43%) of experts without affiliation, degrees and titles included mostly mental health professionals: psychotherapists, psychiatrists, and psychoanalysts. This number included also generic references to the experts (“psychologists”, “evolutionary psychology”, “British psychoanalysts”). It is interesting to note, that the majority of these references appeared in the magazine between 1920s and early 1960s. In the later issues of Time this type of presentation of the experts was infrequent. This might be connected to the process of institutionalisation of psychological science: in the early years of psychology when psychological departments and centres had not yet been established and degrees and titles existed only in a very few institutions, the mere reference to the authority of any mental health professional was sufficient for supporting the truth claim of some opinion. In later years the widely accepted status of psychology as a science dictated the mode of representation of the experts: the most reliable experts in the eyes of journalists were prominent
scientists. Only the status of belonging to scientific community and related to it “direct access” to scientific knowledge guarantied the authority of the expert. The characteristics of these experts in the media stressed the idea that they were not simply psychologists, but also excellent scientists (Ph.D. holders, employed by prestigious universities). This might be viewed as adding values to their opinion.

We can find a very similar picture, when we turn to the presentation of the other group of the first level experts, namely to “other scientists” as experts on repression. I included in these group medical doctors, biologists, philosophers, anthropologists, sociologists and other scientists. The following table (Table 5.9.) presents information about the number of mentions of repressions in reported speech that belongs to the different groups of scientists other than psychologists.

Table 5. 9. Mentions of repression in connection to the title, degree, affiliation of the experts who belong to the social and natural sciences (other than psychology).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of words with the stem “repress” mentioned by the “other scientists”</th>
<th>Raw score (Totally 28)</th>
<th>% of the total number (100 %)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PhD holders</td>
<td>16 (raw score)</td>
<td>57.1 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professors</td>
<td>5 (raw score)</td>
<td>17.9 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experts with affiliation</td>
<td>7 (raw score)</td>
<td>25 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experts with “achievements”.</td>
<td>1 (raw score)</td>
<td>3.6 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experts without affiliation, title, degree or achievements</td>
<td>9 (raw score)</td>
<td>32.1 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Totally, other scientists were quoted in relation to the concept of repression 28 times. It is not surprising that experts in psychology were quoted more than two times more often than other scientists, when the concept of repression was discussed. However this figure is still rather high and might indicate that the knowledge about human psyche was considered to be not only a province of psychologists and mental health specialists, but other scientists as well. It is also interesting to note that psychologists (without references to their degrees, titles or affiliations) were more acceptable as experts on repression than other scientists: 43% of psychologists were quoted by the journalists without any mention of their degree or title as compared to 32% of other scientists.

Freud should be mentioned separately from all the other groups of experts. He was quoted 22 times in relation to repression. This comes to approximately 13% of all mentions of repression in
reported speech. References to Freud were not accompanied by any descriptions of achievements, it seems that Freud himself was perceived as a symbolic figure of a prominent psychologist. However, besides mentions of repression in reported speech directly attributed to Freud, there were other references, which might be called “compound”: experts while speaking about repression mentioned or quoted Freud. Mentions of Freud as a “second voice” in reported speech of the experts occurred 24 times. Thus, approximately one third of all mentions of repression by the experts (27.4 % or 46 times) were in this or that way related to the founder of psychoanalysis.

The experts of the first level totally accounted for 82.3 % of all mentions of repression. The second level experts: lawyers, priests, writers, journalists and politicians also used the words “repression” and “repress”. Writers (mostly novelists) were the most frequently quoted in this connection. The amount of mentions of repression in the reported speech attributed to them came to 10.1 % of the total number of mentions of this term (raw score 17).

The data presented above shows that dissemination of repression was accomplished mostly by the “first level experts”: professional psychologists, psychiatrists, and social scientists. In more recent years (since 1960s) the experts have been constructed mostly as prominent figures of the academic world: the majority were PhD holders and/or professors who made important contribution to science. Their authority rested upon their direct access to scientific knowledge. Unlike their audience, the experts produced psychological knowledge themselves. Construction of the experts as representatives of science whose position on the matter is so important that it is worth quoting facilitated psychological popularisation and contributed to maintaining of the current regime of the self (Rose, 1998). It is also interesting to note that experts seemed to play a more important role in the process of psychological popularisation (for example, in popularisation of the notion of repression) in comparison with popularization of hard sciences. According to Calsamiglia and Ferrero (2003), voices of scientists have only “a limited role in the press, much less weight than those of political actors” (p. 170). In popularisation of psychology the voices of experts are of primary importance, and the voices of politicians are almost not audible. In the following section I would like to discuss another aspect of demarcation between public and scientific knowledge that makes popularisation possible.
5.4.2. How was psychological knowledge presented as scientific?

In this section I would like to discuss in more detail another aspect of boundary work between lay and scientific knowledge, namely how the words of experts were presented as “scientific”. In my opinion two factors were important in constructing this demarcation line, though of course there are other aspects that affect presentation of the reported speech of the experts as scientific. The first of the factors I would like to discuss in this chapter is the choice of reporting verb, which introduced the speech of the experts and together with the presentation of the experts (their title, affiliation, etc.) prepared the readers to accept the words attributed to them as a scientific knowledge and as truth.

*Choice of reporting verb.* Reporting verbs are subtle, but powerful way of expressing author’s position in discourse: according to Hyland (1999), they allow the author of the text to show his attitude to the claims the reported message contain. Thompson and Ye (1991) suggested a complex model of classification of reporting verbs in academic discourse: one of the two dimensions of the model was denotation (what kind of action the verb reports), the other- their evaluative potential. The evaluative potential indicated among other features the attitude of the author toward validity claim of the information he presented. However this model might not be fully applicable to popularization discourse.

Totally, reporting verbs were used in the corpus 63 times. Below I present a list of all verbs that were used to introduce reported speech of the experts in the whole corpus and also the frequencies of these verbs (raw scores).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Say</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Think</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argue</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Believe</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclude</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decide</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feel</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Find</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Describe</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elaborate</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>See</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Write</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assume</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brush aside</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Define</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discover</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indicate</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prove</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resolve</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
These reporting verbs can be divided into four categories. Verbs referring to scientific activities of the experts (like “study”, “reconstruct”, “prove”, “examine”, “discover”, “predict”) belong to the first category. The second category is formed by verbs that refer to popularisation (for example, “explain”, “prescribe”, “warn”). To the third category I ascribed verbs of polemics (“argue”). The last category are “neutral” verbs that introduce reported speech in any context (“say”, “write”, “hold”). In the table below (Table 5.10.) I present distribution of the reporting verbs in the corpus across these categories.

Table 5.10. Categories of reporting verbs and their frequencies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories of verbs</th>
<th>Frequencies (raw scores)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Scientific” verbs</td>
<td>11 (raw score) 17.5 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbs of popularization</td>
<td>6 (raw score) 9.5 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbs of polemics</td>
<td>3 (raw score) 4.8 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Neutral” verbs</td>
<td>43 (raw score) 68.2 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As we may notice, less than one third of all reporting verbs belong to the categories “scientific verbs” and verbs of “popularisation”. These verbs stress the scientific character of the reported speech of the experts and create a “demarcation line” between their words and the surrounding text. So it seems possible to conclude that reporting verbs were not the main means of creating a gap between lay and scientific discourse in popularization of the concept of repression by *Time* magazine. In the next paragraph I would like to discuss another factor that might be of importance for marking out the speech of experts.

*Psychological vocabulary in direct reported speech.*

In this section I would like to discuss characteristics of reported speech that allow the journalists of *Time* magazine to mark it out as belonging to scientific discourse and as a consequence to attach authority of science to it. Vocabulary of reported speech seems to be one of its most explicit characteristics, which is also relatively easy to analyse. In this section I decided to consider psychological vocabulary in reported speech of the experts of *Time* magazine and its
role in popularisation of psychological knowledge. In order to do it I selected entries that contained only direct reported speech of the experts. In the whole corpus I found 45 examples of it, which totally contained 1942 words. Then I made a list of all words that can be viewed as belonging to psychological vocabulary (which included terminology of psychoanalysis, psychology and psychiatry). Below I placed the list of psychological terms used in direct reported speech of the experts.

aggression; atavistic monster; castrating mother; collective paranoia; conditioned reflex; conscious counterpart; death instinct; death instinct; delusion; deviants; egotism; emotionally disturbed; Eros; expansion of consciousness; extensive sublimations; Freudian doctrine; frustrations; guilt complexes; hysterical identification; identify; impulses; inferiority complex; inferiority complexes; inhibiting; inhibitions; irrepresible; life instinct; insight; maternal rejection; mental process; morbidity; neurotic children; Oedipus complex; paranoid; paranoiacs; paranoid tendency; paranoid-schizophrenics; perversion of normal instincts; projection of repressed instincts and hostility; psychoanalysis; psychoanalytic psychotherapy; psychiatrist; regression; releases the inhibitions; safely structured treatment situation; schizoid personality; sexual deviations; sexual inversion; sexual perversion; sexually aberrated individuals; sexually deviated; sibling rivalry; subconscious drives; subconscious fantasy; sublimation; submergence of undesirable stimuli in the unconscious; surplus repression; surplus repression; symptomatic disorder; Thanatos; unconscious; 116

Totally, I found 116 words that could be identified as psychological terms. Together with the words “repression” and “repress” their amount increased to 161 words. Basically, one in six lexical words that appear in direct quotations may be classified as professional psychological vocabulary. Presentation of these words in the text was not accompanied by definitions, explanations or even comments. Some of these terms may seem intuitively understandable (“aggressive”, “frustrations”, “guilt complexes”), but many like “extensive sublimations” or “surplus repression” might be more difficult to understand. Obviously a lay reader may and will experience difficulties in understanding their meaning. Although experts were called upon to “popularise” scientific knowledge, to share it with the readers, it seems that a mere amount of professional terms in their speech makes their message quite difficult to follow. This suggests that in the process of psychological popularization direct quotations of the experts might not only serve the purposes of popularisation proper, but also have another role: they are often placed in
the articles in order to reinforce authority of the experts and also the authority of science they represent. One of their functions thus is to construct the boundary between lay and scientific knowledge and to demonstrate how fully the latter penetrate into the depth of human soul, how well it can master and control it.

5.5. Construction of repression in *Time* magazine.

In this section I would like to discuss the construction of repression in *Time* magazine by the late 1970s, in other words by the end of the “period of popularity” in the history of thanatology, described by Pine (1977). By this time thanatology as a discipline started being institutionalized and Herman Feifel, one of its founders, had published his seminal works (Feifel, 1959; Feifel, 1961a; Feifel, 1963b; Feifel, 1965a; Feifel, 1974b;), where he put forward the idea of repression of death as a characteristic feature of the Western society of the time. In my opinion, it is possible to consider the construction of repression in *Time* magazine as an example of scientific popularization. Unlike the previous section, here I would like to concentrate not on the voices of individual experts, but on the way repression was depicted *Time* magazine as a whole and view the magazine as a channel for dissemination of a single psychological concept.

It is important to note here that the process of popularisation of physics, biology and other “hard sciences” includes dissemination of scientific vocabulary. While readers learn about the order of the universe, they have to learn new terms like “black holes”, “quasar” or “supernova” as tools for mastering new knowledge. The situation becomes more complicated in case of popularisation of psychology. Psychological experts through media not only disseminate psychological concepts that allow the audience to make sense of new knowledge produced in scientific investigation. These concepts are also used to shape psyches: as Moscovici (2008) has shown, they are stuff out which our psyches are made and they condition how we perceive ourselves and others. This also means that the experts directly or indirectly guide the audience as to how this mental process should be accomplished. Psychological vocabulary “does things” not only in the sense that it constructs how people talk about their inner reality, it also makes people capable of acing upon themselves and suggests the techniques for these actions. In the following sections I will show, how the objects of repression, its process and its consequences were constructed in *Time* magazine between 1923 and the end of 1979.
What counts as an object of repression?

In this section I would like to discuss, how the concept of repression and the process of repression were constructed in *Time* magazine. First of all, in order for an emotion or experience to be repressed it should obtain a status of “repressible”, in other words we should view them as something that can potentially be repressed. In order to trace, what experiences were constructed as “repressible” by *Time* magazine I made a list of all entries containing the verb “repress” accompanied by direct object and also the noun “repression” with a modifying noun (for example, “repression of fear”). I obtained a list of 84 entries and tried to group them by the meaning. The results are presented in the table 5.11.

Table 5.11. What is constructed as repressible by *Time* magazine?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Entries</th>
<th>Raw score</th>
<th>% of the total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sexuality</td>
<td>sex (16)</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>sexual energy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>desires (2)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>sexual cravings</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>libido (sexual energy)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>sexual feelings</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>man’s instinctual pursuit of “the pleasure principle” (mainly sexual)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>human preoccupation with sex</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>sexuality (3)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>sexual passions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>sexual urges</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>eros, sexual love</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>his own perverse processes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative emotions or experiences</td>
<td>Distressing experience in early age</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>32.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rage</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hatred of one’s father</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Unhealthy ideas</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Impulse to kill</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Hate of their elders</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Things that had been “forgotten” because they were too painful or disagreeable to remember</td>
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<td>Destructive wish toward mum</td>
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<td>Stress</td>
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<td>Antisocial behavior</td>
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<td>Anxiety 2</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Memory of some injurious childhood experience</td>
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<tr>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Entries</td>
<td>Raw score</td>
<td>% of the total</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Instincts and hostility</td>
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<td>Hostility toward his own father</td>
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<td>Emotions after experiencing personal loss or tragedy</td>
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<td>Aggression</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Anger and hostility against all mankind</td>
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<td>Energy of aggression</td>
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<td>Sorrow</td>
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<td>Childhood conflicts</td>
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<td>Hostile and unacceptable urges</td>
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<td>Awareness of violence</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Death</td>
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<td>Those things that society fears may swamp its order and impair its function</td>
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<td>Rebellion against infant training</td>
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<td>Neutral states</td>
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<td>Instincts and abilities</td>
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<td>Wish</td>
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<td>Unconscious material</td>
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<td>Religion</td>
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<td>Emotional material 2</td>
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<td>Emotions and drives</td>
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<td>Instincts 2</td>
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<td>Psychic realities</td>
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<td>Emotions 3</td>
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<td>Repressed energies below the surface or right in the middle of each of us roots of man’s compulsions</td>
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<td>Enormous energy</td>
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<td>Id</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Instinctual drives</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Much that our Freudian age regards as irrepressible</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Positive emotions and character traits</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Enthusiasm</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Striving for individual self-realization and brotherhood</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Spontaneity</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Moral strivings</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Agape, love of one’s fellow man</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Events that were experienced and appreciated</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Trend: 37 % of entries indicate that sexuality is something people tend to repress. Also negative emotions are presented as repressible (32.1 %). Out of them a large group is related to anger and</td>
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hostility. Positive emotions and traits of character can also be repressed (7.1%). These emotions and experiences are legitimately “repressible”, “discursively marked” as such. This quality is strengthened by the authority of experts in psychological sciences, as I tried to show in the previous sections. By constructing the potentially repressible events, the experts also construct “the public repressed” or the public unconscious.

*What is repression like? Definitions of repression in Time magazine.*

Scientific popular materials on psychology in the media also construct the process of repression, its “technique”. To start with, the magazine provides its readers with definitions of repression which may give them an idea of how it usually occurs. For example, the following definition (suggested by a book reviewer and attributed to Freud) virtually equates repression to forgetting and constructs the former as “driving incidents from conscious mind”. Also, according to the expert, the incidents that are constructed as “repressible” have unpleasant associations.

People forget—which means that they drive from their conscious minds—incidents that have unpleasant associations for them, such as feelings of guilt. Chance or faulty actions bring them to light again, reveal the character of buried repressions, and in such actions the unconscious expresses itself.

23.05.1938.

Another definition constructs personality as divided into two parts: the one that creates some impulses and the other that “temporary rejects” them. This may help us to visualise repression as rejection, cutting short of some incentives and thus exercising control over ourselves.

Vandenhaag: Freud described a process that is called repression in individuals: that which takes place when the individual is confronted with impulses that part of his personality has to reject—at least temporarily—because of fear of being swamped by these impulses. One way to look at censorship is to consider whether it may not be the social analogue of deeper repressions that take place in the individuals. That is, the society also, rightly or wrongly, finds it necessary to repress those things that it fears may swamp its order and impair its function. One danger in having pornography is in time it may come to resemble sex instruction in school: it can make sex as boring as it already is in Sweden and in Denmark.

11.07.1969
These definitions of repression and metaphors they contain allow the readers to better understand what repression is like and to relate the notion of repression to their experience. Also the media provide us with comparisons, descriptions and metaphors that help us to make sense of repression. I would like to dwell on them in the next section.

*Comparisons, descriptions and metaphors in construction of repression.*

The notion of repression as applied to human psyche was initially used as a metaphor, but with time it ceased being perceived as such and became a part of our everyday vocabulary. However this term suggests that some parts of our psyche were expelled from consciousness, pushed out by force. Other metaphors and comparisons used by the experts and journalists of *Time* magazine allow us to better understand repression and its process. Further I present the list of entries that contain comparisons, descriptions or metaphors of repression that I found in the *Time* magazine between 1923 and the end of 1979. I tried to group these entries on the basis on the image of repression they create. The first group stresses its negative component.

- *Being repressed* is a trouble.
- *Repressed* sexuality is the center of personality disorders.
- *Repression* is a mental problem.
- *Repression* is deeply unhealthy.
- *Repression* is greater evil than license.
- *Repression* is a prison.
- *Repression* is worse than any pornography or morbidity.
- *Repression* of emotions is bad.
- Repression deprives man of self-confidence;
- *Repression* of the atavistic in ourselves is a bad thing.
- *Sexual repression* is mankind’s greatest enemy.
- *Sexual repression* is a problem.
- *Sexual repression* is the skulking killer of laughter and freedom
- *Sexual repression* threaten evolution of the race.
- *Victims of repression*

We may notice that besides stressing the negative character of repression (it is a trouble, a problem) the authors and experts of *Time* magazine construct it as an “involuntary” phenomenon.
We do not choose to repress. The comparisons of repression to “prison”, “threat”, suggest that repression indeed is similar to a curse and “happen” to us rather than is “performed” by us. This opinion is reinforced by the abundance of war metaphors in construction of repression. Repression is compared to an _enemy_, a _weapon_, a _killer_. It _threatens_ our race and is responsible for _destruction_. Expressions like “victim of repression” or “prison of repression” also suggest that repression is involuntary, difficult to cope with it and also that drastic measures are required in order to become free from it.

The second group of entries presents repression in a more neural way.

- _Repression_ is not such a great problem as before.
- _Repression_ is a necessary price to pay for the fruits of civilisation.
- _Repression_ can be normal.
- _Repression_ is a price, society demands for its cultural fruits
- One can play _repression_.

This list creates a different image of repression. It is depicted as something normal, as a widely spread phenomenon. Repression is not something exceptional, but rather is a common thing that is present in everybody’s life, moreover it is necessary price for living in the society. Generally, the idea of repression conveyed by its description, comparisons and metaphors allows us to visualise it mostly as something that merely happen to us. We do not notice how it happens but have to deal with the consequences of repression. This issue I will touch upon in more detail in the last section.

_Repression in synonymic constructions._

Also, series of synonymic constructions that include the words with the stem “repress” may help us to understand what repression is like. Synonyms that surround the word “repression” affect the way we understand its meaning. Although repression is not directly compared to them, the proximity in the text creates the effect of proximity in meaning as if these words jointly describe the phenomenon of repression.

In the _Time_ magazine as a corpus the verb “repress” for example can be found in the following “chains” of synonyms:

- people who feel overwhelmed by life, repress all strong feelings and tend to blame themselves for whatever goes wrong:
• to suppress and repress his own perverse processes;
• repress or sublimate her passion;
• deny and repress their emotions;
• repress anger and avoid conflicts;

The meaning of this verb is constructed as similar to the meanings of the verbs “deny”, and “avoid”. All this places this verb in a certain context that specifies its meaning and create a chain of associations with it. The verb “repress” thus is related to being overwhelmed by life, avoiding distress and conflicts and includes denial and blaming.

Similarly, the following list presents synonymic constructions with the noun “repression” in all the issues of Time magazine between 1923 and the end of 1979. I divided this list into two groups: the first group rates repression among “social phenomenon” like religion, conservatism, police state, petty crimes.

• thousands of repressions relaxed and frustrations banished;
• Moral insanity, sexual perversions, repression, inferiority complexes, petty crimes;
• police state, military tyranny, sexual repression and laws against expansion of consciousness, by joyful dance and natural herbs;
• religion and sexual repression;

The second group suggests that repression is an intra-psychic phenomenon and ranks it among such feelings and personality traits as guilt, fear, confusion, prudishness and schizoid personality.

• aggressions, repressions and sexual problems;
• resistance, transference and repression;
• repressions and inhibitions;
• excessive modesty and repression;
• emotional injury or repression of instincts;
• delay, repression and sublimation;
• frustration or repression;
• Oedipus complex, inferiority complex, maternal rejection, sibling rivalry, conditioned reflex, schizoid personality, repression, regression, aggression;
• repressions and frustrations;
- vague hopes, half-beliefs, and repressions;
- preoccupation with former conflicts, repressions, frustrations and the like;
- refer familiarly to "frustrations" and "repressions";
- excessive modesty and repression;
- repression, prudery and evil;
- repressions and problems;
- repressions and troubles;
- self-abnegation and repression;
- the refusal, repression and escapism;

The groups of synonyms of the word “repression” form its context and construct it as something problematic, pathological, as a weakness. Experiencing repression is close to feelings of guilt, fear, confusion and frustration. Repression also is related to alienation from the society and from oneself: it ranks on a par with inwardness, escapism and self-abnegation. Analysis of the immediate context of the word “repression” may require more data and qualitative rather than quantitative methods. In the next section I would like to consider even broader context of this notion and try to understand how it affects the way we repress.

“Diagnosing repression”.

Earlier in the chapter I discussed the role popularization of the concept of repression by means of mass media in implicitly “teaching” people to repress. However there might be another aspect of popularization of the concept of repression: Time as a corpus does not include a single entry where the verb “repress” is used in the present tense. We never “repress” or “are repressing”, but always “have already repressed”. One may ask whether repression as a process indeed “exists” in the present or it is post factum constructed. In other words, similar to memory, repression as process does not seem to exist here and now, because it is not constructed as such in the public discourse. We may discover that we have repressed something only retrospectively. Construction of repression in the media provides us with the tools for it. In this case the description of the process is also retrospective, constructed on the basis of the knowledge that we have something repressed inside us. Paradoxically, the repressed material might exist in public discourse prior to the process of repression. The question as to how we know that we have something repressed in
us, might be solved by examining, how the consequences of repression are constructed in the public discourse. “Internal states” like our depressions, nightmares, flashbacks are often presented there as signs of repression. Like a presence of a dwarf indicates gold vein in a specific mountain area in the fairy tales of 19th century German romantics, the indicators of repression warn us that we should search deeper inside us in order to find the repressed material and even give us a hint as to what might have been repressed. So we might want to find its causes: to “remember” the event that was allegedly repressed and to discover how the process of repression took place. In the following table (table 5.12) I present the the “consequences of repression” as constructed by the experts and journalists of the *Time* magazine across six decades (1920s-1970s).

Table 5.12. *Indicators of repression as presented in Time magazine across six decades (1920s-1970s).*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Decade</th>
<th>“Indicators of repression”</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1920s</td>
<td>Love; adultery</td>
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<tr>
<td>1930s</td>
<td>Neurosis; morbid fear; lack of creativity; malignant self-love</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940s</td>
<td>National character (Japanese); blow up in tight spots; uneasiness of the mankind about an unresolved murder; breaking up; mental disease.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1950s</td>
<td>Man’s miseries; falling in love; mental disturbances; visions and hysterical reactions; interest in work, anxiety, neurotic anxiety with symptoms of repression; “misdirected” love.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1960s</td>
<td>Pain during LSD treatment; troubles in dealing with objective world; anxiety, hippophobia, hysterical fantasies, strange behaviour; neurotism, defeteasm, alcoholism; oppression of others; insistent sex life; being crummy; visions; Mom problem; emptiness and banality of modern life; suicide rate; difficulties in maintaining relations with men of superior intellect/position; cancer; personal and social disorders; handwriting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970s</td>
<td>Compulsions; abnormal sexual behaviour; jokes; not being able to recover from traumatic experience; novels by Stocker; neurosis; personality disorders; unwanted pregnancies, unhappy marriages, abortions; esoteric forms of sex; dreams; crimes; staying home until the age of 47; prose; film; battered spouses; crimes of violence; hysterical act.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We may notice that emotions, psychic states, and behavioural patterns are constructed as indicators of repression in *Time* magazine. They induce us to look for the repressed material and to construct the process of repression. As it is evident from the table, since the 1920s repression has been constructed as related to a wider and wider range of phenomena. Even physical illnesses like cancer and backache or social phenomena like alcoholism, abortions and
generalised “emptiness and banality of modern life” (12.11.1965) have repression as their cause. This may mean that the concept of repression indeed became a part of the public discourse. These phenomena constructed as indicators of repressed material are related to the issue of our control over our selves. On the one hand, self-diagnosed repression allows us to master the repressed areas of our psyches and to exercise control over it similar to that of mental health professionals. On the other hand, the strength of our control might increase the insecurity we might experience about the correctness of our “diagnosis”. The wider is the range of phenomena that we construct as repressed, the larger are areas of the psyche a person considers to be potentially repressible. As a consequence, we possess increasingly more pathological image of ourselves and transfer more power over our selves to mental health professionals.

Repression in narratives.

In this section I will discuss the concept of repression as presented in the stories by told by mental health professionals and their clients and published in *Time* magazine. These stories familiarize the readers with the ways repression was accomplished by other people, with the methods of its diagnostics, and also with the consequences of repression. Thus they can assist the readers in creating their own narrative about repressed events and about the process of repression. The following extract from the article on family therapy may serve as an example of how the repression is constructed by the expert, psychiatrist Norman Paul:

In one case, a 39-year-old journalist named Lewis, about to divorce his wife to marry a young girl, had broken down in sobs as he recalled his grief over the death of his beloved Aunt Anna. "She was always accepting me as I am. Being with her was like peace," he explained. Reviewing his childhood sorrow as his wife listened, Lewis recognised that his girlfriend represented the goal of his lifelong search for another Aunt Anna. This led him to return to his wife, now more understanding because she had shared his secret feelings. Since then, Paul has used the Lewis tape to diagnose hidden, crippling grief in other families. A brusque father whose son William was in emotional trouble got "a feeling of being half lost" when he heard Lewis” sobs. Then, says Paul, "he recollected the time when he himself had felt intense grief”—when his father remarried. Then, Paul helped him reconstruct what he knew but had blocked off: that when he was four, his mother had
killed both his nine-month-old sister and herself. Because he had repressed his sorrow instead of facing it, he had never recovered from the experience. Under Paul’s guidance, he saw that he was jealous because his son still had what he himself had lost so early—a mother. That hidden jealousy, it soon became clear, was the real cause of the boy’s emotional disturbance.

31.05.1971 “The Family as Patient” (695 words)

From the extract we learn a story of a “brusque” man told by psychotherapist. After having heard a pre-recorded confession of another patient, the man suddenly experienced strong emotions and the therapist helped him to understand their origin: a suicide and murder in his family that had happened when the patient had been four years old. The tragic events were repressed and this repression affected not only the client himself, but also his son. From this story we learn that death and suicide of the family members are potentially repressible events and that we can either face the grief or repress it. In the latter case we never recover from this trauma, no matter how long ago it happened. Also our repressed sorrow can affect not only us (we may become brusque or jealous) but also our family and especially children. The only way of cure is seeking advice of a mental health specialist.

If we follow the line of analysis suggested by Vladimir Propp in his Morphology of the Folk Tale (1929/2010), we may view the son as a “dispatcher”: his emotional problems (“illness”) and wish to solve them (“healing”) induced the hero to “live home” and to seek help. The illness of the son was caused by the fact that the hero had long ago “violated an interdiction”, though unwillingly: he had repressed a trauma instead of facing it. In search for help the hero met a “donor”, the psychotherapist, who interrogated and tested him in order to prepare him for receiving a “magic gift”. The hero “withstood the test”: he emotionally responded to the recorded confession of another patient and proved that he deserved to receive the “magic agent”-psychotherapy. The magic agent allowed the hero to achieve the goal of his trip, healing of his son. He returns to his family transformed: he is made psychologically “whole”. Also, we may also view this story as that of a “bewitched” rescued by a good wizard. The construction of repression here makes it similar to a “curse” pronounced upon a person without him or her knowing about it or being able to affect it. Only a wizard/psychotherapist can free the victim from it and restore her life and the life of her family. It might also be interesting to note how the
The word “repressed” is used in the story. It is introduced as part of explanation, the expert provides after telling story in ordinary language. The existence of repression is taken for granted as well as the assumption that the readers are familiar with it. The therapist does not suggest any explanation of this concept or offers any evidence of its existence.

5.6. Conclusion.
In conclusion I would like to stress several points. Firstly, the concept of repression was introduced to the readers of Time magazine in the 1920s in the articles on art and entertainment, but during the following 30 years until the late 1950s it was used mainly in the articles on health and medicine. In the 1960s and 1970s the concept of repression seemed to lose its ties with medicine and was used in increasingly wide types of context, which may serve as evidence that repression became less of a professional term and was integrated into the everyday speech of people. The fact that since 1940s the notion of repression appeared in the letters to the editor may also testify to this effect. In the 1930s and 1940s, when the word repression was used mostly in connection with medicine it was constructed mainly as something pathological and something over which people did not have much control. However by the 1960s and 1970s repression in Time magazine started being depicted as a phenomenon of everyday life, and thus it was normalized. It was also described mostly as an active process i.e. as something that people do rather than merely endure.

Secondly, speaking about dissemination of the concept of repression, I would like to stress the role of experts (psychologists and psychoanalysts) in it. Unlike the popularisation of “hard sciences” where the major role was played by politicians and second level experts (Calsamiglia and Ferrero, 2003), 82.3% of all experts cited by Time magazine were psychologists, mental health professionals and also other scientists, in other words, first level experts. Journalists of Time magazine often referred to the titles, degrees and academic achievements of professional psychologists when quoting their words. This not only attributed authority and power to them, but it also contributed to the reinforcement of the gap between scientific and public knowledge. The number of experts whose titles, degrees and affiliations were not mentioned was quite substantial (43%), however these entries usually dated back to the period between the 1920s and the late 1950s when academic psychology underwent the process of institutionalization. These
experts were mostly psychoanalysts and psychiatrists, and the decrease in citing them might be related to the increasing authority of university academic psychology.

Thirdly, it is important to consider how the concept of repression was constructed in *Time* magazine. Experiences that were most frequently constructed as “repressible” were related mostly to sexuality and aggression. A closer look at definitions, metaphors and descriptions of repression allows us to view repression as similar to forgetting, driving from the conscious mind, or avoiding negative thoughts and feelings. Repression was constructed mostly as an involuntary process, similar to avoidance, denial, and suffering in silence. Also, in a story about the treatment of repression in psychotherapy, repression appears to be similar in its function to “damnation” or “violation of interdiction” that caused terrible consequences to the main character and his relatives without them being aware of it. Intervention by the psychiatrist helped to liberate the main hero from the “black magic” of repression and also healed his son. Mentions of the consequences of repression in the magazine allowed its readers to “diagnose” repression within themselves and to construct it post factum according to the models suggested by the experts presented by the magazine. It is also important to note that repression was constructed not only as an intra-psychic, individual phenomenon, but also as a social phenomenon that created the collective unconscious.

Finally I would like to consider the concept of repression and its dissemination as related to the early thanatological texts, first of all to the essay “The Pornography of Death” by Geoffrey Gorer published in 1955 and then to the later publications by Herman Feifel. As I tried to show in this chapter, by the mid1950s when Gorer’s essay was published, the concept of repression could not be viewed as being fully incorporated into public discourse, although it can be found in the letters to the editor of *Time* magazine as early as 1940s. The references to Freud and psychoanalysis in the extracts containing the words “repress” and “repression” in the magazine were quite frequent, which may indicate that the concept of repression had not lost its ties with psychoanalysis proper. According to the data obtained from the study of *Time* magazine, this happened a decade later, in the 1960s. These findings contradict the observations of Moscovici on the content of *Elle* magazine published in the US in 1952 -1953. According to Moscovici, psychoanalytic terms and models could be found in *Elle* at this time, but in the vast majority of cases they were not accompanied by explicit mention of psychoanalysis (Moscovici, 2008, p. 227). This discrepancy in findings might be explained by the status and editorial politics of the
magazines as well as by different trajectories of spreading of psychoanalytic concepts in France and in the US. Thus the concept of repression in the essay “The Pornography of Death” could still be perceived as not being fully incorporated into public discourse and Geoffrey Gorer was one of the experts who contributed to its dissemination.

As I mentioned earlier, in the 1950s repression was constructed in *Time* magazine more as a pathology and a medical phenomenon than a norm. As I will try to show in the following chapter, this perception of repression was characteristic of Gorer’s essay, in which both repression of sexuality and repression of death seem to be pathologized and pornography was constructed as similar to the “return of the repressed”. It is also important to note that the idea of collective repression (and collective unconscious) was a part of public discourse by the time “The Pornography of Death” was published and that it was depicted by *Time* magazine as a social evil. This perception of collective repression was also shared by Gorer, as I will try to show in the next chapter.

6.1. Introduction.

In the history of thanatology Geoffrey Gorer is usually portrayed as an influential British anthropologist who was the first to describe and analyze the phenomenon of the Western taboo on death in his 1955 essay “The Pornography of Death”. For example, Vanderlyn Pine (1977) in his classic article on the history of the discipline characterized “The Pornography of Death” as “a piercing essay that has had a long-standing influence on British and American scholars” (p. 61) and stressed its “broad social science argument” (ibid). In the more recent account of the history of death studies, Kenneth Doka (2003) presented Gorer as a scholar who did excellent exploratory work on death and dying and noted that “Gorer became one of the first to suggest and analyze the reasons for modern society’s tendency to ignore or deny death” (p. 51). Similarly, Clifton Bryant (2007) described the essay by Gorer as one of the seminal scholarly works in the field of death and dying (p. 158). The main topics of the essay according to Bryant were “modern society’s cultural tendency to deny or ignore death” (ibid) and the in-depth analysis of this tendency. The essay was singled out by all historians of thanatology as one of a very few key publications of its time. For example, Kenneth Doka (2003) selected “The Pornography of Death” as one of the two important works published between the 1917 Freud’s essay on mourning and the mid-1950s (p. 51). Also, all the historical accounts categorized the essay as a scholarly text and its author as a renowned anthropologist.

However some of the perceptions of the essay and its author do not seem to be fully supported by archival materials and may look questionable. For example, as I showed in chapter 3, Gorer can hardly be called a career anthropologist. Speaking about the essay, the analysis of its references in Google scholar shows that it is unlikely that the essay has significantly affected the early history of thanatology. In fact, during the four years following its publication the essay was not quoted in the scholarly literature at all. It was introduced to scientific discourse on death by Herman Feifel in his 1959 volume *The Meaning of Death* and until 1965 (ten years after publication) the essay was quoted in scholarly literature almost solely by Herman Feifel (Feifel, 1959; Feifel, 1961; Feifel, 1963;) with the exception of the article by Maurer (1964) published by the end of the decade. By 1977 when Pine had published his account of the history of death
studies where he stressed the importance of Gorer’s essay, “The Pornography of Death” had been mentioned in the scholarly literature on death totally 14 times. The title of the essay as well as brief familiarity with its contents lead to more questions about its status as a scholarly text and also allow one to wonder as to what its main idea was.

In this chapter I will try to answer two questions. Firstly, I am interested in whether Gorer’s essay can be viewed as an academic text. Secondly, it is important to understand the main idea of the essay and to ascertain whether Gorer was indeed claiming that death in the West was denied. It is important to answer these questions in order to better understand the role of the essay in the history of thanatology, and also in order to trace the origin of the thesis of repression of death, which had so widely spread in today’s public discourse on death, as I tried to show in chapter 1.

Essentially, both questions can be viewed as related to the notion of genre. The first one obviously refers to the genre of the essay, in other words, whether the essay can be classified as an example of an academic article or of academic prose. The second one can also be viewed as related to genre, but in a more implicit way: The genre of the text (academic or other) in many aspects determines the topics that can be discussed within it, the way, these topic are discussed as well as the rhetorical persona of the author. So in my opinion it seems reasonable to turn to concept of genre and to generic and rhetorical analysis in order to answer these questions.

As I discussed in chapter 4, there are a number of different approaches to definition of the genre and also several approaches to generic analysis. Analysis of rhetorical situation is often used in generic criticism and some authors (Aly, 1969; Buehler, 1998; Johanessen, 1986; Murphy, 1990) base their discussion of genre solely on rhetorical situation. In my opinion, it is important to discuss the immediate context of the essay, in other words, its history, the role of topic of death in earlier works by Gorer, etc. in order to be able to define what kind of text The Pornography of Death is. The socio-political context is also considered to be an important element of rhetorical situation and that is why I would like to discuss in some detail the magazine in which essay was published. The history and status of Encounter are important not only as applied to a particular magazine, but also reflect the wider social and political context. Besides discussing the rhetorical situation, I will also consider the text of the essay and use methods of corpus analysis and quantitative linguistic analysis that are often used in generic criticism (Clark, 1977; Clark, 1979;
Schryer, 1993; Gustainis, 1982). In order to answer the second question about the way repression of death or taboo on death was constructed in the essay, I will use methods of Rhetorical Psychology and Critical Discourse Analysis.

6.2.1. Topic of death in Gorer’s research.
In this section I will discuss role of the topic of death in Gorer’s research and publications up to 1955, when the “Pornography of Death” was published. Familiarity with the documents stored in the Gorer’s archive at the university of Sussex can help us to clarify this issue. We may notice that the essay “The Pornography of Death” was not the first and definitely not the last article published by Gorer in *Encounter* magazine. It was a long-lasting cooperation. For example, in 1953, the year the magazine was launched, an article entitled “English Ideas about sex” by Gorer appeared there. The next year another essay “Notes on the translation of Nature, science and Dr. Kinsey” was published in *Encounter*, and in 1956 yet another essay “The remaking of man” also authored by Gorer appeared in the magazine. The essay “The Pornography of Death” was written in 1954, and published in October 1955. At the time the topic of death seemed marginal in Gorer’s publications, rather “The Pornography of Death” continued the line of the essays “The Erotic Myth of America” (1950) and “English Ideas about Sex” (1953) and was developed in connection with his interest in gender and sexuality as a topic of study in its own right. In other words, contrary to a common stereotype, the essay was not a popular version of Gorer’s research on the subject of death published in a scholarly magazine and subsequently adapted for the educated readership of a popular magazine. Rather, it was an “exploratory article”, which presented an idea that Gorer immediately made accessible to the general public without subjecting it to testing by a professional audience.

6.2.2. The socio-political context: *Encounter* magazine.
*Encounter* magazine, where “The Pornography of Death” appeared for the first time, was one of the most influential magazines in the post-war intellectual history. It was the official voice of the Congress for Cultural Freedom and its UK affiliate, the British Society for Cultural Freedom. The former was a CIA funded organization, one of its most effective covert operations, aimed at resisting the pro-Soviet sympathies among the Western intelligentsia, but also at promoting and popularizing US culture and politics in Europe and all over the world (Saunders, 1999).
Encounter was a joint project of the British Intelligence and the CIA, which addressed the lack of intellectual anti-communist media in Britain and in the USA. By the spring of 1952 the outline of the new magazine was ready. There were two editors of the magazine, the British and the American one. The CIA was to fund the new magazine, but the British Secret Intelligence Service (SIS) contributed by paying the salaries of the British editor and his secretary. The funding mechanism was operating by so called “triple pass”: some credible rich people received the CIA money and transferred it to the Congress for Cultural Freedom (CCF) and its British affiliate as donations (Saunders, 1999, p. 177). The CCF later transferred the funds directly to the magazine. For the SIS and the Foreign Office the main interest in this project was the ability to communicate anti-communist ideas to intellectuals in Asia, India and the Far East. Thus, a certain number of copies of each issue were bought by the Foreign Office and distributed through the British Council. The two candidates for the post of co-editor were Irving Kristol and Stephen Spender. Both of them worked in close cooperation with Michael Josselson, the Administrative Secretary of the Congress for Cultural Freedom and a CIA employee.

In October 1953 Encounter magazine was launched. The first issue contained a controversial “Fiedler piece”, an article written by Leslie Fielder about the Rosenberg case, where the author justified the execution of Rosenbergs because they “dehumanized themselves by becoming official cliches” even up to the moment of their death (Fiedler, 1953, p. 18)67. The news about the article spread fast and the entire print run of 10 000 copies of the magazine were sold out within a week. This contributed to the popularity of the magazine but also gave rise to the rumors that the magazine was financed by the American government. These rumors never completely stopped during the whole time of existence of the magazine. Within several years Encounter established itself as a prestigious intellectual and cultural periodical and enjoyed great popularity in Britain and the USA, but also in the Commonwealth countries. In 1961, eight years after it had been launched, the magazine trebled its circulation and sold close to thirty thousand copies (Roselli, 196168), which was an unusually high figure for an intellectual magazine. Encounter was the only magazine of the kind in the UK, to say nothing about the rest of Europe, where the post-war economic crisis affected the existing highbrow magazines and made the launch of the

new ones virtually impossible. None of them could compete with *Encounter* and its lavish financing and none of them could offer as generous royalties.

As I mentioned earlier, the rumors that *Encounter* was financed by the US government were always there, but a series of scandals in the late 1960-s made it evident to the general public. The California-based magazine *Ramparts* published an investigation of the source of funding of *Encounter* and CIA covert operations in 1967. These findings were picked up by the national newspapers. The CIA involvement in the cultural life was a shocking fact for many, as the rhetoric of the open society promoted by the magazine contradicted the reality of CIA control. One of the editors of *Encounter* resigned, the magazine lost many contributors and also lost in circulation, but survived until 1990. In its heyday *Encounter* was a model magazine of and for public intellectuals (Posner, p. 155). The fact that CIA supported it (as well as the Congress for Cultural Freedom and other projects) shows that public intellectuals were taken seriously during this period and that they were an important part of the cultural cold war, an asset, in which the US government invested much funds. One may wonder as to whether the rise of academic public intellectuals (and decline of the independent non-academic ones) in the 1960-s was partly a reaction to the scandal with the CIA funding of the *Encounter*, which showed that the independent public intellectuals were actually not that independent.

As I mentioned earlier, Gorer published his first essay titled “English Ideas about Sex” in *Encounter* in December 1953 and kept writing for the magazine at least once a year till 1967 and the scandal with the funding of *Encounter*. We can only hypothesize whether Gorer knew about the nature of the magazine and its link to the American and British Intelligence. As I mentioned in the chapter 3, Gorer’s papers stored at the University of Sussex contain correspondence with Stephen Spender, one of the magazine’s editors and Gorer’s colleague working for the British Control Commission in the occupied Berlin right after the war. Also, Gorer corresponded with Michael Josselson, Melvin Lasky, and Malcolm Muggeridge, the key figures in the Congress for Cultural Freedom, before he started contributing to the magazine. This may allow one to suppose that Gorer might have been aware of the source of financing and hidden agenda of the magazine. Also, Gorer as a Head of the British Political Warfare Mission in Washington might have his own contacts with the intelligence services and may have known as much as the editors of the magazine or even more than them. The most important thing however is that “The Pornography
of Death” was published in one of most influential literary and political magazines of the time, which also can be defined as a conservative, right-wing magazine.

6.3. The genre of the essay “The Pornography of Death”: quantitative linguistic analysis.
In this section I would like to take a closer look at the essay “The Pornography of death” from the point of view of its formal characteristics, in order to answer the question, whether this text might be considered to belong to scholarly discourse. As I argued in chapter 3, the career of Gorer does not allow us to consider him to be an academic: he did not receive a degree in anthropology, never taught at the university level and generally never did what career academics usually do. Also, the magazine, where the essay was published was a popular rather than a scholarly periodical. All this might allow us to suspect that the essay might not be a conventional scholarly text. In the following section I would like to take closer look at the text of the essay from the formal point of view and compare it with the scholarly publications in anthropology published at the same time.

6.3.1. The title of the essay.
The first element that immediately arrests one’s attention is its title. It is obvious that “The Pornography of Death” does not look like a typical title of a research article or, more broadly, of an academic article first of all because of its formal characteristics: length, grammatical structure and wording. According to Haggan (2004) the average length of titles in “soft sciences” (linguistics) amounts to 9 words, whereas science titles are nearly half as long averaging 14 words per title. I could not find any information about the average length of titles in anthropology, the field Gorer associated himself with. It is especially difficult to find this information as applied to the 1950s when the essay by Gorer was published. So I decided to analyse the titles of the original articles published in 1955\(^{69}\) in *American Anthropologist* (volume 57), one of the most influential anthropological journals of the time. Totally there were 51 articles in the sample. The average length of the title amounts to 7.9 words. This is almost twice as much as Gorer’s title contains. Only four titles in the magazine were of the same length or shorter than that of “the Pornography of Death”. These types of titles referred to certain ethnic or religious groups like “The Burwezi” or “American Communities” (3 titles). Another title, “Physical Anthropology” seemed to be an editorial.

\(^{69}\) the year when the “Pornography of Death” appeared in *Encounter* magazine.
As for the grammatical structure of the title, the most common type in humanities and social sciences is a compound title, which contains two noun phrases, separated by colon (Haggan, 2004; Hartley, 2007). Also widespread are complex noun phrases with several modifying prepositional phrases as well as full-sentence titles. The latter are more popular in sciences. In the articles published in *American Anthropologist* in 1955 the compound titles amounted to only 12.5% of all titles. The most common title type (52%) was complex noun phrase with modifying prepositional phrases (for example “Types of Social Structure among the Lowland Tribes of South and Central America”). As we may notice, the title of Gorer’s essay “The Pornography of Death” lacks the grammatical complexity of an academic title. If we compare it with the other academic titles, we may notice two things: first, the complex structure of an academic title is supposed to reflect the content of the article very precisely and thus to attract potential readers who are interested in particular aspect or angle of a problem (Siso, 2009). In the case of a non-academic article, a broad and undifferentiated title might mean that the author is trying to attract a wider readership than a specialist article with a complex title would.

Finally, the wording of the Gorer’s title can hardly be called academic. This aspect is closely related to the previous one, namely, with the structure of the title. The short title does not allow the author to use of academic words (Coxhead, 2000; Coxhead and Nation, 2001), even very frequent ones (like “analysis”, “method” or “factor”) that belong to the Sublist 1 in Coxhead’s terminology. The meaningful words –“pornography” and “death”- can be both plain words and social scientific terms if they are placed in the context of similar academic terminology. However, here this context is not provided. Without this context these words leave an impression of being highly emotive. In other words, the title of the essay by Gorer differs from the titles of mere technical academic works and it is also quite unusual for a standard academic article and might rather belong to a magazine or a newspaper article. The wordplay “The Pornography of Death” makes the title catchy: it brings together two seemingly incompatible concepts- “pornography” and “death”. This combination marks the rhetorical figure of catachresis, literally ‘misuse’, bringing together two dissonant notions, especially in a metaphor. The function of catachresis is first and foremost to denote a new phenomenon, in this context, the phenomenon that Gorer allegedly discovered in the society of that time. Also, catachresis as well as other types of rhetoric devices such as alliteration and rhyme is often used in the media to create sensational headlines in order to attract reader’s attention (Bucaria, 2004). This type of headlines
is characteristic feature of many newspaper articles, especially the one published in tabloids (Bucaria, 2004).

6.3.2. Formal characteristics of the text of the essay.
As I mentioned earlier, the career of Geoffrey Gorer, the magazine where the essay was first published, and also the title of the essay might indicate that “the Pornography of Death” might not be a scholarly text. In this section I would like to take a closer look at the formal characteristics of the text of the essay in order to better understand, whether “The Pornography of Death” might be viewed as a scholarly text.

The length of the essay.
Speaking about the length of the essay, it is important to point out that “the Pornography of Death” is too short for a research article in social sciences: it contains only 2 309 words. According to Swales (1990), the length of an academic article in social sciences in the 1940-s averaged to 5 000 words. After this, the average length of an article has steadily increased and by 1980 reached 10 000 words. In order to be able to compare the essay by Gorer with the articles in anthropology written at the same period I calculated the average length of all the original articles (51 articles) published in 1955 in *American Anthropologist*. Their average length amounted to 6 769 words. This makes an average anthropological article published in 1955 almost three times longer than the Gorer’s essay.

The structure of the essay.
Also, the organization of the essay allows us to suspect that we are not dealing with a standard scholarly text here: Gorer’s essay was not formally divided into sections and does not contain references. However, according to Swales (1990), section headings became regular features of research articles after 1950. We may notice that all the original articles published in *American Anthropologist* in 1955 were divided into sections and all but three (5.8 %) contained Reference sections.

Also, the use of epigraph in the essay by Gorer might indicate that it was not a conventional academic article. Epigraphs are relatively rare in academic prose and are not expected in academic articles (Katriel and Sanders, 1989): none of the 51 original articles published in *American Anthropologist* in 1955 contained an epigraph. Also, epigraphs are rather controversial elements of the text. On the one hand, epigraphs are detached from its main body and the main
flow of arguments. The detachment is accentuated by the fact that epigraphs are usually taken from genre, time, or cultural milieu different from the body of the text (Katriel and Sanders, 1989). The author of the text is only minimally involved in explaining and commenting on the epigraph. On the other hand, obviously if the epigraph is included in the text, it was done for a purpose: the author tries to convey some information and prefers to do it apart from flow of arguments in the main text. Thus, the epigraph requires the readers to hypothesize about its meaning in the context provided by the main text. The readers might also need to go back to the epigraph more then once while they familiarize themselves with the text in order to grasp the meaning of both epigraph and the text.

*The vocabulary of the essay.*

It might also be important to analyze the vocabulary of the essay in order to understand how different or similar it was to the average article in anthropology published at the time. Averil Coxhead (Coxhead and Nation, 2001) suggested dividing the vocabulary of academic texts into three groups: high frequency words, academic vocabulary, and technical vocabulary. Whereas technical vocabulary differs from subject area to subject area, the academic vocabulary consists of words that are reasonably frequent in a wide range of academic texts, but are not so common in other kinds of texts. Academic vocabulary covers around 8.5 -10% of the words in academic texts, but only 3.9% of words in newspapers, and 1.7% in fiction. A text analyzing program *Vocabulary Profile*70 designed by Thomas Cobb of the University of Quebec allows one to calculate the amount of academic words in a given text on the basis of the list of academic words suggested by Coxhead (Coxhead, 2000). The essay by Gorer contains 5.62% of academic words. This figure places the essay somewhere between academic articles and newspapers, but is slightly closer to the mean figure for newspapers. However the corpus of academic English designed by Coxhead contains modern sources (1990-s) and does not take into consideration the historical changes in the amount of academic words in academic texts. So in order to make my comparison more valid I decided to create an improvised corpus comprised of 51 original articles published in 1955 in *American Anthropologist* (345 219 words). This corpus was analyzed with the help of the program *Vocabulary Profile*. I found out that academic words account for 7.66 of words in anthropological articles of the time. This figure is smaller than that of the modern

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70 The program is available online at Thomas Cobb’s web page [http://www.lectutor.ca/vp/](http://www.lectutor.ca/vp/). (Retrieved 15.06.2012)
academic English, however still notably bigger than the amount of academic words in the essay by Gorer.

Another dimension of the vocabulary which intersects with the classification suggested by Coxhead (2000) is the etymology of words used. English vocabulary consists of the Old English Core, Norman French and Latin and Greek borrowings. This allows the speaker of English to use a great range of synonyms and near synonyms, which have different stylistic nuances. The core words from Old English amount to 98 out of 100 of the most frequently used words of the language (Crystal, 2006). They are perceived by the language users as simple and straightforward (Fahnestock, 2011). The French borrowings convey the aura of elegance and order, and whereas words with the Latin and Greek roots convey formality and erudition (Fahnestock, 2011). They are the main source of scholarly terminology. As Fahnestock points out, synonyms are the fuel of rhetorical power in English (2001, p. 31). On the level of formal analysis we may calculate the proportion of words of different origin in the essay by Gorer as compared to the original articles published in *American Anthropologist* in 1955. The program *Vocabulary Profile*, which I mentioned earlier, allows us to calculate the amount of words belonging to the Old English Core. It also places the French, Latin and Greek borrowings in one category. The essay by Gorer contains 73.19 % of words of the Old English Core, whereas the articles published in the *American Anthropologist only* 65.94%. Greater proportion of Anglo-Saxon vocabulary in “the Pornography of Death” means that it contains less words of French and Latin/Greek origin. This might serve as additional evidence of less academic character of this text.

6.4. Rhetorical analysis of the essay “The Pornography of Death”: the genre of the essay and the idea of repression of death in it.

In this section I would like to discuss the idea of the Western repression of death or the Western taboo on death in the essay. But first I would like to briefly overview the essay. “The Pornography of Death” consists of an epigraph and 16 paragraphs. The full text of the essay can be found in Appendix 1. In the introductory paragraphs Gorer discussed the concepts of obscenity and pornography in relation to the concepts of seemliness and prudery. He refers to the examples taken from different cultures to argue that obscenity is the opposite site of seemliness. In paragraphs 2 and 3 Gorer turns to the concept of pornography and notes that pornography is a much rarer phenomenon than prudery and occurs mostly in literate societies. He defines
pornography as “the description of tabooed activities to produce hallucination or delusion” (p. 49). In paragraphs 4 and 5 Gorer discusses pornography in graphic arts and literature in various cultures. In the next paragraph (paragraph 6) he links pornography to prudery and notes that “the periods of the greatest production of pornography have also been the periods of the most rampant prudery” (p. 49). In paragraphs 7 and 8 Gorer introduces the idea of the Western taboo on death: he argues that for the last two hundred year copulation and also birth were the “unmentionables” of the triad of basic human experiences, whereas death was no mystery. At the 20th century an unremarkable shift in prudery occurred: sexuality has become more and more mentionable, whereas death as a natural process became unmentionable. Further in the paragraph and also in the paragraphs 9 and 10 Gorer presents his evidence in favor of the idea that death became unmentionable: lack of death-bed scenes in the modern literature, lack of experience of death in younger people, attempts to hide the truth about death from children and also some funeral practices (embalming). The following two paragraphs are devoted to the analysis of the reasons for taboo on death: they are first of all shift in religious beliefs and decline in belief in immortality. Second, it is public health measure and improved preventive medicine, which made death at home rather uncommon. At the same time there was increase in violent death (wars, revolutions, crime, road accidents). This caused violent death to play a growing part in the mass culture. In the paragraphs 13-15 Gorer draws parallels between the two pornographies, that of sex and death and finally in the last paragraph he calls for acceptance of the basic facts of birth, copulation, and death and their implications. He suggests that “if we dislike the modern pornography of death, then we must give back to death-natural death-its parade and publicity, readmit grief and mourning” (p. 52).

In the following sections I would like to take a closer look at the idea of the Western taboo on death, the way it was introduced to the text of the essay and constructed there. The title of the essay “The Pornography of Death” provides a good starting point for this discussion.

6.4.1. The title of the essay.

As I mentioned earlier in the chapter, the title of the essay “The Pornography of Death” contains two concepts- “pornography” and “death”. The combination of these words marks the rhetorical figure of catachresis, an extravagant or outrageous metaphor” (Jasinski, 200171). The function of

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catachresis is first and foremost to denote a new phenomenon, in this context, the phenomenon that Gorer discovered in the contemporary society. As Glucksberg (2001) pointed out, occasional or even more than occasional categories do not have name often because these categories are new. They receive their names in the process known as dual reference, when a notion is used at two different levels of abstraction, concrete level and superordinate level. The metaphor in the title “The pornography of death” allowed the author to transfer the qualities usually associated with the concrete notion of pornography to the perception of death. According to the Webster’s Seventh New Collegiate Dictionary (which was published in 1963 and reflected the contemporary usage) pornography meant “the depiction of erotic behaviour intended to cause sexual excitement” (p. 661). This word was used interchangeably with “obscenity” (Kronhausen and Kronhausen, 1961), which meant something dirty, disgusting, abhorrent to morality or virtue (Webster’s, 1963, p. 582). Thus death was constructed here as something dirty, obscene and “the pornography of death” as something intended to elicit strong emotional reaction and – as in the legal use- something prohibited, hidden. It is interesting to note that Gorer was not the only author who applied the word “pornography” to the matters, not related to sex: in 1955, the same year as Gorer’s essay was published, an American philosopher Abraham Kaplan in his article “Obscenity as an aesthetic category” discussed “the pornography of violence” (p. 558). By this he meant a type of obscenity, in which “sexual desires find symbolic release only as transformed into acts of aggression” (p. 558). As examples of “the pornography of violence” Kaplan quoted pulp fiction and also more highbrow literature like writings of the “realistic school”:

A phenomenally popular series of novels is constructed according to a rigid pattern of alternation of violence and sex which coincide only at the climax when the virile hero is allowed to shoot the wicked beauty. More sophisticated in style and structure, but essentially the same in substance, is the work of the "realistic" school sometimes associated with the name of Hemingway. Death in the afternoon prepares for love at midnight. … this genre is enormously successful; taking into account the "detective" story and the crime "comic," the pornography of violence is more widespread in our culture than all the other categories of obscenity put together. (p. 558)

Here Kaplan (similarly to Gorer in his essay “The Pornography of Death”) attacks the popular culture where violence and sexualized violence became a source of recreation for the spectator. In stressing the obsession of the contemporary culture with violence in the media both Kaplan
and Gorer followed the line of reasoning suggested by the American-Jewish intellectual Gershon Legman in his 1949 book *Love and Death. A Study in Censorship*. In this book Leman linked the widely spread graphic violence in the American culture to the repression of the erotic. Violence in the media was considered by Legman to be a direct consequence of sexual repression. As I will argue later in the chapter, Gorer in his essay also established a connection between the two repressions, but linked the concepts of pornography, violence, repression and obscenity in a slightly different way.

Returning to the essay by Gorer, the figure of catachresis in the title allowed the author introduce the topic of death in connection with the topic of sexuality. The word “pornography” according to the Edinburgh Associative Thesaurus has the strongest association with the word “sex”\(^2\). The figure of catachresis used in the title linked the notions of death and sexuality in a flash, bluntly, and as something that didn’t need any supporting evidence: the title does not provide the author with this possibility. This made catachresis an effective rhetorical tool. The paradox in the title not only made it memorable and provocative, but also set the scene for the discussion of repression of death in connection with sexuality and thus made the rhetorical work in the body of the text easier for the author. The epigraph of the essay also contributed to this task as I will argue in the following section.

6.4.2. The epigraph.

The epigraph of the essay was as following: “Birth, and copulation, and death. That’s all the facts when you come to brass tacks: Birth, and copulation, and death”. This is a small quotation from the unfinished play by T.S. Eliot “Sweeney Agonistes” (though Eliot included it in his book under *Unfinished Poems, 1909-1962*). “Sweeney Agonistes” was first published in fragments in 1926 and 1927 and later as a whole in 1932 (Grove, 2002). It continues the cycle of “Sweeney” poems of the 1920-s (“Sweeney Among the Nightingales”, “Sweeney Erect”). The main characters of the poem belong to the world of what Eliot called “furnished flat sort of people” (Scofield, 1988). Presumably, this is the world of what today would be punters and escort agencies (ibid, p. 192). In the second fragment of the poem (“Fragment of an Agon”), where the epigraph was taken from, Doris, an escort girl, and Sweeney, one of her customers and a “caricature of the macho” (Crawford, 1987, p 29), first flirt and then Sweeney takes the dialogue

\(^2\) The interactive version of the thesaurus can be accessed from the site of Carnegie-Mellon University at [http://www.speech.cs.cmu.edu/comp.speech/Section1/Lexical/eat.html](http://www.speech.cs.cmu.edu/comp.speech/Section1/Lexical/eat.html).
to a new level and introduces the theme of cannibal or crocodile island. The extract containing the sentences on birth, copulation and death was as following:

SWEENEY: I’ll carry you off
To a cannibal isle.
DORIS: You’ll be the cannibal!
Sweeney: You’ll be the missionary!

... SWEENEY: … you see this egg
You see this egg
Well that’s life on a crocodile isle.
There’s no telephones
There’s no gramophones
There’s no motor cars
No two-seaters, no six-seaters,
No Citroen, no Rolls-Royce.
Nothing to eat but the fruit as it grows.
Nothing to see, but the palmtrees one way
And the sea the other way,
Nothing to hear, but the sound of the surf.
Nothing at all but three things
DORIS: What things?
SWEENEY: Birth, and copulation, and death.
That’s all, that’s all, that’s all, that’s all,
Birth, and copulation, and death.
DORIS: I’d be bored.

SWEENEY: You’d be bored.

Birth, and copulation, and death.

That’s all the facts when you come to brass tacks:

Birth, and copulation, and death.

I’ve been born, and once is enough.

You don’t remember, but I remember,

Once is enough (p.126-127).

One may notice that the line “Birth, and copulation, and death” refers first of all to the life on the cannibal island (but could also be interpreted more widely as describing the life of a modern man). Eliot had been interested in anthropology since his student years in Harvard. Interest in “savages” was part of the general atmosphere of the time, “primitive man was in vogue” (Crawford, 1987, p. 61). For many anthropologists of the time modern urban man and a primitive were juxtaposed, however there were attempts to connect them, not only in the scholarly work, but also in the popular culture and in fiction. This fragment of Eliot might be viewed as one of the attempts to give a meaning to these concepts. Without telephones, gramophones and motor cars the life of an average Londoner or Berliner is plain and boring “as an egg”, and only these external attributes of civilization separate the “modern savage” from the savage described in anthropological books. Eliot uses the word “copulation” (rather than “sex” or even “love”) when speaking about the triad of basic facts of life. This word belongs to the realm of natural sciences and is often used while describing mating of animals. For example, in the Webster’s dictionary the two examples provided for the word copulation refer to animals. Reduction of human experience to that of animal is one more way to draw a parallel between the primitive and the modern man. In my opinion, Eliot’s lines on birth, and copulation and death referred not to the “existential situation” of all human beings, but rather represent a very pessimistic view of emptiness of the modern culture, which cannot offer much to the ordinary city dwellers, to the people who belong to social world of Doris and Sweeney.

Returning to the “Pornography of Death”, the epigraph here might be viewed first of all as setting the tone for understanding of the essay. The paradoxical title of the essay established the
link between death and sexuality. It constructed the former as something that might have a quality of being indecent or even shameful. The epigraph continues this line of reasoning and informs the reader that the essay will possibly cover the issues of death, sexuality, shame, etc. The epigraph was later repeated in the body of the text without reference to Eliot. The Eliot’s triad of basic human experiences was implicitly used by Gorer as an organizing principle for his reasoning. The task of linking death and sexuality and establishing parallels between their “pornographies” was shifted onto the title and epigraph of the essay. This makes rhetorical work aimed at connecting the subjects of death and sexuality in the main part of the text easier for the author and allowed him to offer only a few arguments in favor of the taboo. These arguments were presented as if they stood for the whole body of evidence and explanations, as I will argue further in the text. The connection between sexuality and death and possibility of applying the word “pornography” to death was constructed as a premise in the title and epigraph and Gorer’s reasoning was based upon it. I will discuss this maneuver in more detail later, when speaking about the use of epigraph in the body of the Gorer’s essay.

Also, in order to analyse the epigraph and its role in the essay we may consider it as a form of direct quotation or direct speech. This quotation is unaccompanied by comments or explanations: the author does not introduce the epigraph like any other type of quotation and doesn’t interpret it. Thus, according to the classification suggested by Leech and Short (1981), epigraphs may be considered to be examples of Free Direct Speech. In Free Direct Speech excerpts of speech are offered without reporting clause or any assignment of the author. But in the case of epigraph the author is not free in selection and placement of epigraphs (unlike other types of quotations). Epigraphs are positioned out of the main body of the text, prior and detached from it. Quotations introduce to the text additional voices, other than that of the author (Fahnestock, 2011). The very form of direct quotations makes the presence of these voices very obvious and allow them to serve as a graphic example of polyphony and heteroglossia (these two concepts might be viewed as overlapping to a considerable degree (Jasinski, 2001). According to Bakhtin (1993), polyphony in a narrow sense refers to a type of prose in which an author creates a number of voices or “consciousnesses” that engage in dialogue with each other. Although it is the author who creates these voices, they are to a certain degree independent of each other and of the author’s point of view and represent their own consciousness, their own position.
Returning to the essay, we may notice that there are at least three “layers” of voices here: first is the voice of the author (Gorer), who chose the epigraph and made it work in the context of his essay. The second voice belongs to Eliot, the fragment of whose poem/play Gorer used as an epigraph. Finally, the third voice is that of Sweeney, the character from the poem “Sweeney Agonistes”, who utters the lines on “Birth, and copulation, and death”. Also, we should not forget the voice of Doris here: her voice is almost not heard in the epigraph, however it might be viewed as a vehicle for Sweeney’s voice in the quotation. Speaking about the voice of the author of the essay, it might be important to note that by the 1950-s when Gorer’s essay was published, Eliot had a reputation of one of the most important poets writing in the English language. The Nobel prize in literature was awarded to Eliot in 1948. It strengthened his status of a classic in his own lifetime (Grove, 2002). However Eliot’s poetry was not created for mass consumption, it was elitist, full of complex literary allusions and willfully difficult (Longenbach, 2002). The choice of the quotation from T.S Eliot for the epigraph might be viewed as contributing to the ethos of the author as a highly sophisticated person, a connoisseur of poetry and arts. The epigraph (in addition, the one taken from a relatively obscure unfinished poem/play) not only presented his rhetorical voice as that of a highly educated and aesthetically sensitive person, but also characterized Gorer as rather an elitist writer. It marked the author as belonging to a certain social strata, not merely to intelligentsia or bohemia, but to its cream of cream, to the elite, keenly interested in modern literature and art. A quotation from Eliot for Gorer’s readers might have served as an indication of esthetic, cultural, but also social affinity. With its help Gorer positioned himself as belonging to the educated elite of the society, which was the target audience of *Encounter* magazine. However Gorer chose the epigraph from the source that was not so generally known and in this way had possibly increased his status as being above his readership. Also, the message this quotation convey (as I tried to argue earlier) might be viewed as condemning the contemporary mass culture of “the modern savages” and its obsession with “telephones, gramophones and motor cars”. So here Gorer might present himself as belonging to the conservative wing of intellectuals. It is also interesting to note that none of essays in *Encounter* of the period (1953-1958) except the one by Gorer started with epigraph. Thus Gorer presented himself as being different, unusual, even in this aspect and offered his credentials as highly educated intellectual at the very beginning of the article.
Speaking about the voice of Sweeney, it might be important to note that for Eliot Sweeney is a personification of an unrefined, sensual and secular man, an “image of what humanity has ultimately degraded to” (Tiwari and Tiwari, 2007, p. 41). Birth, copulation and death are the triad of basic human experiences in a cannibal island as perceived by Sweeney, but also as I argue further in the chapter, the lines on birth, copulation and death essentially refer to the popular culture, in its most primitive version. This culture is the culture of Sweeney, Doris, and people of their social strata according to Eliot (and also Gorer). As we may notice, in the poem Sweeney applies this scheme to the way he and his circle live their lives and this reduction of life to birth, death and copulation depresses him, but also Doris. For Eliot, Sweeney’s deeply tragic perception of emptiness of life is a way to show shallowness of the modern life and the modern popular culture that cannot offer much to an average city dweller in terms of coping with existential issues. Gorer treats this grotesque and highly pessimistic view as that pertaining the human nature in the contemporary culture and bases his essay on it. In my opinion, the voice of Sweeney dissatisfied with his existence but unable to break out of the circle of birth, copulation, and death, the voice of a modern savage, might serve in the essay as a contrast to the position of Gorer himself, an intellectual, belonging to the elite of the society. It allows Gorer to criticize the world of Sweeney, the mass culture, and gives him rhetorical tools for it. The position from which a writer could claim that death in the modern Western society is denied might be quite awkward: it not easy to construct the author as simultaneously belonging and not belonging to the death denying society. The presence of the two voices in the essay (that of Sweeney in the epigraph and that of Gorer, the highly educated intellectual) allows the author to do it and sets the stage for the critique of the mass culture in the essay.

6.4.3. The body of the essay.
The essay starts with a discussion of the obscene and also prudery in the different cultures. In the following paragraph (paragraph 7) the author switches from the discussion of the obscene and pornography to the topic of repression of death (the main part of the argument). Gorer wrote:

Traditionally, and in the lexicographic meaning of the term, pornography has been concerned with sexuality. For the greater part of the last two hundred years copulation and (at least in the mid-Victorian decades) birth were the "unmentionables" of the triad of basic human experiences which "are all the facts when you come to brass tacks," around which so much private fantasy and semi-clandestine pornography were erected.
During most of this period death was no mystery, except in the sense that death is always a mystery. Children were encouraged to think about death, their own deaths and the edifying or cautionary death-beds of others. It can have been a rare individual who, in the 19th century with its high mortality, had not witnessed at least one actual dying, as well as paying their respect to "beautiful corpses"; funerals were the occasion of the greatest display for working class, middle class, and aristocrat. The cemetery was the center of every old-established village, and they were prominent in most towns. It was fairly late in the 19th century when the execution of criminals ceased to be a public holiday as well as a public warning.

In the first sentence the author in my opinion tries to provide some explanation for the title of the essay, where he connected the concept of pornography with that of death. He stated that traditionally indeed the concept of pornography has been related to sexuality. In the next sentence the expression ‘for the greater part of the last two hundred years’ sets the scene for introduction of the topic of repression of death: the question suggests itself as to what had changed during the rest of this two hundred years period. The author writes that sexuality and birth were unmentionable topics during this period. This thesis is mentioned briefly and as something self-evident. As I tried to show in the previous chapter on the spreading of the concept of repression in the popular discourse, the idea of sexual repression (especially sexual repression as a characteristic feature of Victorian society) became a commonplace in the popular discourse of the time. The claim of the repression of death is based on it, and in a certain sense sexual repression is used as a presupposition in the discussion of repression of death.

The motif of the ‘triad of the basic human experiences’ might also be worth discussing. This idea is related to the lines by Eliot presented in the epigraph. One may notice that Gorer tries to justify the presence of birth in this triad, which does not fit smoothly into the sex and death scheme. He links birth and sex by the conjunction ‘and’, places these two words in the same grammatical position in the sentence (subject) and binds them to one verb (“were”). However paradoxically, the author does not seem to link birth and death here. The quality of being unmentionables is ascribed to the both nouns (sex and birth). Gorer also used the adverb ‘at least’ and reference to mid-Victorian decades as limiting qualifier of the repression of birth. Linking birth, sex, and death under the heading of ‘basic human experiences’ provides the author with a “matrix” for comparing the attitudes to them in the society.
In the next sentence the author states that during this period death was no mystery, but specifies: “except in the sense that death is always a mystery”. This rhetorical manoeuvre limits the sweeping generalization provided in the first part of the sentence and in sense ‘legitimizes’ it. The conjunction ‘except’ in this context has a similar function to the disclaimer ‘but’ in the racist utterances like ‘I am not a racist but…’ (Van Dijk, 1992): it helps the author to anticipate the possible objections regarding the incompatibility of the two clauses and to construct them both as valid and unproblematic. The second clause ‘except in the sense that death is always a mystery’ also helps to construct the repression of death as something obvious, something that does not need detailed evidence.

The following four sentences presented an account of death awareness attributed to the society of the past. It interesting to take a closer look at the traits of the society of the past Gorer constructed as an evidence of the alleged death awareness. Gorer mentioned four pieces of evidence here, which were related to each other: children were encouraged to think about death, people of the 19th century witnessed natural death and corpses quite often, cemeteries were centres of every village, and executions used to be public holidays. Gorer here does not provide a more detailed description of these pieces of evidence here and does not mention historical or other sources to support his claims. Rather he presents this evidence as something obvious that may stand for awareness of death in the society as a whole.

Finally, the topic of repression of death appears in the next paragraph (paragraph 8). The paragraph was as followed:

In the twentieth century, however, there seems to have been an unremarked shift in prudery; whereas copulation has become more and more “mentionable”, particularly in the Anglo-Saxon societies, death has become more and more “unmentionable” as a natural process. I cannot recollect a novel or play of the last twenty years or so which has a “deathbed scene” in it, describing in any detail the death “from natural causes” of a major character; this topic was a set piece for most of the eminent Victorian and Edwardian writers, evoking their finest prose and their most elaborate technical effects to produce the greatest amount of pathos or edification.

The twentieth century is constructed here as the time when repression of death had emerged. It might be interesting to pay attention to the two words in this sentence: ‘unremarked’ and ‘shift’.
The former suggests that repression of death according to Gorer passed unnoticed by the society of the time which made the role of scholar especially important and his rhetorical stance especially strong. The word “shift” introduces interesting dimension to the test of Gorer, and I am not sure that Gorer actually meant it, at least he didn’t develop this idea further. “Shift” suggests a certain interdependence between the repression of death and that of sex. As one of the topics became more and more mentionable, the other gradually became unmentionable as if these two types of repression are in antiphase with each other. The figure of antithesis used in the last sentence helps to draw a line between repression of sex and death, the former belonging to the past, and the later to the present. At the same time, the symmetrical position of the adverbs “more and more” in this sentence brings these types of repression together and constructs them as interdependent.

After this sentence Gorer presents his first piece of evidence in favour of repression of death. It is related to reflection of death in fiction and plays. The absence of death-bed scenes and depictions of death from natural causes in the literature of the time is considered by the author to be a sign of repression of death. Several questions might be asked in this connection. First, it is not absolutely clear, what “natural causes” mean and why death by natural causes as depicted in literature is taken for an evidence of repression or awareness of death. Second, the choice of sources may also pose a question. It limits the analysis to something author read. On the one hand, this might add to credibility of the statement as the author speaks about his first-hand experience. On the other hand, references to one’s reading only, without supporting the claim by other evidence may look a little odd and gives scope to counterarguments. For example, one may remember Thomas Mann and his Magic Mountain, which is abundant in death-bed scenes. It is also interesting to note that Gorer limited his sources to highbrow literature and mentioned only plays and novels. However he did not specify which Victorian and Edwardian writers he meant and did not mention specific novels or plays (or specific death bed scenes in them). Also, Gorer excluded from his argument popular entertainment like pulp fiction, comics, and films. In fact, in westerns and also in war films death scenes are very common. For example, in westerns not only are people shot to death, but there are often dying scenes, where the dying utter last words. This genre of popular entertainment does not seem to fit the thesis of mass repression of death. Also, Gorer omits here popular press and its coverage of death. In my opinion, the mention of death bed scenes in the literature might serve not only as the example of the alleged denial of death in
the society of the time. Also, it contributes to Gorer’s self-presentation, his rhetorical voice. The sentence started with “I cannot recollect a novel or play of the last twenty years” describes the author as an intellectual, a person who is interested in the contemporary literature, follows “the literary process” and notices its trends. Similarly, the expressions “eminent Victorian and Edwardian writers”, “finest prose”, “most elaborate technical effects”, and “greatest amount of pathos or edification” allowed the author to present himself as an intellectual and also as a connoisseur of literature, rather than a mere reader.

The other two arguments were related to practices and rituals surrounding death and dying. The paragraph runs as follows:

One of the reasons, I imagine, for this plethora of death-bed scenes—apart from their intrinsic emotional and religious content—was that it was one of the relatively few experiences that an author could be fairly sure would have been shared by the vast majority of his readers. Questioning my old acquaintances, I cannot find one over the age of sixty who did not witness the agony of at least one near relative; I do not think I know a single person under the age of thirty who has had a similar experience. Of course my acquaintance is neither very extensive nor particularly representative; but in this instance I do think it is typical of the change of attitude and “exposure”.

In the first sentence Gorer switched from presenting arguments in favour of repression of death to discussing its reasons: the death-bed scenes were so common in everyday life during Victorian period, that the Victorian and Edwardian writers could share it with the majority of their readers. Thus, explanation of the piece of evidence (that itself needs justification) here has also served as a way of presenting the idea of taboo on death as self-evident and existing in reality. The next piece of evidence seems to be related to the previous one: the younger acquaintances of the author (unlike the older one) did not witness many (if any) death-bed scenes in their lives. Gorer also softens this utterance with disclaimer: he stated that his acquaintances were not very numerous or representative, but they may indicate the change in attitude to death. It is interesting to note that the mention of the acquaintances as not very representative may indicate not only the fact that in order to present his argument as more convincing Gorer draw from the scientific discourse, but he also constructed himself as belonging to the elite.
Finally, in the paragraph 10 the author presents his last group of arguments in favour of taboo on death. The paragraph was as following:

The natural processes of corruption and decay have become disgusting, as disgusting as the natural processes of birth and copulation were a century ago; preoccupation about such processes is (or was) morbid and unhealthy, to be discouraged in all and punished in the young. Our great-grandparents were told that babies were found under gooseberry bushes or cabbages; our children are likely to be told that those who have passed on (fie! on the gross Anglo-Saxon monosyllable) are changed into flowers, or lie at rest in lovely gardens. The ugly facts are relentlessly hidden; the art of the embalmers is an art of complete denial.

Here Gorer once more linked the taboo on death with the taboo on sex: The repression of death and decay were constructed as a characteristic feature of Gorer’s time, whereas birth and copulation were attributed to the previous epoch. Gorer completed his evidence in favour of repression of death by referring to the funeral practices (embalming) as an act of denial. As we may notice, the arguments in favour of the Western taboo on death in the essay were essentially common sense arguments. They are not based on research of any kind and they do not belong to academic (psychological, psychoanalytic, anthropological) style of reasoning. Nevertheless the arguments in favour of the taboo on death were presented in the essay in a very confident manner: Gorer used the tactic of presenting one “fact” as if it stood for the whole body of argument, which can be viewed as “metonymic argumentation”.

In the following paragraph (paragraph 11) Gorer provides explanation for the taboo on death. He claimed that the shift of taboos was related to shift of religious beliefs:

In the nineteenth century most of the inhabitants of Protestant countries seem to have subscribed to the Pauline beliefs in the sinfulness of the body and the certainty of the after-life. “So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory.” It was possible to insist on the corruption of the dead body, and the dishonour of its begetting, while there was a living belief in the incorruption and the glory of the immortal part. But in England, at any rate, belief in the future life as taught in Christian doctrine is very uncommon today even in the minority who make church-going or prayer a consistent part of their lives.
Providing explanation, religious or other, for the essentially common sense arguments that were not supported by references, allowed Gorer to strengthen these arguments by placing it in presupposition and presenting them as if their existence had been already proved. It is also interesting to note that in this paragraph Gorer discussed specifically “Protestant countries” and mentioned “Pauline beliefs in the sinfulness of the body”, the expression which is clearly marked as a belonging to professional theological discourse. Also Gorer here quotes from the New Testament\(^{73}\). This strengthened his argument and also contributed to his ethos as a highly educated intellectual.

Finally, in the next paragraph (paragraph 12) Gorer moves on to his main thesis in this essay:

> While natural death became more and more smothered in prudery, violent death has played an evergrowing part in the fantasies offered to mass audiences—detective stories, thrillers, Westerns, war stories, spy stories, science fiction, and eventually horror comics.

As I mentioned earlier, this argument was also used by Abraham Kaplan and Gershom Legman in their analysis of the contemporary mass culture. Similarly, Gorer in his essay contrasts the elitist, highbrow culture of the previous epochs (Victorian and Edwardian novels) and the contemporary mass culture. The idea of taboo on death (the pornography of death as its consequence) allowed Gorer to express his dissatisfaction with the contemporary mass culture and also to suggest the solution to this problem at the end of the essay:

> …people have to come to terms with the basic facts of birth, copulation, and death, and somehow accept their implications; if social prudery prevents this being done in an open and dignified fashion, then it will be done surreptitiously. If we dislike the modern pornography of death, then we must give back to death—natural death—its parade and publicity, re-admit grief and mourning. If we make death unmentionable in polite society—“not before the children”—we almost ensure the continuation of the “horror comic”. No censorship has ever been really effective.

Here Gorer suggested that people had to come to terms with “basic facts of birth, copulation, and death” in order to diminish the spread of the mass culture with its cult of violence. It is interesting to note that in conclusion Gorer once more used “the triad of basic human

\(^{73}\) First Epistle from the apostle Paul to Corinthians, 15:42
experiences” (birth, copulation, and death) suggested by Eliot in the epigraph. It seems that again this triad had to be stretched to accommodate Gorer’s argument: as he mentioned earlier in the essay, the society had already come to terms with sex and birth, and the pornography of death in the mass culture is related rather to the repression of death.

In this context I would like to discuss the way Gorer in his essay used the words “taboo” and “the unmentionable” to discuss the idea of the Western repression of death. The word “taboo” was introduced into the English language in the 18th century by James Cook and was a key concept for the social anthropology of the 19th and the first half of the 20th century (Knight, 1998). As Gilmore et al. (2013) have pointed out, the word “taboo” was an important part of colonial anthropology dealing with studies of the “exotic other” and offered insight into the incomprehensible and irrational “savage mind”. Freud contributed to the contemporary debate on the origin of incest and the concept taboo in his 1913 book “Totem and Taboo” (Wallace, 1983). Due to this book the word “taboo” received another meaning: it became a tool for psychoanalysis and the understanding of various neuroses. One may wonder, what the word “taboo” meant for the anthropologists of time when Gorer wrote his essay. As Gilmore et al. (2013) noted, the notion of taboo at the time began to mean something “slightly ridiculous, embarrassingly unscientific and an unnecessary consideration for an “enlightened” modern world” (Gilmore et al, 2013). Also lifting of the taboo became a synonym to progress. Also, some manifestations of repression of death in the essay by Gorer, might be viewed as influenced by the anthropological view on the taboo (for example, the taboo expressions in the language substituted by euphemisms or taboos in burial rituals were discussed in the anthropological literature of the time (for example, Elmendorf, 1951; Kelly, 1949; Leslau, 1959; Norbeck, 1952.)

The link between the alleged pornography of death (violent death in the mass culture) and the taboo on death was constructed as similar to the pornography proper and societal repression of sex. Pornography of death (like sexual pornography) here is implicitly constructed as the “return of the repressed”, societal reaction to the taboo. It is similar to the consequences of the individual repression (which -as I tried to show in the chapter 5- were viewed as negative and unhealthy in the public discourse of the time). The remedy against pornography, as Gorer stressed in the essay, is very similar to the “cure” against repression proper, as the analysis of repression in Time magazine suggested: people need to “come to terms with” or become aware of the repressed material. This will lead to gradual disappearance of the pornography. It is interesting to
notice that in this context that the essay “The Pornography of Death” is often viewed as an example of social critique (Pine, 1977; Doka, 2003): Gorer is expressing his discontent with the existing situation in the society and with the abundance of violent death in the mass culture. However, the construction of violent death in the media as “pornography”, linking it to societal repression of death, and suggesting individual awareness of mortality as a remedy against it in fact confirms the existing status quo in the society. Gorer does not link violent death in the mass media with the increased violence in the society, does not try to analyse it as related for example to traumatic experiences of the Second World War or to the nuclear threat. Also he does not link this violence to the unequal distribution of power in the society, the growing dissatisfaction with the regime and the increased interest to the communist and socialist ideology in the West, which the *Encounter* magazine was called to struggle with. Rather than suggesting measures to overcome violence in the society, Gorer prefers to deal with the issue on the individual level and suggests to overcome the alleged repression of death in order to eliminate its “pornography”.

6.5. Conclusion.

In conclusion I would like to stress several issues. Firstly, as I tried to argue in the first part of this chapter the essay “The Pornography of Death” cannot be viewed as a conventional academic text or a research article. The title of the “Pornography of Death”, the length of the essay and its structure, the use of epigraph, and also the vocabulary used by the author suggest that it should not be classified as a research article. The information about the genre of the article as reflected in the formal characteristics of discourse can be supplemented by the information about the rhetor: the career and biography of Geoffrey Gorer, which I discussed in chapter 3, support the judgement that he was not a conventional academic. Also, the rhetorical situation or more broadly the context, as I argued in chapter 4, might be important for classifying whether a text belongs to a particular genre. The information about the magazine, where the essay by Gorer was published, and also its political orientation indicate that the essay might not be a scholarly text.

Secondly, contrary to the common perception expressed in the accounts of history of thanatology, “modern society’s cultural tendency to deny or ignore death” (Bryant, 2007, p. 158) might not be the most appropriate description of the main theme of the essay. Rather the idea of the repression of natural death was used by Gorer to initiate discussion on violence in the mass culture of the time, which he defined as “the pornography of death”. This allowed him to
contrapose the highbrow and the mass culture of the time and to criticize the latter from the position of authority and power. The construction of violence as “pornography” allowed the author to suggest the remedy for it, which was similar to that of pornography proper. Gorer did not consider it as a social problem, rather he reduced it to the level of individual morality and education and did not try to question the established “status quo” in the society. This was in line with the policy of the conservative *Encounter* magazine.

The idea of repression of death was introduced to the text of the essay in connection with sexual repression. This allowed Gorer to make the idea of taboo on natural death sound more convincing: the idea of repression of sexuality, as I tried to show in the Chapter 5, has been established in the public discourse and widely discussed in the media. The link between the taboo on death and taboo on sex helped to legitimize the concept of repression of death. However in describing the taboo on death Gorer used essentially common sense arguments, which were not grounded in scientific research on this subject. Gorer presented personal observations and individual facts as if they stood for some bigger picture and were signs of the taboo, which was so obvious and so widely spread that it did not need to be proved by elaborated argument. This way of argumentation might be viewed as metonymic: “as natural death was repressed in these particular instances, so it was repressed in all other aspects of Western culture”. Also, in discussing the taboo on death Gorer followed the line of contemporary anthropology that depicted taboo as unhealthy, negative, and even slightly ridiculous.

Finally, the rhetorical persona or rhetorical voice of Gorer in this text might possibly be described as a voice of gentleman scholar, a conservative intellectual. The use of quotation from Eliot in the epigraph, the anthropological, philosophical and religious terminology in discussing the taboo on death, contrasting the elite, highbrow culture with the mass culture and criticizing the latter might allow us to view Gorer’s rhetorical persona this way. Also, the categorical character of statements, the lack of hedging (Hyland, 2009) and references to other research in the essay indicate that Gorer’s rhetorical voice in this essay might not be viewed as that of a conventional scientist or social scientist. This might serve as additional evidence that “The Pornography of Death” was not a conventional anthropological text, although it was often constructed as such in history of thanatology.
The analysis of the genre and the main idea of the essay are important not only in order to better understand how the history of thanatology and – more generally- “ceremonial” histories of other disciplines (Harris, 1980) were constructed. The idea of repression of death is an important part of thanatological discourse today and many studies are based on this premise especially those belonging to the Terror Management Theory (Solomon, Greenberg, and Pyszczynski, 1991). In the following chapter I will continue discussion of the thesis of repression of death in the early thanatological literature, namely in the works of Herman Feifel. I will also discuss how the essay by Gorer was represented in publications by Feifel and what role the references to “The Pornography of Death” played in them.
7. The thesis of repression of death in the early works of Herman Feifel.

7.1. Introduction.
In this chapter I would like to present the analysis of the way the idea of the Western repression of death was constructed in the early publications by Herman Feifel. As I argued in the chapter 2 on the history of death studies, the thesis of repression of death played an important role in the formation of the “ceremonial” history (Harris, 1980) of the discipline and formed a part of its “origin myth”. However, the idea of societal repression of death or death being a taboo subject in the postwar Western society does not seem to be widely spread in the academic publications on psychology of death of the 1940-s and 1950-s. The majority of books and articles in academic psychology on the subject of death published at this time (for example, Anthony, 1940; Alexander, Colley and Adlerstein, 1957; Alexander and Adlerstein, 1958; Caprio, 1950; Eissler, 1955; Lindemann, 1944; Nagy, 1948; Stacey and Reichen 1954;) did not contain any mention of the taboo on death as a characteristic feature of the society of the time in any form including difficulties in carrying out research projects on death or resistance of the participants and gatekeepers. The dissertations and theses on death published at the time did not contain this idea either (Klopfer, 1947; Shrut, 1954; Swenson, 1958.). The few exceptions include the article by Meerloo (1954) on psychological aspects of cancer, where he stressed the importance of psychological support of cancer patients and noted that cancer was associated with death, and that thinking and feeling about death was a taboo for the patients and therapist alike (p. 214). Also, Orlans (1957) in his article on attitudes toward death expressed surprise about the paucity of research in this field and wondered whether “the society, uncloaking sexuality, put death in its place as a secret rite not to be discussed in public” (p. 74). These authors did not elaborate on the subject of taboo/repression of death and mentioned it in passing (both articles contained only one sentence where the repression of death was mentioned). Psychoanalytically orientated psychologists following Freud considered repression of death to be characteristic feature of the society in general (Flugel, 1953; Wahl, 1958; Ostow, 1958; Zilboorg, 1943), but in the 1950s this subject was not discussed at length, but only mentioned in the literature.

The idea of death being a taboo subject in the American society of the time (as opposed to other periods and other cultures) was developed in more detail in the works of Herman Feifel. Some of his publications (for example, Feifel, 1962, Feifel, 1963b, Feifel, 1963c, Feifel, 1965) were
entirely devoted to this topic, and others contained relatively lengthy extracts on the Western repression of death (for example, Feifel, 1959). I think that it is no exaggeration to say that it was Herman Feifel who introduced the idea of repression of death or taboo on death as a characteristic feature of the Western society to the scholarly literature on death of the 1950s and 1960s. So the main aims of this chapter were to trace how this thesis was introduced to the thanatological discourse, in what types of texts it appeared, what evidence in support of this thesis was provided and what goals could possibly be achieved with its help. In order to answer these questions I used methods of Discursive and Rhetorical psychology, Critical Discourse Analysis as well as that of generic criticism.

7.2. Overview of Herman Feifel’s publications and research on the subject of death (1955-1975).

As I mentioned in chapter 3, Herman Feifel completed his PhD thesis in psychology at Columbia University in 1948. The thesis “Qualitative Differences in the Vocabulary Responses of Normals and Abnormals” was published the following year as a Genetic Psychology Monograph (Feifel, 1949). In the early 1950s Feifel continued publishing on the topic related to his PhD thesis (vocabulary responses of children (Feifel, 1950; 1952) in co-authorship with his former advisor Irving Lorge and also published several articles on mental illness and psychotherapy (Feifel, 1951; Feifel, 1953, Feifel, 1955b, Feifel, 1955c) which reflected his involvement in research projects at Menninger Clinic and WVA Hospital. Later Feifel’s research interests switched to the attitudes toward aging, which was in line with the on-going research projects on this topic carried out by Irving Lorge (Tuckman and Lorge, 1953). In 1953 Feifel presented a paper on attitudes toward aging in schizophrenic patients74 at the 61st Annual Convention of the American Psychological Association in Cleveland, Ohio. This study (Feifel, 1954) was published one year later in the Menninger Quarterly, publication of the Menninger Foundation board of governors, and in the American Journal of Psychiatry.

In 1955 the first article by Herman Feifel on the subject of death was published in the peer reviewed Journal of Nervous and Mental Disease. It was titled “Attitudes of Mentally Ill Patients Toward Death” and could be regarded as a continuation of Feifel’s work on attitudes of the

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mentally ill toward old age. Throughout his career Herman Feifel authored around eighty publications on the subject of death and dying, and I would like to take a closer look at those that appeared during two decades after the first one. Between 1955 and 1975 Feifel published 46 articles on death (and 8 on the subjects like psychotherapy, mental illness, and religion). These publications are presented in chronological order in the table 7.175. The table contains information about the titles of the articles, years of their publication and also their genre. When I defined the genre of the publications I classified as research articles the publications that presented the results of research and appeared in the peer-reviewed journals. The publications that appeared in the edited volumes and presented research (though in less rigorous form than that required by the scientific journals) and also publications in the peer-reviewed journals that did not present research were classified as essays. The book review was the most straightforward category: I classified as book reviews the publications that were marked as such in the “Print Bibliography of Herman Feifel” (1997). I classified as conference presentations the publications of Feifel that appeared in the volumes of conference proceedings. Among the publications were also an encyclopedia entry, a call for research participation, court case commentaries and conference comments.

**Table 7.1. Publications of Herman Feifel on death and dying (1955-1975)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Publication</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Genre</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Attitudes of mentally ill patients toward death. <em>Journal of Nervous and Mental Disease</em>, 122, 375-380.</td>
<td>1955</td>
<td>Research article</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Publication</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Genre</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>[Review of the book Suicide and Mass Suicide, by J.A. Meerloo]. In Teachers College Record 65, 460-461.</td>
<td>1964</td>
<td>Book review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#</td>
<td>Publication</td>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Genre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>[Review of the book <em>The Dying Patient</em>, by O. Brim et al. (Eds.)]. <em>Social Case Work</em>, 52, 239-240.</td>
<td>1971</td>
<td>Book review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>[Review of the book <em>Man’s Concern with Death</em>, by A. Toynbee et al. (Eds.)]. <em>Life-Threatening Behavior</em>, 1, 67-74.</td>
<td>1971</td>
<td>Book review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>The community decides to be. [Review of the books <em>Suicide: The Gamble with Death</em>, by G. Lester &amp; D. Lester and <em>Organizing the Community to Prevent Suicide</em>, by J. Susman &amp; D.L. Davidson (Eds.)]. <em>Contemporary Psychology</em>, 18, 284-285.</td>
<td>1973</td>
<td>Book review</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
It is interesting to note that slightly less than one third of the publications (13 out of 43 or 30%) were book reviews and only six publications (14%) can be classified as research articles proper (one of the research articles, “Attitudes of Mentally Ill Patients Toward Death” (1955) was reprinted ten years later in the edited volume *Death and Identity* (1965). Thus the majority of the works Herman Feifel published between 1955 and 1975 were book reviews, conference presentations, chapters and essays written for the edited volumes, commentaries and introductions. Among the publications in the list were also an encyclopedia entry (1963) and a call for research participation (1959).

If we undertake a task of reading articles by Herman Feifel one after another, we may notice some characteristic features that could be attributed to his writing style, for example, his humor or liberal use of quotations. I will try to discuss these features in more detail later in this chapter. However the feature that arrests one’s attention when it comes to reading publications by Feifel in bulk is that he used and reused the same sentence or group or sentences time and again in his articles. For example, the very first article on death by Herman Feifel was published in 1955 and opened as following: “All of us, at one time or another in life, come to grips with the problem of death. Life insurance, the passing away of a parent, Memorial Day, the belief in immortality - all attest to our concern” (p. 375). These two sentences were repeated verbatim in his next article “Older persons look at death” (1956, p. 127), then (with minor variation) in the unpublished 1956 conference presentation, then in the article “Some Aspects of the Meaning of Death” (1957, p. 50), and finally in the article “Attitudes Toward Death in Some Normal and Mentally Ill Populations” (1959, p. 114) published in the volume *The Meaning of Death*. The next sentence of the same article runs as following: “Historical and ethno logical information reveals that reflection concerning death extends back to earliest known civilization and exists among practically all peoples” (Feifel, 1955, p. 375). It was repeated verbatim in (Feifel, 1957, p. 50;
Feifel, 1959, p. 114) although not immediately after the first sentence. Similarly, the sentence “In the presence of death, Western culture, by and large, has tended to run, hide, and seek refuge in group norms and actuarial statistics” first appeared in the Introduction to the book *The Meaning of Death* (p. xiv) and then resurfaced with minor variations in 1961a (p. 64), 1961b (p. 16), 1963c (p. 66), 1964 (p. 460) and 1971d (p. 4).

Sometimes Feifel repeated almost verbatim whole paragraphs or groups of paragraphs, like for example in the case of his essays on the taboo on death published in 1962, 1963 and 1965 (Feifel, 1962; 1963b; 1965b). The text of these publications is almost identical and based on the conference paper that Feifel presented at the 1961 APA Convention in New York. Similarly, the 1961 and 1963 essays contained fragments that were very similar to each other (Feifel, 1961a; 1963c) and the 1973 and 1975 essays had the same title “The Meaning of Dying in the American Society” and were exactly identical (Feifel, 1973b; 1975c). In the later essay the author did not indicate that the text was reprinted. These essays were listed as separate publications in the “Print Biography of Herman Feifel” (Strack, 1997).

By the modern standards this strategy might be considered self-plagiarism (Bretag and Mahmud, 2009; Andreescu, 2013; Bruton, 2014). It might be important here to distinguish self-plagiarism from self-citation. In the case of self-citation the academic authors openly cite their previous work which, as Hyland (2001) has argued, allows writers to create an identity as both “disciplinary servant and persuasive originator” (p. 223) and promote themselves and their contributions to the discipline in order to gain credibility and acceptance in the discourse community. Self-plagiarism refers to unacknowledged re-use of identical or almost identical portions of one’s work. In an academic context this might refer to re-use of textual extracts of various length and also to re-use of research findings, for example, by publishing them several times without citing the previous publications. In the case of re-use of textual extracts, the so called “textual recycling”, undisclosed exact duplication of small amounts of material previously published by the same author without adequately referencing it, is not always viewed as ethically questionable by the scholars of plagiarism. However the verbatim duplicate or redundant publication is definitely wrong (Bruton, 2014). The problem with the self-plagiarism of the longer portions of text is that the readers and the academic editors might assume that the text is original, and was never published before which might have implications for the understanding of
the role of the text (or its fragment) and its contribution to the discipline and also for some legal issues related to copyright.

Speaking about the importance of research in the career of Herman Feifel, Lamers (2012) noted: “My experience with Feifel over nearly 40 years suggests that if he had a mantra, it would be ‘Research.’” (p. 65). A similar idea was expressed by Strack (2003) in his *MacMillan Encyclopedia* entry about Feifel. However, these ideas do not seem to be fully corroborated by the analysis of the publications by Feifel: during the first twenty years of his thanatological career (since his first publication of death) Feifel authored six research articles on the subject. After his first 1955 article he published another peer-reviewed research article one year later (in 1956) and after a break of seventeen years another three articles co-authored by his colleagues at the Los Angeles Veterans Administration Outpatient Clinic. One might ask whether Feifel carried out other research projects during this interval and when and where they were published. I have attempted to bring this information together in the table 7.2. There I placed some information about the project, namely the title of the article where the project was published, year and number and structure of participants in the project that might help us to distinguish one project from the other.

Table 7.2. Research papers by Herman Feifel and their research projects.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Publication</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Some aspects of the meaning of death. In E. Shneidman and N. Farberow (Eds.), <em>Clues to Suicide</em> (pp. 50-57). New York: McGraw-Hill.</td>
<td>1957</td>
<td>85 Mentally disturbed patients in VA hospital; 40 WWI veterans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Death-relevant variable in psychology. In R. May (Ed.), <em>Existential Psychology</em> (pp. 61-74). New York: Random House.</td>
<td>1961</td>
<td>85 Mentally disturbed patients in VA hospital; 40 WWI veterans; 85 normals (50 Korean War veterans, 35 professional people);</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Death In N. Farberow (Ed), <em>Taboo topics</em> (pp. 8-21). New York: Atherton.</td>
<td>1963</td>
<td>60 terminally ill patients; 60 mentally ill patients;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As one may notice, in total, 15 publications by Feifel contained some research results. Six out of them appeared in peer-reviewed journals. It is also possible to notice that many publications discussed the results of more than one research project and that many research projects were published and discussed more than once: for example, the study on attitudes to death in mentally ill patients was first published in 1955 as a research article, and then presented again in 1957, 1959, and 1961 in the essays by Feifel. Similarly, the 1956 study on the attitudes to death of the World War I veterans was first published in a peer-reviewed journal, and then discussed again in 1957, 1959, and 1961. The later publications followed the same pattern: for example, the study on perception of death as related to its nearness involved 95 healthy normal persons and 92 seriously and terminally ill patients and was first presented at the APA Convention in 1968. Later the same study was presented along the other research projects in the articles published in 1969, 1973 and 1974. It is also interesting to note that some studies (for example, the study on the perception of death in terminally ill supported by NIMH research grant (Feifel, 1961; Feifel, 1963)) were never published as research articles proper, but rather in the form of essays. These essays often contained very few details about the actual studies. Thus, the substantial proportion of the research projects carried out by Feifel between 1955 and 1975 were published not as research articles, but in form of essays, where standards for data presentation were not so rigorous. Also, as it is evident from the table, many research projects were published several times. This tactic resembles the way Herman Feifel re-used sentences and groups of sentences, written for the earlier publications, in his later writings and by today’s standard can be viewed as another example of self-plagiarism (Andreescu, 2013).

Reading the early publications of Herman Feifel one by one in chronological order is a fascinating process: one can witness the creation of repression of death thesis “in the making” and trace how it was introduced to his articles, how it gradually gained in power and occupied more and more space in his texts. Feifel did not mention the taboo on death in his early articles on death (1955, 1956), moreover in the introduction to these articles he constructed death as highly visible. The idea of the Western repression of death appeared in his publications in 1957. In the table 7.3. I would like to present information on the thesis of repression of death in the
publications of Herman Feifel over the period of the twenty years (1955-1975)\textsuperscript{76}. Besides the title of the article, the year it was published and the presence of the idea of repression of death in the text, I have also indicated the part of the article where the RoD thesis appeared (column 6) and the length of the extract containing this idea (column 7). Before I discuss the table in some detail, I would like to comment on its three columns: the presence of RoD thesis in the text (column 5), the part of the text where this thesis appeared and the length of the extract containing this idea. Firstly, I would like to clarify why the position of the extract in the text might be important and also how I defined the position of the extract in the publications of Herman Feifel. As Hyland (2009) has pointed out, different sections of academic article might carry different tasks in the “marketing” of a research article (p. 70). For example, in the introduction writers try to create a research space in order to justify the importance and contribution of their work and in the words of Swales (1990) to create, occupy and defend a niche in the “academic ecosystem”. In the introductory part the academic writers usually state what is already known in order to show that this knowledge might be incomplete. In the Discussion section authors try to persuade the reader that their knowledge claims are well grounded, in other words they try to guide the reader from acceptance of the relatively uncontroversial data to acceptance of the writer’s knowledge claims (Parkinson, 2011).

Although the writings of Herman Feifel, where the RoD thesis appears, could not be classified as research articles proper, many of them (for example, many essays in the edited volumes or conference presentations) do present some research, although not in the rigorous form required by the peer-reviewed journals. When the text of an essay or a conference presentation had subheadings (like Introduction, Methods, Subjects, Conclusion, etc.), I used these subheadings in defining the position of the RoD extract in the text. When the text did not contain subheadings I classified the opening part (the part preceding the presentation of the research results) as an Introduction and the part of the text which followed the results section as a Conclusion.

Second, I would like to discuss the fifth columns and the seventh columns of the table (“the presence of the RoD thesis” and “the length of the extract containing the idea of the Western taboo on death”). The task of identifying the presence or absence of the idea of repression of

\textsuperscript{76} The list of publications in the table 7.3. differs slightly from that of the table 7.1. in that I placed the Preface, Introduction and the Essay by Herman Feifel published in the book \textit{The Meaning of Death} (1959) in separate rows to make the identification of the topic of repression of death more convenient.
death in an extract and the length of this extract was not easy to operationalize. One way of approaching this problem might be to view the RoD thesis as a “topic” and to consider it within the framework of linguistic analysis that studies topic identification and text segmentation. However, as Watson Todd (2005) pointed out, topics were “one of the most elusive, intractable, and least frequently defined notions in semantics” (p. 93), first of all because this concept was inherently subjective and resided in the interaction between a reader and a text rather than in the text itself. Also topics could be identified at different levels of discourse (at the level of sentences as well as at the level of the whole text (for example, we can speak about a topic of a book)). Following Watson Todd (2011, p. 252), I would like to consider topic at the intermediate level as ideationally coherent stretches of discourse raging from a single sentence to several paragraphs. There has been several attempts to define a topic (van Dijk, 1977; Crookes and Rulon, 1988; Watson Todd, 2005), which affected the way topics and their boundaries could be identified in the text. However in the studies where topics were conceptualized on the intermediate level of discourse, the most common method of topic identification was intuitive. As Watson Todd (2005, p. 96) noted, intuitive topic identification might be the most practical when topic identification was not the main focus of the study. Returning to column five of the table and the thesis of repression of death in the works of Herman Feifel, I think it might be possible for the purpose of this study to identify it in the text on the intuitive grounds. I marked as containing the idea of repression of death those publications of Herman Feifel, where the idea of repression of death was clearly stated, like for example in the following quotation from one of the book reviews by Feifel (Feifel, 1961b, p. 16):

One of man’s most distinguishing characteristics is his capacity to grasp the concept of a future and inexorable death. Even before its actual arrival, death is an absent presence. Yet, by and large, in the presence of death Western culture has tended to run and seek refuge in euphemistic language, in the development of an industry which has as a major interest the creation of greater "life-like' qualities in the dead, and in actuarial statistics. … We have been compelled, in unhealthy measure, to internalize our thoughts and feelings, fears and even hopes concerning death. We treat death, in fact, as an obscenity.

The publications on death where the ideas of repression of death, taboo on death, or death being an obscenity or pornography were not mentioned at all even in passing were marked as not
containing this idea. Speaking about the length of a topic (the last column of the table 7.3) some rules regarding the boundaries of the topic should be set. When I was selecting extracts of text containing the topic of repression of death I firstly selected the paragraphs where the idea of the Western taboo of death was clearly stated. In other words, I selected the whole paragraphs that contained the sentences, in which the idea of death being a taboo subject in the Western society was clearly expressed. Besides this I marked as belonging to the topic the paragraphs that preceded the paragraphs containing the RoD thesis if these paragraphs were used to introduce the idea of taboo on death for example by creating a contrast between the attitude to death in modern Western society and that of the previous epochs. Also, the paragraphs that followed the RoD paragraphs and further developed this idea (so example, described the negative consequences of taboo on death or benefits of death awareness) were selected. I have classified six texts (Feifel, 1962, 1963b, 1963c, 1965b, 1973c, and 1975c) as fully devoted to the idea of repression of death. In the first three publications the author described the problems with getting access to the participants in his study on terminally ill patients and the resistance of the hospital staff to the idea of research and he placed this in the context of the Western repression of death. The other three texts were essays on the subject of meaning of death and dying in the contemporary American society. When I estimated the length of the extract I measured the number of words in it. If the text contained several extracts on the repression of death I indicated the total length of these extracts. In column 7 “Length” I indicated the number of words in the RoD extract(s), the total number of words in the text and (in brackets) percentage of the RoD extract to the text.

Table 7.3. The thesis of repression of death in the publications of Herman Feifel.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Title of the publication</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Genre</th>
<th>RoD thesis</th>
<th>Part of the article</th>
<th>Length</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Attitudes of mentally ill patients toward death. <em>Journal of Nervous and Mental Disease</em>, 122, 375-380.</td>
<td>1955</td>
<td>Research article</td>
<td>no</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Older persons look at death. <em>Geriatrics</em>, 11, 127-130.</td>
<td>1956</td>
<td>Research article</td>
<td>no</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Some aspects of the meaning of death. In E. Shneidman, &amp; N. Farberow (Eds.), <em>Clues to suicide</em> (pp. 50-57). New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.</td>
<td>1957</td>
<td>Essay</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>440/3 337 (13.2 %)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Attitudes toward death in some normal and mentally ill populations. In H. Feifel (Ed.), <em>The Meaning of death</em>, (pp. xiii-xviii). New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.</td>
<td>1959</td>
<td>Essay</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>Introduction; Conclusion</td>
<td>3 463/5 733 (60.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>The dying patient. <em>Bulletin of the Los Angeles County Medical Association</em>, 89, 25 (with A.M. Kasper).</td>
<td>1959</td>
<td>Call for research participation.</td>
<td>no</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Comments at the Symposium &quot;Attitudes toward death in</td>
<td>1961</td>
<td>Comments</td>
<td>no</td>
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<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>The taboo on death. American Behavioral Scientist 6: 66-67.</td>
<td>1963</td>
<td>Essay</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>Whole article</td>
<td>1 030/1 030 100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Several issues might be worth discussing in relation to this table. Firstly, more than half of the publications (27 out of 45, or 60%) contained the idea of taboo on death. The two decades did not differ greatly in the number of articles that stated that death was a taboo in the West: the mentions of RoD thesis was slightly less frequent in the first decade (12 out of 27) than in the second.

Second, speaking about the presence of the RoD thesis in the publications belonging to different genres, it is important to note that this idea did not appear in the research articles by Feifel published in peer-reviewed journals, whereas all the essays (14 out of 14) contained it. Slightly less than half (six out of thirteen) book reviews also presented this idea, and two out of three conference presentations contained mentions that death in the West was repressed. Besides this,
Feifel discussed this idea in other types of publications like court case commentaries or encyclopedia entry.

Third, it might be important to pay attention to the part of the article where the idea of repression of death was mentioned. Save for the 1963 encyclopedia entry, Herman Feifel placed the paragraphs containing the idea of the Western taboo on death either in the introductory part of the article or in the discussion/conclusion. The encyclopedia entry seemed to have a predetermined structure and the author might not have been entirely free in choosing the way of presenting his ideas. Herman Feifel first mentioned the Western taboo on death in his 1957 article for the volume *Clues to Suicide*, where this idea was placed at the discussion/conclusion. In the texts that followed (Introduction and the essay written for the volume *The Meaning of Death* (1959)) I found the RoD thesis both in the beginning and in the conclusion. In the later writings this idea could be found again either in the introductory part (it usually opened the article) or by the very end in the conclusion (or in both). It is interesting to note that book reviews contained this idea only at the very beginning, in the opening paragraphs, whereas the conference presentations mentioned the idea of the death taboo in the conclusion. The two conference presentations contained the information about the research in the most rigorous form: similar to research articles they contained subheadings and presented information about the number of participants, methods, raw data, etc.

Finally, it might be interesting to trace, how much space Feifel allocated to the discussion of the taboo on death in his articles. The earlier articles 1959-1961 contained a substantial proportion of text devoted to the topic of taboo on death (roughly one third or even more space was used to develop this idea). Then, as I mentioned earlier, Herman Feifel published four articles (1962-65) that were entirely devoted to the taboo on death. In the publications of late 1960-s early 1970-s the taboo on death was not mentioned very often and did not seem to occupy so much space as in the earlier articles, while later Feifel again allocated a significant part of his article on death education to the repression of death.

**7.4. The genesis of the idea of the Western taboo on death in the early works of Herman Feifel (1955-1959).**

The idea of the Western repression on death in the publications by Herman Feifel first appeared in print in 1957, in the volume *Clues to Suicide*. However this essay did not seem to very visible
or cited (it had only 11 references by Google Scholar). At the same time the volume *The Meaning of Death* edited by Feifel, which appeared two year later, has been considered classical in the field of death studies and had immeasurably greater impact and visibility (as I tried to show in the chapter 3). So it might be reasonable to consider that the RoD thesis was introduced by Herman Feifel to the academic and public discourse on death in 1959. In the rest of the chapter I would like to present rhetorical analysis of the extracts containing the idea of repression of death published in the 1959 volume *The Meaning of Death*, but first I would like to trace, how these extracts were formed and thus how the RoD thesis in these extracts took its shape. Earlier in this chapter I tried to show that Herman Feifel often re-used parts of his publications of various lengths (from the individual sentences or group of sentences to the whole paragraphs or even groups of paragraphs). The same tendency can be observed in his early articles on death: the 1955 and 1956 research articles and the 1957 and 1959 essays share substantial parts between them. I have also included in my analysis the unpublished symposium presentation by Feifel (1956), on which the text of the 1959 essay was based.

I think that the most appropriate way of presentation of this material would be chronological and that the history of RoD thesis in the writings of Herman Feifel should probably start from his first article on death “Attitudes of Mentally Ill Patients Toward Death” (1955). The article opened as following:

> All of us, at one time or another in life, come to grips with the problem of death. Life insurance, the passing away of a parent, Memorial Day, the belief in immortality—all attest to our concern. Historical and ethno- logical information (5) reveals that reflection concerning death extends back to earliest known civilization and exists among practically all peoples. Some investigators (4, 6, 24) hold that fear of death is a universal reaction and that no one is quite free from it. Freud, for instance, postulates the presence of an unconscious death-wish in people which he connects with certain tendencies to self-destruction (9). Teicher feels that “war neuroses” are essentially neurotic forms of the fear of death (22). Heidegger states that time has meaning for us only because we know we have to die (12). Stekel goes so far as to express the hypothesis that every fear we have is ultimately a fear of death (21).
Death themes and fantasies are especially prominent in psychopathology (1,3,22). Ideas of death are recurrent in some neurotic patients and in the delusions and hallucinations of many psychotic patients. The stupor of the catatonic patient, for example, has sometimes been likened to a death state. Caprio (4) thinks that all nervous and mental disorders can be regarded as forms of “psychic death”. Also, a number of psychoanalysts (8, 10, 17, 19) are of the opinion that one of the main reasons that shock measures produce positive effects in many patients is that these treatments provide them with a kind of death-and-rebirth fantasy experience.

Both theology and philosophy have grappled with the problem of death and its meaning. Nevertheless, a review of the literature indicates few studies of an empirical nature dealing with attitudes toward death. This is particularly true with reference to mentally ill persons. The author could find none which focused on hospitalized adult patients. The studies that have been reported emphasize the attitudes toward death of children (16, 18), college students (2, 15, 20), and a small number of psychoanalyzed neurotic patients (3) in whom ideas of death were noticeable.

The major purpose of the present exploratory study is to augment the limited available data regarding the conscious attitudes toward death of mentally-disturbed patients. Examination will also be made of the relationship between the adjustment level of the patients and their attitudes toward death.

Feifel opened his article with a conventional four paragraph introduction, which looked compatible to the introductions to articles on death published at the time, although possibly it

77 Many introductions to the research articles on death published at the time started directly with indicating a gap in the existing literature or positioning their own research in relation to what was already known and did not contain any reflections of general character on the subject of death. For example, the article by Stacey and Reichen (1954) on attitudes toward death and future life among normal and subnormal adolescent girls opened with the following sentences: “In an article by Stacey and Markin the little explored area of individuals’ thoughts, attitudes and reactions toward death and their beliefs concerning an existence after death was studied in college students and penitentiary inmates. The present study is an attempt to extend further this knowledge to include subnormal and normal adolescent girls.” (p. 259). In case when we can find reflections of general character in the introductions, the ideas expressed there are similar to the ideas expressed by Feifel in his 1955 article, namely that death was quite visible in the society, but some specific topic happened to be out of focus of academic psychology and should receive more attention. For example, Alexander and Adlerstein (1958) stated their article with the following passage: “The child’s concern with death has been a part of most parents’ experience. Several psychologists, in recording various aspects of development in children, including their own, have discussed this topic briefly. More controlled observations on the subject of the child and death are very scarce in psychological literature both in this
was a little wordier. The first paragraph conveyed the idea that death was an important concept for psychological research because all people have to deal with at one point or another and also because fear of death and concern about it were universal reactions and played an important role in human functioning. These ideas were reinforced by references to the authorities in the field (Freud, Teicher, Steckel) and to the research carried out by other scholars. It is interesting to note that in the opening paragraph of introduction Feifel also quoted Heidegger, the philosopher, who was not very often quoted in empirical articles on psychology. This might indicate the desire of the author to present himself as an intellectual with broad range of interests. In the second paragraph the author further developed the idea of importance of the subject of death for psychological research by stressing the centrality of death for psychopathology. The third paragraph was used to claim that there was not enough research carried out on this subject generally and specifically on the mentally ill persons. Finally the fourth paragraph served as brief introduction of the study carried out by Feifel and as a transition to the next sections where the methods and results were presented. It is easy to notice that this introduction and the flow of arguments in it fits well with the classical CARS (Create a Research Space) model for introductions to scholarly articles developed by Swales (1990). In the first and the second paragraphs Feifel – in terms of Swales- established a territory: he first claimed the centrality of the topic (“all of us come to grips with the problem of death”, “all civilizations reflect on death in this or that way”), and then briefly reviewed the previous research related to attitudes to and fear of death generally and as applied to the mentally ill people. The third paragraph was used to “establish a niche” (second move) by stating that there was a gap in the existing research (“only a few studies deal with attitudes to death in empirical way and nothing is written about attitudes to death of mentally ill”). Finally, the fourth paragraph can be considered as “occupying the niche”, where the author announced the research presented in the body of the article. As one may notice, there is no mention of repression of death or taboo on death being a characteristic feature

country and abroad. Perhaps the most comprehensive piece of work was done by Sylvia Anthony.” (p. 167). Similarly, the article by Alexander, Colley and Adlerstein “Is Death a Matter of Indifference?” (1957) started as following: “Despite a wealth of conjecture and concern about death in philosophy, religion, literature, biology, the arts, and anthropology, psychologists have remained rather aloof and have neglected death as a subject of study. In the last half century, the psychological literature yields relatively few reports dealing with this concept.” (p. 277)

Basically, all these introductions convey the idea that death is something people talk about: discuss with their children or encounter in arts, literature and philosophy. The fact that these introductions were shorter than that of Feifel (1955) might reflect the writing style of these psychologists as well as the editorial policy of the journals where the articles were published.
of the modern Western civilization here. Quite the contrary, death was depicted as highly visible (Memorial Day, death of the parents, life insurance). Moreover, one’s inability to come to grips with one’s own mortality was considered as an underlying cause of psychopathology. The idea of repression of death did not appear in the Discussion or Conclusion of this article.

A similar strategy for the introduction was used in the next research article by Feifel on the attitudes to death in older people (Feifel, 1956, p. 127). The text of the introduction could be found in the footnote. As one may notice, four out of seven sentences of this introduction had already appeared in the introduction to the 1955 article. The 1956 introduction consisted of two paragraphs. It was much shorter than that of the 1955 article and did not contain the paragraph on death and psychopathology. Instead Feifel added an opening quotation from the fifteenth-century epic, Der Ackermann aus Bohmen and a sentence that interpreted it and served as connection between the quotation and the slightly modified introductory sentences that had been used in the 1955 article (on life insurance, Memorial Day, and reflection concerning death). The reference to the German epic here might be perceived as performing a similar task to the reference to Heidegger in the previous article: it was rather unusual in the introduction to a research article in psychology and allowed the author to present himself not only as a researcher and psychologist, but also as an intellectual. The next paragraph was relatively short and could be viewed (in terms of Swales, 1990) as establishing a niche (there was no research on attitudes to death in persons over 65) and occupying it (introduction of the author’s research on attitudes to death in older persons). This article did not contain any mention of the Western taboo on death either, however the section “Conclusion” contained the following sentences: “Too many of us still consider death as a purely biologic event. Actually, its meaning for the individual can serve as an important organizing principle in determining how he conducts

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78 The article started as following: “As soon as a man comes to life, he is immediately old enough to die” - so reads a passage from the fifteenth-century epic, Der Ackermann aus Bohmen. Death is the only event which can be predicted with certainty for the individual once birth has taken place. All of us, at times, come to grips with the thought of death. Life insurance, reactions to the death of a parent, Memorial Day, thoughts about life after death—all attest to our interest and concern. Reflection concerning death ‘extends back to earliest civilization and exists among all peoples. A review of the literature, however, indicates few empiric studies of attitudes toward death, and none focused on persons 65 years of age and over. The purpose of this study is to present some data regarding the conscious attitudes of older persons toward death.” (p. 127).

himself in life” (p. 130). These sentences in the context of conclusion of this specific article do not convey the idea of repression of death, but as I will try to show later can be viewed as its “predecessors”.

In September 1956 Herman Feifel presented a paper at the first symposium on death, which he organized and chaired. The paper was titled “Attitudes Toward Death in Some Normal and Mentally Ill Populations” and was published later with some modifications in the 1959 volume *The Meaning of Death*, as I mentioned in the chapter 3. The text of the presentation can be found in the archives of the Menninger foundation, and the idea of the taboo on death as a characteristic feature of the Western society of the time was first expressed there. However this idea appeared in print one year later, in 1957. The introduction to the symposium presentation was quite brief and contained one paragraph:

Both theology and philosophy have grappled with the problem of death and its meaning. A review of the psychological literature highpoints the lack of any systematic endeavors to bring this meaningful area into the domain of controlled empirical investigation. Perusal of the Psychological Abstracts indicates a total of 16 references on the topic of death since 1950 – an average of less than three per year. Of the 16, only three can be designated as empirical. The purpose of my paper this morning is to present some empirical findings on attitudes toward death in varying populations. This constitutes part of a continuing series of research investigations now being carried on and will have to be considered as tentative, and in the nature of an interim report because of methodological problems, present sampling limitations, group control inadequacies, etc. It should also be kept in mind that they pertain more to conscious and public attitudes than to the “deeper layers” of the personality.

In this paragraph Feifel used only one “recycled” sentence, the first one, which had appeared in the third paragraph of the introduction to the 1955 article. The rest of the paragraph was written

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80 The symposium “The Concept Death and Its Relation to Behavior” was organized and chaired by Herman Feifel. It took place on September 1, 1956 as a part of the Sixty-Fourth Annual Convention the American Psychological Association in Chicago.

81 Murphy, G. (1958). [Correspondence of Gardner Murphy and Herman Feifel]. Papers of Gardner Murphy (222912, Box 37891, Folder 297184), Menninger Foundation Archives, Kansas State Archives, Topeka, Kansas, USA.
anew. However the Introductory speech to the Symposium (which can be found in the Appendix 2) contained a substantial part of re-used sentences: eight (out of twenty three) sentences of the speech first appeared in the 1955 and 1956 articles. As I mentioned earlier, the idea of taboo on death was introduced in the conclusion of the 1956 conference presentation by Herman Feifel. After discussing the religious beliefs of the “normals” (younger group of the participants which consisted of Korean War Veterans and mental health professionals) Feifel wrote,

Along this line, I believe that the frenetic accent on and continual search for the “fountain of youth” in many segments of our society reflects, to a certain degree, attitudes concerning death. One of the reasons we tend to reject the aged is because they remind us of death. Professional people who come in contact with chronic and terminally ill patients, have noted parallel avoidant tendencies in themselves. They often reject this kind of patient because he reactivates or arouses their own fears about dying. The onslaught of hostility found in many of these patients makes the professional person feel guilty and defensive for outliving them. One’s narcissism also becomes wounded when “our medicine, our prayers” cannot help or save them.

Conscious denial of death permeates a good deal of our thinking. It is not the disquieting “I die” - but rather “one dies”. Geoffrey Gorer, the English anthropologist, has commented that death has become as unmentionable to us as sex was to the Victorians. Forest Lawn, a cemetery in Los Angeles, proudly claims to minister “not to the dead, but to the living”. We may well take concern with this false sense of reality in our suppressed hostility toward death and in our sort of embarrassed incuriosity over its meaning. Erich Lindemann has insightfully pointed out that we have prenatal care clinics, marital counselling services, vocational and occupational steering resources, but no medical or community centers designed to assist the mourner. Yet, no matter how hard man tries to shelve and hush up knowledge of the inevitable end of his earthly life, he never quite succeeds. Knowledge of finiteness may make time the fatal enemy of lasting gratification and introduce a repressive element into all libidinal relations. At the same time, however, it serves man positively as a galvanizing force- an Aristotelian vis-a-tergo if you will- pushing him forward toward creativity and accomplishment. Acceptance of his finite status can enlarge man’s self- provide him with a state of augmented inner freedom, and
consequent heightening of the meaning of life. As Seneca, the Roman philosopher put it, “No man enjoys the true taste of life but he is willing and ready to quit it”.

In these extract the idea of the Western repression of death was expressed explicitly: Feifel mentioned for example “conscious denial of death” and supported his thesis by reference to anthropologist Geoffrey Gorer and psychologist Erich Lindemann.

Next, I would like to briefly discuss the introduction and conclusion of the 1957 article by Feifel published in the edited volume *Clues to Suicide*. The introduction consists of four paragraphs and is very similar to the introduction Feifel wrote for his articles published in 1955 and 1956. The full text of the introduction can be found in the Appendix 2. Here the author added two opening sentences to the 1955 introduction paragraphs in order to link the subject of the book (suicide) with the subject of his article. Also, in this paragraph Feifel mentioned the epic *Ackerman aus Bohmen* and the aphorism “as soon as a man comes to life, he is immediately old enough to die”, which have already appeared in his 1956 introduction. However in the 1957 article Feifel omitted the name of the epic and reference to the book by Eissler, which might suggest that Feifel himself was familiar with the original text. The second paragraph was composed of the sentences, which were first used in 1955, but in the 1957 article the author merged the paragraphs on death as a problem that concerned everybody and that on death themes and phantasies in psychopathology. Out of eleven sentences of this paragraph nine were verbatim repetitions of the sentences which appeared in the introduction to the 1955 article and the other two had minor differences with the corresponding sentences of the 1955 article (for example, in the last sentence of the paragraph “also” (1955) was changed for “in addition” (1957)).

The next paragraph had the same function as the corresponding paragraph in the article published in 1955 (indicating a gap in the existing literature on attitudes to death) and three out of four sentences of this paragraph were transferred from it verbatim. The fourth paragraph closely resembled the fourth paragraph of the 1955 article and served the same purpose of introducing the research, which was presented in the body of the article (mentally ill persons and elderly (Veterans of the World War I)). The idea of repression of death being a characteristic feature of the Western society was not discussed in this extract. Quite the contrary (and similarly to the introductions to the previous articles from which a substantial part of the text was borrowed), one may have the impression that death was quite visible in the society because people were
constantly reminded about it (for example, by the death of a parent, Memorial Day, life insurance, etc.). The sentence “Historical and ethnologic information reveals that reflection concerning death extends back to earliest civilization and exists among practically all peoples”, which opened the second paragraph, conveyed the message that the modern Western society was not an exception and that the Americans of the time reflected upon death like their ancestors and people of other cultures. Moreover, in the third paragraph (where the author stated that there was a gap in the literature, which his research was to fill) Feifel did not claim that there was no psychological literature on death (and thus death did not receive scientific consideration), but rather stressed the lack of studies of an empirical nature, which specifically addressed the problem of attitudes to death. So judging from the introduction to this article, people were quite aware of their mortality in everyday life and social sciences were dealing with this topic quite freely though for some reason the specific topic of attitudes to death did not receive enough attention at the time.

In the body of the article Herman Feifel presented the results of his studies of attitudes to death in mentally ill and the elderly. The last paragraph of the “research section” of the article contained information about the responses of the elderly people to the question as to how they would describe themselves. After presenting the research, Feifel wrote:

The frenetic accent on and continual search for the fountain of youth in many segments of our society reflect, to a certain degree, anxieties concerning death. We tend to reject the aged because they remind us of death. Professional people who come in contact with chronic and terminally ill patients have noted parallel avoidant tendencies in themselves. They often reject this kind of patient because he reactivates or arouses their own fears about dying. The onslaught of the patient’s hostility makes them feel guilty and defensive for outliving him. One’s narcissism also becomes wounded when “our medicine, our prayers” cannot help or save him. Conscious denial of death permeates a good deal of our thinking. Geoffrey Gorer, the English anthropologist, has commented that death has become as unmentionable to us as sex was to the Victorians. Forest Lawn, a cemetery in Los Angeles, proudly claims to minister “not to the dead, but to the living.”

One may notice that in this extract the author consolidated the two paragraphs on the Western repression of death that first appeared in the 1956 symposium presentation and edited them. For
example, he omitted the reference to Lindemann possibly because Lindemann was speaking specifically about grief, rather than about death in general. The fact that extract of the Western taboo on death first appeared in the conclusion of the conference presentation and the 1957 article might indicate the status of this claim in these texts. In conclusions academic writers usually try to guide the reader from acceptance of the research data to acceptance of the writer’s knowledge claims (Parkinson, 2011). The idea of the Western repression of death was introduced to the 1956 and 1957 texts as tentative, a thought, a part of reflection of the author on the results of the studies he conducted and attempt to generalize on them. However it is interesting to note that the idea of the Western repression of death appeared in the conclusion of the both texts as an attempt to generalize on different data: in the 1956 conference presentation the author discussed the Western denial of death in relation to young people, their attitudes to death and religiosity. In the 1957 essay Feifel discussed the same idea of the Western repression of death (expressed in very similar way) in relation to older people and their views on death, old age and status in the society.

In the 1959 essay the idea of repression of death appeared both in the introduction and in the conclusion. The text of the introduction can be found in the Appendix 2. One may notice that the first and the second paragraphs consisted mostly of the sentences, which had already appeared in the introductions to the 1955, 1956, and 1957 publications by Feifel (out of 18 sentences of the two opening paragraphs 12 had been already published earlier). The idea of the Western repression of death was developed in the fourth paragraph. Here we can find the sentences that had already appeared in the conclusions of the 1956 conference presentation and the 1957 essay (sentences on the words for death and dying, Geoffrey Gorer, and the Forest Lawn cemetery). In other words Feifel transferred his arguments in favor of the repression of death as well as the reference to the essay by Geoffrey Gorer “The Pornography of Death” (1955) from the conclusion of his earlier texts (conference presentation and the essay) to the introduction of the 1959 article and strengthened them with additional evidence. Thus the main part of the rhetorical work aimed at constructing the taboo as existing was accomplished in the introduction. According to Hyland (2009), in the introduction the academic writers usually state what is already known and does not need verification in order to show that this knowledge might be incomplete. Placing the RoD thesis in the introduction, the author constructed it as having different status in comparison with the conclusion. As I mentioned earlier, in the conclusion the
idea of the Western denial of death might be viewed as a part of author’s attempts to make sense of his data and generalize on it. The RoD thesis here can be viewed as linked to the research, grounded in it, but at the same time as having the status of author’s opinion, his speculation rather than an established scientific fact. Placed in the introduction, this idea can be perceived as established in the field, as a premise, on which the author was basing his further reasoning and research. Thus it seems that the very position of the RoD thesis in the introduction could facilitated the task of showing that repression of death in the Western society really existed and made this idea more persuasive. The conclusion of the 1959 article contained several paragraphs on taboo on death, three of which contained sentences that first appeared in the 1956 conference presentation and in the 1957 essay. However the idea of the Western repression of death in the conclusion to the 1959 article was not so explicitly expressed as in the introduction. Rather Feifel mentioned this thesis almost in passing as something self-evident and used it as a premise to discuss other issues (treatment of the dying patient, role of death in human development, further research on death and dying, etc.) as I will try to show further in the chapter.


7.5.1. The Introduction to the volume The Meaning of Death.

The Introduction authored by Herman Feifel and published in the volume he edited seems for the most part to be written anew. However it does contain several sentences, which appeared earlier: in the Introductory speech to the Symposium (1956) and in the 1957 article. I could find two extracts that contain the idea of repression of death in the Introduction. The first extract was placed at the very beginning of the text and was relatively long (approximately 30% of the text). It consisted of an epigraph and three paragraphs. The idea of taboo on death was developed in the third paragraph. Immediately after this extract Herman Feifel provided an overview of the contributions to the volume, after which followed a brief conclusion. This conclusion also contained the idea of the Western taboo on death.

The second extract of the Introduction, where the topic of repression of death was touched upon, was placed at the very end of the text, after a brief discussion of the contributions to the volume.

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82 I discussed the way I selected the extracts containing the idea of repression of death as well as their length earlier in this chapter.
The full text of this extract can be found in the footnote\(^83\). This extract consisted of five short paragraphs. In the second, third and fourth paragraphs Herman Feifel summarized the main ideas of the volume in the form of “three leitmotivs”, which emerged “despite the diversity of disciplines and approaches”. The idea of denial of death can be found in these paragraphs.


In the following section I would like to take a closer look at the essay “Attitudes Toward Death in Some Normal and Mentally Ill Populations” published in the volume The Meaning of Death (1959). As I mentioned earlier, the essay was a revised and edited version of the conference presentation delivered at the symposium “Death and its Relation to Behavior” within the framework of the 1956 APA convention in Chicago, which Feifel had organized and chaired. In the article (and also in the conference paper) Feifel presented three research projects on attitudes to death in mentally ill persons, elderly people (World War I veterans) and “normals”. The results of the first and the second studies had been already published in 1955 and 1956 respectively. The third research project on attitudes to death in the “normals” was first presented at the symposium.

Comparing the text of the conference presentation (held by the Menninger Foundation Archives in Kansas\(^84\)) with the article published in the volume The Meaning of Death may allow one to better understand the concept of the article and its genre. It is possible to notice several differences that reflect editorial changes. Firstly, the text of the presentation was structured and

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\(^83\) After having discussed the essays published in the volume The Meaning of Death Herman Feifel wrote: “Despite the diversity of disciplines and approaches, and occasional diametrical stands evidenced in the book, three dominant leitmotivs emerge:
1. Denial and avoidance of the countenance of death characterize much of the American outlook. Life is not comprehended truly or lived fully unless the idea of death is grappled with honesty. This has implications not only for the individual but for society as well.
2. It is conceivable that our science-conscious culture, which tends to measure all experience within the bounds of space and time, does not furnish us with all the necessary parameters for investigating and understanding death.
3. There is a pressing need for more reliable information and systematic, controlled study in the field. This is an area where theoretical formulations have not been lagging behind an accumulating body of descriptive and empirical data. Research on the meaning of death and dying can enhance our understanding of the individual’s behavior and yield an additional entryway to an analysis of cultures.
Of course, it is quite possible that the overlapping of certain ideas in the book may emphasize not only the extent and degree of mutual understanding but those of ignorance as well. We will have fulfilled a major aim of the book if it opens up interest and catalyzes organized examination of the field” (p. xvii).

\(^84\) Feifel, H. (1956, October 22). Letter to Gardner Murphy and appendix (Copy of a conference presentation). Papers of Gardner Murphy (1924-1987), Menninger Foundation Archives (Box Correspondence E-G misc, file 297184). State Archives, Topeka, Kansas, USA.
had subheadings (“Subjects and procedure”, “Results”). The subheadings were not included in the article for the volume *The Meaning of Death*. It does not seem to be the policy of the editor of the volume or the publishing house because some of the contributions to the volume (for example, that of Maria Nagy, Carla Gottlieb, and Edgar Jackson) did contain subheadings.

Secondly, the article was almost twice as long as the conference presentation (5,874 words and 3,094 words respectively). Both texts presented the same research data and devoted to these data almost the same amount of words (2,363 and 2,295 respectively). The difference lays in the structure of these texts: in the 1956 conference paper the introduction and conclusion together amount to 25.8% of the text. The remaining 74.2% was devoted to research presentation. The 1959 article had different structure: only around 40% of the text was devoted to presentation of the research findings. The biggest part of the text (almost 60%) was allocated to the introduction (17.4%) and a lengthy conclusion (42.3%). The introduction paragraphs, which Feifel wrote for his 1955 and 1956 articles were not included in the text of the 1956 presentation, but appeared in a slightly modified form in the opening speech Herman Feifel delivered at the symposium. However these paragraphs can be found in the 1959 article. The idea of the Western taboo on death was developed in the conclusion of the 1956 conference presentation (after Herman Feifel presented his research data) and also in the opening part and in the conclusion of the 1959 article.

Thirdly, the main part of the article where Feifel presented the results of his studies seemed to be less specific and detailed in comparison with that of the presentation. Many details of the research as well as technical language were edited out and the whole text looked more suitable for the non-professional audience. For example, in his 1956 conference presentation Herman Feifel described the participants in his studies the following way:

The subjects consist of three major groups: (1) two groups of mentally ill patients comprising 38 acutely disturbed closed ward patients in partial remission, and 47 open ward patients diagnosed as psychoneurotic. Both are slightly above-average in intelligence and have mean ages in the middle thirties; (2) a group of 40 World War I, male, veterans living at a Veterans Administration Domiciliary. None of these individuals has ever been mentally disturbed or has any apparent incapacitating brain involvement. They are staying in the Domiciliary because of physical illness and inability to economically support themselves at present. This group has a mean age of 67 years and is
of average intelligence; and (3) a group of 81 “normals” composed of two sub-groups: (a) 49 young Korean War Veterans applying for clarification of training objectives under Public Law 550 at a VA Guidance Center. None of these individuals has any manifest physical or emotional difficulties. The group has a mean age of 26 years and is slightly above-average in intelligence; (b) a group of 32 professional people consisting of psychiatrists, psychologists, and social workers functioning at a mental hygiene clinic. This group has a mean age of 39 years and is of superior intelligence. The subjects were individually seen and interviewed, use being made of standardized questionnaire and rating scale techniques.

However in the article published in 1959 the major part of this detailed description was omitted:

The results are based on three major groups: (1) 85 mentally ill patients—mean age, 36 years; (2) 40 older people-mean age, 67 years; and (3) 85 “normals” consisting of 50 young people—mean age, 26 years; and 35 professional people-mean age, 40 years.

It is interesting to note that the information about the participants was lacking many details: the sub-groups to which the participants belonged, their level of intelligence, details of their career and current economic status, etc. Some of these details may be considered important for understanding the results of the study and may affect the possibility of generalizing on them. For example, the fact that the young people were Korean War veterans returning from the front and the professional people were in fact mental health professionals could have affected the way they responded to the questions about death. It is also interesting to note that the number of participants in the third study on “normals”, which had not been published before, seemed to be rounded up: in the conference presentation Herman Feifel mentioned 81 participants (49 Korean War Veterans and 32 professional people). However in the 1959 article he wrote about 85 “normals” (50 young people and 35 professionals). The discrepancy in the number of “normals” could also be noticed later in the text, where Feifel discussed religiosity as a factor that affected attitudes to death. In the 1956 conference presentation Feifel mentioned that he interviewed and administered the Gregory Religious Beliefs questionnaire on the Korean Veterans and professional group. Totally 81 participants took part in this study (42 non-religious and 39 religious persons), which corresponded to the number of “normals” he presented earlier in the text. However, in the 1959 article he noted that in this study 42 people were classified as non-
religious and 40 as religious, which made the total number of “normal” participants 82 (and not 85, as Feifel wrote earlier in the same article). The mean age of the participants in both groups was the same (34 for non-religious and 31.5 for religious). The fragment on factor of religiosity in the 1956 conference presentation was as follows:

Returning to the point made earlier—the speculation that some persons attempt to master their anxiety about death by thinking of it as a precursor of a new life—and to the finding that those who hold a religious outlook on death tend to fear death more often in old age than do those who hold a more materialistic orientation, I thought it would be fruitful to get comparative data on religious and non-religious persons, particularly taken into account the “judgement” aspect after death as a possible important variable. As a result of interviewing and administering the Gregory Religious Beliefs questionnaire to the Korean Veteran and professional group, I obtain a population of 42 non-religious and 39 religious persons. The mean age of the non-religious group is 34 years, and they are of above average-intelligence. The mean age of the religious group is 31.5 years and they are also of above-average intelligence. The main beliefs which characterize the religious person, as distinguished from the non-religious one, are his credence in a Divine purpose in the operation of the universe, in a life after death, and acceptance of the Bible as revealing God’s truths.

In the 1959 article this paragraph was much shorter and also lacked many details:

While the data were being collected and evaluated, the implication suggested itself that certain persons who fear death strongly may resort to a religious outlook in order to cope with their fears concerning death. I thought it would be fruitful to get comparative data on religious and nonreligious persons, particularly taking into account the “judgment” aspect after death as a possible important variable. The mean age of the religious group (N = 40) was 31.5 years; that of the nonreligious one (N = 42) was 34 years. The main beliefs which characterized the religious group, as distinguished from the nonreligious one, were credence in a divine purpose in the operations of the universe, in a “life after death,” and acceptance of the Bible as revealing God’s truths.
As one can notice, the author edited out the information on the hypothesis he had in this study and the methods of the study and used passive voice ("the data were being collected and evaluated") and the impersonal construction ("implication suggested itself"). As Billig (2013, p. 129) argued, scientists are likely to use passive voice in results and methods sections of their research papers which allow them to present less information about the process of the research. This allows them to present their findings as being independent of the identity of the researcher and imply that anyone who followed the same research procedure would have found identical results. Similarly, Feifel presented his study and its results as the truth obtained with the help of scientific method by using passive voice and impersonal constructions.

Another paragraph from the conference presentation described the results of the study on attitudes to death. Here the author discussed the way the participants answered the question how often they thought about death and noted that women in the group of mental health professionals (20 out of 32 professionals) tended answer “frequently” significantly more often than men.

In response to the question, “How often do you think about death”, a majority of all the groups (the Domiciliary subjects, the Korean Veterans, and the professional group) reply “occasionally”. This is followed by, “rarely”, and then “frequently”. Examination of the data along the lines of sex shows that the women (N=20; mean age of 36 years) in our professional group answer “frequently” significantly more often (at the .01 level) then do the men in our professional and Korean War groups. Exactly what it means needs further study. We should not forget, however, that there is no necessary relationship between thinking about death and fear of death.

However in the 1959 article the information about the number of women participants, their age and occupation was omitted and as well as the other details of the study (the responses of other participants, the exact question they were answering, etc.). As a result the 1959 paragraph read as following:

Examination of the data along lines of sex suggests that women tend to think more frequently about death than do men. Exactly what this means needs further study. We should not forget that there is no necessary relationship between thinking about death and fear of death.
The lack of specific details allowed the author to present the results of the study on 20 female mental health professionals in their middle thirties as if they pertained all women.

To sum it up, Herman Feifel edited his conference paper in order to transform it into the article for the volume *The Meaning of Death*. In the process of editing he omitted many details of his research (the methods and hypothesis, the information about the participants, etc.) and also used passive voice and impersonal constructions. As Hyland (2009, p. 82) has noted, conference presentations in comparison with research articles usually contained greater imprecision in describing results. However in the conference presentation by Feifel, the results were in fact described more precisely than in the 1959 article. This might be viewed as an indirect indication that the article might not belong to the genre of empirical article. Also, editing out the information about the research data and results might have made the article easier to understand for the general reader and also allowed the author to make very broad generalizations about attitudes to death in all elderly people, all women, all professionals. The passage from data to knowledge claims was accomplished by omitting the seemingly unnecessary details. This allowed Feifel to present his findings as more unambiguous and this conforms with his overall presentation of the research as being innovative and important.

The essay contains two extracts, where the idea of repression of death was clearly expressed. The first extract can be found at the very beginning of the essay. The first and second paragraphs first appeared in the article by Feifel in 1955. The third paragraph seems to be written anew. The fourth paragraph contained elements that first appeared in the conclusion of the 1956 conference presentation and 1957 article. The idea of repression of death was discussed there. The fifth paragraph is a modified form of a paragraph that first appeared in 1956.

The second part of the article containing the idea of taboo on death was placed after the section where Herman Feifel presented the results of his studies on attitudes to death. As I tried to show earlier in this chapter, the 1959 essay presented the same data as the 1956 conference paper, but was almost twice as long. The introductory part and the part that contained data presentation were roughly of the same length in both texts. However Feifel greatly increased the length of the conclusion of the 1959 essay: from 614 words in 1956, the conclusion was expanded to 2 432 words in 1959. The 1959 conclusion contained 14 paragraphs. Some of them (like for example paragraph 1 and paragraph 14) could be found in previous publications by Feifel and in the 1956
conference presentation. Although some contained individual sentences, which appeared in the earlier articles (paragraphs 6, 10, 11), the bulk of the text seemed to be written anew.

The text of the conclusion creates impression of being somewhat disorganized: the paragraphs did not seem to be very well connected together and similar ideas were discussed in different parts of the text, for example, the necessity to openly discuss death with terminally ill patients was touched upon in the paragraphs 3 and 7, and the concept of death being an important organizing principle of human behavior was stressed in paragraphs 4, 6, and 14. Nevertheless one can distinguish several blocks of topics in the text of the introduction: in the paragraphs 1-3 the author considered attitudes of physicians and psychiatrists to the subject of death and stated that it was a serious mistake not to discuss death with the terminally ill patients. The paragraphs 4, 5 and 6 were devoted to the idea that death was important for living and that it can serve people positively, as a galvanizing force pushing them toward creativity and accomplishment. In the paragraphs 7, 8 and 9 Herman Feifel again discussed the attitudes to death in terminally ill people, presented some hypotheses and thoughts originated from his research project on terminally ill patients and suggested factors that might affect attitudes to death and dying. In the paragraphs 10 and 11 he elaborated on the idea that death meant different things to different people and in the paragraphs 12 and 13 he suggested directions and methods for further research on attitudes to death. Finally, in the paragraph 14 he once more stressed the importance of the concept of death for human functioning and called for more research on this subject.

The idea of repression of death (in different form and of different degree of elaboration) can be found in paragraphs 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, and 14. However the paragraphs 1 and 4 contained this thesis in the most elaborated form that is why I would like to base my analysis mostly on these paragraphs.


In this section I would like to discuss the construction of repression of death in the volume The Meaning of Death (1959) namely in the Introduction and the essay written by Herman Feifel. The idea of repression of death was first mentioned in the Introduction that is why I think it might be reasonable to start my analysis from the paragraphs belonging to the Introduction.
7.6.1. The construction of the Western repression of death in the Introduction to the volume *The Meaning of Death*.

Herman Feifel started his discussion of the Western repression of death in the first paragraph on the Introduction, which run as followed:

Dying and death are events that happen to each one of us. We can postpone, gain reprieves, but ultimately we all must die, hora incerta, mors certa. And with world events being what they are, life’s temporality tends to move even further into the foreground. There is a sardonic Viennese saying, “So many people now die who never died before.” Many people react to this state of affairs with the feeling that there is something morbid in paying attention to death. They comment, “I’m interested in life, not death.” The seventeenth century French writer and moralist, La Rochefoucauld, epitomized this viewpoint in his remark, “One can no more look steadily at death than at the sun.” But, at the same time, we must not overlook the knowledge we have gained about our planet and man by studying that sun. Is it not a form of ostrich adjustment to neglect one of the essential realities of life, a kind of fraud perpetrated on ourselves?

Here the author states that although death will eventually happen to everybody, some people prefer to ignore and consider interest in the subject of death to be something morbid. The first issue that may attract one’s attention in this paragraph is the use of personal pronouns “we” and “us”. In order to better understand the role they played in text, it is possible to invoke a concept of identification introduced by K. Burke in his book *A Rhetoric of Motives* (1950). Unlike persuasion, the concept of the “old rhetoric”, identification does not imply deliberate design and it can include a partially unconscious factor in appeal. Identification is a way to overcome division (another key concept of Burke’s rhetoric), an essential condition of human society, which Burke compared to the “state of Babel after the fall” (p.23). The division and identification are interconnected: people are divided from each other and have to use language to overcome it and promote identification. However identification is always incomplete and provisional because people can never fully share *substance* (the third important concept in the interrelated network of concepts Burke used in his works, which might refer to human psyche, interests, motives, etc.). Rather identification can make people “co-substantial”, “both joined and separate”, a part of a community and simultaneously separate individuals. Returning to the concept identification in rhetorical criticism, Hochmuth (1952) showed that it might function
both as a means and an end. If identification is viewed as “means”, it allows the researcher to consider, how it is accomplished in discourse. This topic was in detail discussed by Cheney (1983) who studied different types of identification in organizational communication. Among identification strategies Cheney singled out “the most subtle” one, which he called “the assumed we” as opposed to “they”. The pronoun “we” stresses the idea of unity, togetherness, mutual trust, and also shared values and goals. (p.154). However, the pronoun “we” might not only convey the notion of shared identity, but paradoxically might also be used to exclude some groups from the common “we” (Billig and Marinho, 2017). Thus, the pronoun “we” might not have a single “universally true” meaning of inclusion or exclusion, rather this meaning depends on what the speakers are doing with their words within a particular situation. As Billig and Marinho (2017) argued, “an exclusive act can be performed by linguistically inclusive words” (p. 73).

Returning to the Introduction by Herman Feifel, the pronoun “we” might be viewed here as conveying the meaning of inclusion. “Each one of us” is going to die at a certain point and the appeal to common mortality marks a powerful, but subtle means of accomplishing identification, which sets the tone for the whole text and establishes a bond between the author and the reader. The pronoun “we” constructs the argument of the text as co-created by the author and the reader and thus conveys the message that “you and I think alike” to the readership (Harwood, 2005). As I mentioned earlier, Feifel used the pronoun “we” throughout the opening paragraphs of the Introduction. In the first sentences he stated that death happened to each of us, we cannot avoid it, it is problem that concerned all humans. The pronoun “we” here implies all humans, all mortals. It helps Feifel to create the idea of unity of the author and the reader in their common humanity and may be viewed as a powerful strategy of engaging the readers. This strategy might look especially winning taking into consideration that Feifel was addressing a composite audience in an introduction to a general interest book. Thus it again could be viewed (among other goals) as contributing to promotion of the book as a commodity in the market (Bhatya, 1997).

The following sentence contains a phrase “world events being what they are”. It is interesting to note that references to world events were quite common in the introductions to scholarly
literature on death of the time. For example, Alexander and Adlerstein (1959) opened their article in the same volume *The Meaning of Death* with the following passage:

We live today in an era in which the problem of death is a part of the Zeitgeist. The discovery of tremendous sources of power which, if used destructively, could obliterate nations and perhaps our entire planet has placed death in the focus of human consciousness. In the case of the individual it is as though that which was thought of as a natural process with an indefinite time referent has increased in immediate probability value. One of the consequences of these troubled times has been a trend toward religion (p. 271).

Here Alexander and Adlerstein claimed the importance and centrality of the problem of death for their contemporaries: death became a part of the Zeitgeist because of the discovery of nuclear power, which could destroy the whole planet. The reference to dangers of nuclear bomb might be viewed here as an exigence, a pressing problem in the world, something to which people should attend (Bitzer, 1968), and which serves to organize the rhetorical situation. The authors then moved to the problem of individual death, which for the people of the time became much more urgent: death could be expected at any moment. In the next sentence Alexander and Adlerstein moved on to the subject of their study, death and religion. If we compare this introductory sentences with the sentence by Herman Feifel “And with world events being what they are, life’s temporality tends to move even further into the foreground.”, we may notice that Feifel, although claimed the centrality of the topic of death considering the world events of the time, does not specify, what exactly he meant and used quite ambiguous expression. In my opinion this ambiguity has a strategic character here. Referring to the world events (similarly to Alexander and Adlerstain) might be seen as another identification strategy because the topic indeed was very timely. The author signaled to the readers that he shared their fears and their concerns and was going to address it further in the book. However depicting death as highly visible, a part of the Zeitgeist, appeared to be in contradiction with the idea of the Western taboo on death, the unwillingness and inability of the modern Western people to openly discuss this subject (which was developed in the third paragraph). In the Introduction Feifel tried to use both ideas for his rhetorical purposes: referring to the world events in the first paragraph allowed him to identify with the anxieties of the readers, and thus to construct the book as timely (and also as worth
spending money on). At the same time, the idea of the Western taboo on death and death as something hidden allowed him to contribute to his own ethos as a pioneering researcher, capable of breaking the taboo. It also promoted the book and his own research by appealing to “conspiracy of silence” (intentional or unintentional), which surrounded the subject. The latter strategy seemed to be successful: the review in *Time* magazine, which made the book popular, opened with the quotation of Herman Feifel on the Western taboo on death, which the book allegedly tried to “remedy” with the help of the experts in religion, arts and sciences.

In order to better understand how Feifel accomplished the transition from the collective and highly visible mortality (in the first paragraph) to the taboo on individual death (in the third paragraph) we may invoke the concept of dissociation, discussed in detail by Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca (1969). Dissociation is used while negotiating tensions, inconsistencies, contradictions and “incompatibilities” (Jasinski, 2001, p. 175). Dissociative arguments are aimed at dividing the source of tension in two opposite parts, one of which is usually constructed as belonging to the realm of “appearance” and the other to the realm of “reality”. Then the negative feelings are transferred to the realm of “appearance”, and positive feelings can be associated with “reality”. The appearance-reality dichotomy is one of the most popular ways of dissociation; it is the “prototype of all conceptual dissociation” (Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, 1969, p. 415). However dissociation can be performed using other dichotomies like “ideal vs practical”, “letter vs spirit”, “name vs thing”, etc.

In the first paragraph of the introduction Herman Feifel referred to the collective mortality (possibility of mass death, destruction of the planet), but described its causes very vaguely as “world events being what they were”. This choice of words allowed Feifel to make easy transition from collective to individual mortality (without clearly stating the reasons for life’s temporality which moved “even further into the foreground”). This might be viewed as a way of downplaying the importance of collective mortality and constructing all mortality as essentially individual. In the following sentence (which I will discuss in some detail a little later) Feifel

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86 Returning to the concept of exigence, Bitzer singled out two types of exigence, a non-rhetorical and a rhetorical one: a non-rhetorical exigence (like death, winter, natural disasters) cannot be modified by rhetorical intervention. However the exigence is rhetorical “when it is capable of positive modification and when positive modification requires discourse or can be assisted by discourse” (pp. 6-7). In other words, a rhetorical exigence is the one which can be modified by rhetorical means only (Bitzer provided the example of racism here: persuasive discourse is
used the ironical saying, which might be perceived as mocking the idea that some people might be immune to death or might think that death would not affect them. Finally, he created a “straw reader”, “some people”, who thought that there was something morbid in paying attention to death. Creating “a straw reader” might be viewed as a dissociative strategy, which Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca (1969) identified as “opinion vs truth” (p. 438). The author and the reader could thus identify with the truth (importance of being aware of individual death) and together (as the pronoun “we” suggests) scorn the opinion of “some people”, who were interested in life, not in death. This rhetorical maneuver prepared the ground for introduction the idea of the Western taboo on death in the third paragraph.

Returning to the text of Introduction, the first part of the sentence “There is a sardonic Viennese saying” can be seen as a co-textual irony marker, that alerts a reader that the next sentence might be ironic, brings the reader in an ironic frame (Burgers et al, 2013). The adjective “sardonic” described the utterance that followed as being ironic, but also bitter, mocking, or even cynical. The saying “So many people now die who never died before” is in fact a so called Irish bull (Kirke, 1889, p. 41), where the humorous effect is based on “verbal blunder”. Thus the co-textual irony marker in this context might be especially important because otherwise the irony might not be recognized as such by the readers. The word sardonic here might also be referring to the bitter and sarcastic type of humor associated with the Austrian-Jewish writer Karl Kraus, who was mentioned in the Freud’s 1905 book *Jokes and Their Relation to the Unconscious*.

The second part of the sentence, the actual saying “So many people now die who never died before” might indeed be perceived as sardonic or even cynical as applied to individual mortality: it is critical to the culture that denies death and promotes the idea of eternal youth, and as such is consistent with the rhetorical position of a cynic who finds people morality a sham, a pretense and “plays upon the duality of what is a value and what is a pretended value” (Yoos, 1985, p. 60). However this sentence was preceded by the sentence where Feifel mentioned the “world
events being what they were”, which put mortality at the foreground. Thus, the sardonic Viennese saying might also be perceived as elaborating on this subject (for example, the word “now” in the Viennese saying (“So many people now die…”)) might be seen as continuing the description of “world events being as they are”), and the people “who die now, but never died before” might in fact be victims of A-bomb, fallout, Korean war, World War II, etc. As applied to the collective mortality, the saying sounds callous and mocking of the people who were dying because of “word events”, political power games, which these people could not prevent or even affect. In my opinion, the humor of the sardonic Viennese saying in this context has a dark overtone (as the humor of Kraus had) and continues the line of downplaying the collective mortality (and the political and ideological issues related to it- as I tried to show earlier) and limits mortality awareness to individual mortality (“it is not us collectively as a nation, a population of the Earth, who will die because of world events, but individuals, people, who never died before”). As such this type of humor might be perceived as aimed at maintaining the political and societal status quo (Billig, 2005) and very much in line with the politics of the US government of the time (Boyer, 1985; Capshew, 1999) aimed at calming the population down, convincing the people that the atomic threat was not as bad as it was painted and diverting public attention from the politics of the government (arms race, experiments with nuclear weapons, fallout, etc.) However at the same time this kind of gallows humor might also be perceived -in line with analysis of Freud in his 1927 essay Humor- as a rebellion against the traumatic reality of war and death.

The following sentence starting with “Many people react to this state of affairs…” might be viewed as preparing the ground for the introduction of the idea of taboo on death in the third paragraph, as I tried to show earlier. Here Feifel created the “straw reader” (“many people”), which might be viewed as a characteristic feature of a scientific popular discourse (Hyland, 2009, p. 162). The function of the “straw reader” in this context might be to construct the writer’s arguments as important as if they contradict a widely spread, but wrong belief that that needs to be refuted. Also, it might be interesting to take a closer look at another ambiguity in the text of this paragraph, the expression “this state of affairs”. Here the use of ambiguity might be viewed as a device that helps the author to smoothly pass on from the idea of highly visible mortality (life’s temporality, which moved even further into the foreground) to the opinion of many people, who would prefer to neglect it. “This state of affairs” might refer to the world
events being what they are or to the situation described in the sardonic Viennese saying that too many people die nowadays that were not supposed to die. Substituting the phrase “this state of affairs” by actually describing them (for example, “Many people react to the nuclear threat…”), or “Many people react to death being part of the Zeitgeist…” would make the whole sentence rather improbable and contradicting the idea expressed in the beginning of the paragraph, that life’s temporality moved even further on the foreground.

The paragraph finishes with the rhetorical question “Is it not a form of ostrich adjustment to neglect one of the essential realities of life, a kind of fraud perpetrated on ourselves?” Rhetorical questions can be effective persuasive devices, enabling speakers and writers to make stronger statements with greater implications (Frank, 1990). Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca stressed the importance of “interrogative modality” for rhetoric and pointed out that “a question presupposes an object to which it relates and suggests that there is agreement on the existence of this object” (p. 159). In the text by Feifel, the rhetorical question first of all presupposes that the repression of death, the neglect of “one of the essential realities of life”, indeed exists. Moreover, as Perelman further noted, a question might mark an “initiating a line of reasoning, particularly by the use of alternative, or of division, with the complicity, so to speak, of the interlocutor who, by answering, is giving his endorsement to this mode of argument” (ibid, p. 159). The rhetorical question in the Feifel’s text is used to initiate the discussion of repression of death by suggesting an alternative: acceptance of death or “ostrich adjustment”, “fraud perpetuated on ourselves”. This alternative and also evaluation of the two positions within it (negative evaluation of the repression of death and positive evaluation of the awareness of death) are placed in the presupposition of the rhetorical question. This continues the dissociative strategy that was initiated earlier in the paragraph, sets the tone for the further discussion of the repression of death in the third paragraph, and also might be viewed as serving the purpose of identification by suggesting that there is agreement between the author and the reader about the existence of repression of death and its negative evaluation.

The second paragraph of the introduction was as follows:

The critical question is not the sham dichotomy of life and death but rather how each one of us relates to the knowledge that death is certain. Throughout man’s history, the idea of death has posed the eternal mystery which is the core of our religious and philosophical
systems of thought. And it is quite possible that this idea is also the prototype of human anxiety. Insecurity may well be a symbol of death. Any loss may represent total loss. One of man’s most distinguishing characteristics, in contrast to other species, is his capacity to grasp the concept of a future—and inevitable death. In chemistry and physics, a “fact” is always determined by events which have preceded it; in human beings, present behavior is dependent not only on the past but even more potently, perhaps, by orientation toward future events. When we stop to consider the matter, the notion of the uniqueness and individuality of each one of us gathers full meaning only in realizing that we are finite. And it is in this same encounter with death that each of us discovers his hunger for immortality.

The idea of death being one of the essential realities of life that was introduced in the last sentence of the previous paragraph was further developed here: the author first stressed the importance of this idea throughout man’s history and then called attention to the important role it played in the human psyche. This line of reasoning might be seen as a continuation of the dissociative strategy aimed at further separation of the position of “many people” quoted in the previous paragraph87 (“opinion”- in terms of Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca) and the position of the author who labelled this reaction of “many people” as an “ostrich adjustment” and a “fraud perpetrated on ourselves” (“truth” in terms of Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca). In this paragraph the author reinforced with additional arguments the position he constructed as truth in order to make the contrast between the truth and the opinion even more striking and the idea of taboo on death even more inadequate.

The paragraph opened with the sentence: “The critical question is not the sham dichotomy of life and death but rather how each one of us relates to the knowledge that death is certain.” The epithet “sham” as applied to the dichotomy of life and death” is quite unusual in the context of scientific or scientific popular book and it might be more appropriate in works on religion or philosophy, as it implies the idea of unity of life and death and the possibility that death could be transcended. This idea was not present in the earlier or in the later writings by Herman Feifel. In the text of the Introduction Feifel did not elaborate on the subject of transcendence of death and

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87 As Feifel wrote in the previous paragraph, “Many people react to this state of affairs with the feeling that there is something morbid in paying attention to death.”
on the reasons he believed that the life/death dichotomy was sham. Also, he did not provide any references to scientific literature on the transcendence of death, although this idea was touched upon for example in the Discussion by Gardner Murphy, published in the same volume (pp. 317-340). Rather he mentioned it in passing, as something self-evident and stated that this was not the key question of his investigation. In my opinion, this sentence contains a certain discrepancy: if life/death dichotomy is sham and one can transcend death, then in fact this is the critical question, and the way each of us relates to the certainty of death directly depends on it. It is interesting to note however, that this sentence with some modifications was re-used by Herman Feifel in his 1965 article “The problem of death” and runs as follows:

For us, as psychologists, the critical question is not so much the dichotomy of life and death as how each of us relates to and copes with the cognition of oncoming extinction (p. 30)

In this version the epithet “sham” was omitted and the whole sentence seems less controversial and more appropriate for a scientific text: it stated that the possibility of life after death was not the issue scientific psychology should deal with, rather psychology was more interested in how the idea of death affected the human functioning. It might be possible that in the 1959 volume the word “sham” allowed Feifel to digress into the issues of philosophy and religion which seemed to be in line with the concept of the volume as essentially interdisciplinary and aimed at wider audience. Later however he omitted this word as he tried to establish death studies as a scientific discipline and himself as a scientist.

Finally, I would like to discuss the third paragraph of the Introduction, where Herman Feifel developed the idea of the Western taboo on death. The paragraph run as follows:

In the presence of death, Western culture, by and large, has tended to run, hide, and seek refuge in group norms and actuarial statistics. The individual face of death has become blurred by embarrassed incuriosity and institutionalization. The shadows have begun to dwarf the substance. Concern about death has been relegated to the tabooed territory heretofore occupied by diseases like tuberculosis and cancer and the topic of sex. We have been compelled, in unhealthy measure, to internalize our thoughts and feelings, fears, and even hopes concerning death. As some of the book’s contributors indicate,
profound contradictions exist in our thinking about the problem of death. Our tradition assumes that “man is both terminated by death and capable of continuing in some other sense beyond death.” Death is viewed on the one hand as a “wall,” the ultimate personal disaster, and suicide as the act of a sick mind; on the other, death is regarded as a “doorway,” a point in time on the way to eternity.

The first sentence of the paragraph deserves in my opinion to be discussed in some detail. It started with the adjunct adverbial “in the presence of death”, which can be interpreted as a contingency adjunct in classification of Quirk (1985). The position of adverbial in the sentence may be determined by the information structure (whether the adverbial conveys new or given information), thematic structure (whether it serves as the point of departure for the clause as message) and cohesion (whether it serves as a link to the preceding extracts of discourse). In the majority of cases adjunct adverbials, including the contingency ones, appear in the end position of the sentence (around 78% of all adverbials), which is considered to be the default position (Hasselgard, 2010). The initial position is relatively rare for the majority of adjunct types, according to Hasselgard (2010), with only around 12% of adjuncts appearing at the beginning of the sentence. The initial position might indicate a strong focus on the adjunct and also the fact that this adjunct is intended to be a “point of departure of the message”. Adjuncts in the initial position may also serve as a link between the sentences or segments of the text.

In the text by Herman Feifel the initial position of the adverbial “in the presence of death” might reflect firstly author’s focus on the concept of death and importance of this concept for his discussion of the Western culture that followed. Also, the initial position reflected the fact that the adverbial contained not new, but already given information: the subject of death was discussed in the previous two paragraphs. Thus the adverbial “in the presence of death” connected the paragraph that followed with the previous paragraph and made the transition to the topic of repression of death in the Western culture smoother. The word “death” in the initial position of the sentence does not seem to correspond to the way repressed or taboo subjects are typically handled in the text, because the text does not contain any rhetorical work which is expected when a sensitive subject is discussed.

The subject of the sentence is “Western culture”. The actions attributed to it were “running, hiding and seeking refuge”. This might be viewed as a metaphor, specifically as a
personification. As Reisigl (2006, p. 600) has pointed out, personalization played an important role in animating imagined “collective subjects” as for example, races, nations, ethnicities, and other political “collective actors”. Personification in the text of the Introduction by Herman Feifel first of all conveyed the idea that Western culture was a single homogeneous entity and it reacted (and as a subject of action possibly also chose to react) to the presence of death in the single unified way, by running, hiding and seeking refuge in group norms and actuarial statistics. The three verbs in the compound predicate (run, hide, seek refuge) expressed dynamics of movement and also conveyed the image of a scared person or possibly even a coward, who made futile attempts to avoid the inevitable (it is obvious that one cannot find protection against death in essentially human things like group norms and actuarial statistics). Thus the readers are led to dissociate with the approach to death ascribed to the Western culture and to accept the viewpoint and claims of the author of the text, namely the idea that death is a taboo subject, and also his depiction of this taboo on death as something negative, “an ostrich adjustment” and “a fraud perpetrated on ourselves”, as Herman Feifel wrote in the first paragraph of the Introduction. It is also important to note that in this paragraph personification of the Western culture continued the dissociative strategy started in the first paragraph and constructed the taboo on death and death awareness as a binary opposition: death may be either taboo (as in the opinion of many people mentioned in the first paragraph and also in the Western culture) or highly visible. This opposition does not presuppose that death in the Western culture might be repressed under certain circumstances and at certain times and simultaneously highly visible in other situations.

In this sentence the author introduced the idea of the Western taboo on death to the text with the help of figurative language and did not provide evidence or arguments (either in form of stories, or facts and statistics) to support this claim. However in my opinion this idea was made more convincing by the word choice at the end of the sentence. The phrase “group norms and actuarial statistics” can be perceived as belonging to professional or even scientific discourse. The choice of words contributed to the ethos of Herman Feifel as a scientist, a professional and added to the credibility of the statement that death was a taboo subject for the Western culture. Also the expression “by and large” here can be viewed as an example of hedging (Hyland, 2005), that “indicate the writer’s decision to withhold complete commitment to a proposition, allowing information to be presented as an opinion rather than accredited fact” (p. 178). Hedges strengthen the arguments rhetorically: by mitigating the sweeping generalization about all
Western culture the author allowed the examples of the opposite to be incorporated in his argument.

The second and third sentences of this paragraph were as follows:

The individual face of death has been blurred by embarrassed incuriosity and institutionalization. The shadows have begun to dwarf the substance.

Herman Feifel here continued using rich metaphorical language when speaking about the taboo on death. It is not immediately clear what “individual face of death” might mean (possibly, the awareness of death by each individually) and also how this “individual face” could be blurred by incuriosity and institutionalization: the author did not provide explanation as to how it could be possible and what exactly he meant. The expression “embarrassed incuriosity” (along with several other sentences in Herman Feifel’s article “Attitudes toward death in some normal and mentally ill populations” published in the same volume) seem to be borrowed from the essay “The Word, the Flesh, and the Devil” by John Jessup, one of the editors of Life magazine (Jessup, 195588) In this article Jessup discussed the changing attitude to health (and ultimately, to flesh) in the contemporary American Christians and draw a line between the health of the soul and the health of the body. Although there is nothing wrong in being healthy and enjoying it, “the true health of Christian soul is not measured by a bovine “adjustment” to life”, as Jessup put it (p. 141). The Americans however seem to evade the fact of death, “the natural climax of existence” and should be concerned about their hostile attitude to death and their “embarrassed incuriosity” about afterlife. Here the expression “embarrassed incuriosity” is used by Jessup in his polemics for the true Christian values and has a negative coloring. Herman Feifel however applied it to death in general. The choice of passive voice added to vagueness of the sentence: passivisation allows the writer not to specify, who performed the action and as such has ideological overtones, especially in academic writing in social sciences (Billig, 2013). It is not clear, whether the incuriosity and institutionalization were the agents and performed the action of blurring the individual face of death, or whether the agent was not mentioned in this sentence

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88 Jessup, J.K. (26. 12. 1955) The Word, the Flesh, and the Devil, Life, Special Issue, Christianity, p. 141. The extract from the article containing the expression “embarrassed incuriosity” was as follows: “Are Americans trying to evade the fact of death, the natural climax of existence? Christians may well take concern for the false sense of reality in our suppressed hostility to death and in our embarrassed incuriosity about what lied beyond. If our human need for immortality is driven underground, it will probably erupt into idolatry or superstition” (p. 141).
and incuriosity and institutionalization were the means by which the individual face of death was blurred. The word institutionalization, however, might be viewed as belonging to the professional vocabulary (scientific, medical, etc.).

The third sentence continues the strategy of using metaphorical language when speaking about the reaction of the Western culture to death. It might be viewed as summarizing the ideas introduced in the first and second sentences of the paragraph. The sentence itself is rather vague, it mentioned “shadows that dwarf the substance”. Apparently, the word “substance” referred to the awareness and acceptance of one’s finitude and “the shadows” to the tendency of the Western culture to deny death. This metaphor is based on the contrast between the object and its insubstantial shadow. However it might also be viewed as referring to the “light-dark” family of metaphors, which Osborn (1967) describes as “archetypal”, grounded in prominent features of human experience and therefore very persuasive, popular in discourse and immune to changes wrought by time (p. 116).

The next sentence marked the transition from the first part of the paragraph, where the notion of the Western taboo of death was introduced with the help of metaphorical language to the second part:

Concern about death has been relegated to the tabooed territory heretofore occupied by diseases like tuberculosis and cancer and the topic of sex.

In this sentence Herman Feifel established a link between the taboo on death and other types of taboos, first of all with that of sexuality (as the final position of the expression suggested). Similarly to the previous sentences of the paragraph, this idea was expressed quite vaguely. The use of passive voice of the verb “relegate” made it unclear, who relegated concern about death to the tabooed territory (another metaphor) and how exactly it was accomplished. It is interesting to note that although tuberculosis and cancer are diseases leading to death, even synonyms for death to many people (for example, Koocher, 1986), the author did not link the alleged taboo on these diseases with the taboo on death and did not explain the possible reasons for these taboos. The link between the taboo on sexuality and taboo on death established in this sentence is in my opinion very important. Discussion of taboo of death as related to taboo on sexuality helps the author to make the idea of taboo on death sound more convincing: repression of sex, its
manifestations and consequences have been propounded by psychoanalysis that also suggested the ways of its diagnostics and treatment. The idea of repression of sexuality, as I tried to show in the Chapter 5, has been established in the public discourse and widely discussed in the media. The link between the taboo on death and taboo on sex helped to legitimize the concept of repression of death. The sentence that followed seemed to support this line of reasoning.

We have been compelled, in unhealthy measure, to internalize our thoughts and feelings, fears, and even hopes concerning death.

The verb “internalize” is clearly a psychological term and the adverbial “in unhealthy measure” contains an evaluation of this internalization from the point of view of mental health professional. This adverbial suggests that internalization up to a certain degree might be healthy, but in the case of Western repression of death it is not so and this situation needs the psychological expertise to be assessed and rectified. As I tried to argue earlier, this move might be viewed as an attempt to extend the power and expertise of mental health professionals to the areas related to death and dying. The verb “compelled” suggested that some external force drove “us” to repression of death, but what kind of force or entity it was, was not clearly stated in the text. The inclusive pronoun “we” used in this sentence help the author to construct himself and the readers as sharing the same unhealthy mental trait: repression of thoughts and feelings related to death. However the choice of the verb (“compel”) might suggest that repression of death is something that happened to people (rather than something they were doing themselves) and against which they did not have power and means to protect themselves.

The concept of Western taboo on death introduced by Herman Feifel in the book is a very broad generalization. It was constructed by Feifel as a part of binary opposition “taboo versus awareness”, which presupposed a single, unified reaction to death ascribed to the Western culture as whole (totality of the taboo). In the following two sentences the author tried to support the idea of taboo on death by referring to the other essays published in the volume:

As some of the book’s contributors indicate, profound contradictions exist in our thinking about the problem of death. Our tradition assumes that “man is both terminated by death and capable of continuing in some other sense beyond death.”
The quotation in the sentence starting with “Our tradition…” was taken from the Discussion by Gardner Murphy published in the same volume (Murphy, 1959, p. 333). Murphy considered the idea of contradiction in the thinking about the problem of death in the final part of his article, where he draw conclusions from contributions to the volume and also introduced the topic of life after death and parapsychology as valid subjects for psychological research. The sentence by Murphy can be considered as a part of rhetorical work aimed at legitimizing these concepts.

Finally, the paragraph ends with the following sentence,

Death is viewed on the one hand as a “wall,” the ultimate personal disaster, and suicide as the act of a sick mind; on the other, death is regarded as a “doorway,” a point in time on the way to eternity.

The idea of death being a “doorway” appeared in the 1957 article by Herman Feifel published in the volume Clues to suicide (p.55). The full text of this extract can be found in the footnote. In his article Feifel referred to his research in progress where he singled out four types of attitudes to death (death as a doorway to a new life, death as a rest/sleep, death as an adventure, and also fight against death). These attitudes reflected the pattern found in responses of the participants and were not constructed as being in opposition to each other. However in the Introduction to the volume The Meaning of Death - as I tried to show earlier in this chapter- Herman Feifel used various rhetorical means to construct the taboo on death and death awareness as a dichotomy and attitude to death in the Western culture (where it was assumed that death marked the end of life and also its continuation in some form) as internally contradictive. The concept of death being “a doorway” was paired in this text with the concept of death as a “wall”, which was not identified in the data provided by the participants in the 1957 study and did not appear in earlier publications by Feifel. As I tried to show earlier, in the first part of paragraph Herman Feifel introduced the topic of repression of death using metaphorical style of writing. In the second part

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89 In the article “Some aspects of the meaning of death” Feifel wrote: “Research in progress indicates that people respond differently to oncoming death. For most religious persons, death represents “the dissolution of bodily life” and “the doorway to a new life.” For some, death is a “rest” and “peaceful sleep” (it is interesting to note that in Homer’s Iliad, Sleep [Hypnos] and Death [Thanatos] are alluded to as twin brothers); also, the emphasis in our experimental populations on dying “at night while asleep” should be noted. To others, death is perceived as an adventure— so well expressed in Lord Balfour’s dying words, “This is going to be a great experience.” Then there are those who put up a desperate fight against death—so beautifully described by Dylan Thomas, the Welsh poet, “Do not go gentle into that good night… rage, rage, against the dying of the light.” (p. 55).
of the paragraph he supported his thesis with more rational arguments like reference to the articles of the other contributors to the volume.

The idea of the Western repression of death was briefly mentioned in the final part of the Introduction, after the discussion of contributions to the volume and it was constructed there as if it pertained to the volume as a whole. This allowed Feifel to merely mention it and not to provide evidence in favor of this thesis, because the whole volume composed of 18 essays written by different authors and representing different disciplines was constructed as providing this kind of evidence. This might indicate the importance of the idea of taboo on death for Herman Feifel and his willingness to promote this idea despite lack of the evidence in favor of it. His strategy seemed to be successful: the idea of death taboo being a central topic of this volume was often quoted with the reference to this paragraph (for example, Benoliel, 1997; Laderman, 2000; Staudt, 2009).


Herman Feifel used similar strategies in construction of repression of death in his essay written for the volume The Meaning of Death. Here the idea of repression of death was developed in the fourth paragraph and I would like to discuss this and following paragraph in some detail. The paragraph run as followed:

Death is one of the essential realities of life. Despite this, camouflage and unhealthy avoidance of its inexorableness permeate a good deal of our thinking and action in Western culture. Even the words for death and dying are bypassed in much of everyday language by means of euphemisms. It is not the disquieting, “I die,” but rather the anonymous, “one passes on,” “one ends his days.” The Christian Science Monitor, one of our outstanding newspapers, did not permit the word to be mentioned on its pages until recently. American movies, for the most part, shy away from tragedy and death and give us “happy endings.” Forest Lawn, a cemetery in Los Angeles, proudly claims to minister “not to the dead, but to the living.” And one of our industries has as its major interest the creation of greater “lifelike” qualities in the dead. Geoffrey Gorer, the English anthropologist, has commented [13] that death has become, in a certain sense, as
unmentionable to us as sex was to the Victorians. He points out that in the nineteenth century most Protestant countries would seem to have subscribed to Pauline beliefs concerning the sinfulness of the body and the certainty of an afterlife. With the weakening of these concepts in the twentieth century, there appears to be a concomitant decrease in the ability of people to contemplate or discuss natural death and physical decomposition.

It is interesting to note that the idea of repression of death discussed in this paragraph seems to contradict the first and the second paragraphs of the essay that depicted death as highly visible, because people were constantly reminded about it in their everyday life (by life insurance, Memorial Day, the belief in immortality, etc.). The paragraph can be divided into two parts: in the first part the author presented the thesis of repression of death and provided arguments that testified to the effect that the taboo on death existed. In the second part he offered explanations for the emergence of this taboo. The idea of the Western repression of death in this extract was expressed in the following way:

Death is one of the essential realities of life. Despite this, camouflage and unhealthy avoidance of its inexorableness permeate a good deal of our thinking and action in Western culture.

The first sentence summarized the ideas on the importance of death for human functioning, which could be found in the previous paragraphs. It was used to connect this paragraph with the previous text and also as a starting point for the discussion of the repression of death: it allowed the author to create a contrast between the importance of death (the essential reality of life) and repression of death in the Western culture, which made the taboo look even more striking. The second sentence contained the claim that death in the Western culture was a subject of camouflage and avoidance. I think there are several important points that should be mentioned in relation to this sentence. Firstly, the sentence contained both a factual claim (Death was camouflaged and avoided in the Western culture) and its assessment (this camouflage and avoidance were unhealthy). Acceptance of the claim that death is repressed implies also a negative evaluation of its repression. Secondly, the pronoun “our” (“our thinking and action”) suggested that “us”, the Western culture, was a single entity, a unity, and as such has a single common reaction to death (camouflage and avoidance). The use of this pronoun might be viewed
as the means that allowed the author to construct the taboo on death as something widely spread and obvious. Finally, it is interesting to note that the subject of this sentence were abstract nouns “camouflage and unhealthy avoidance”, which “permeate” our thinking and action in Western culture. In this sentence (as well as throughout the paragraph) the author did not attribute the action of denying, avoiding or camouflaging to the actual people, rather he used abstract and noun-based language to speak about repression of death, reified it. This description of taboo on death seems to be similar to the Freudian description of repression proper in that it constructed repression/taboo as if it were a thing, which can affect people’s mental health, do harm to them (Billig, 2013, p. 102). Reification in description of taboo on death or death denial allowed Feifel to construct taboo on death as existing and also as a phenomenon, which can be described in scientific language and thus sanctified by the authority of science. It also allowed him to avoid discussion of the ways repression of death was performed by people on the daily basis and relived him from the burden of proof that taboo on death existed in reality. This discussion, as I will try to show later in the text, was substituted by metonymic argumentation. Also, reification of repression of death allowed Feifel to construct this phenomenon as a part of binary opposition “repression-awareness”, as I will try to show further in the chapter.

In the following part of the paragraph Herman Feifel offered evidence that the taboo on death existed in reality. I would like firstly to briefly discuss the individual arguments in favor of the idea that death was repressed and then to consider the way Feifel depicted the Western attitude to death in this extract as a whole. The first argument in favor of the taboo on death was linguistic:

Even the words for death and dying are bypassed in much of everyday language by means of euphemisms. It is not the disquieting, “I die,” but rather the anonymous, “one passes on,” “one ends his days.” The Christian Science Monitor, one of our outstanding newspapers, did not permit the word to be mentioned on its pages until recently.

The author constructed the existence of euphemisms of death as a sign indicating that death was denied. According to him, euphemisms allow people not to apply the idea of death to themselves (“It is not the disquieting, “I die”…”), but to perceive death impersonally, as related to someone else. To support this idea Feifel also quoted an example of a newspaper the The Christian Science Monitor, which allegedly did not allow the word death to be mentioned on its pages.
This idea seemed to originate in the essay “the Pornography of Death” by Geoffrey Gorer (1955). In the essay Gorer wrote:

It seems symptomatic that the contemporary sect of Christian Science should deny the fact of physical death, even to the extent (so it is said) of refusing to allow the word to be printed in the Christian Science Monitor (p. 51).

Gorer used this argument while speaking of the changing role of religion in the society of the time: the belief in the afterlife was vanishing even among religious people and without this belief the idea of natural death and decomposition became too horrible to contemplate and discuss. As an example Gorer referred to the sect of Christian Science that denied physical death and did not allow this word to be printed in Christian Science Monitor. In his essay Gorer did not present this idea as a fact and used the expression “so it is said” (which can be viewed as hedging (Hyland, 209)) to soften the categorical character of this claim and make rhetorically stronger. Herman Feifel, however, presented this statement as a fact, but limited it by indicating the time period (“until recently”). This might be viewed as an attempt to soften this statement and also to defend it against possible refutation: the word “recently” did not specify when exactly the prohibition was withdrawn.

The second argument was related to representation of death in the mass culture:

American movies, for the most part, shy away from tragedy and death and give us “happy endings.”

This argument seems to contradict the main idea expressed in the essay “The Pornography of Death” by Gorer, whose explanation of the repression of death Feifel quoted later in the paragraph. Unlike Feifel, Gorer stressed the increasing presence of violent death in the media (the pornography of death) and considered it to be a sign of repression of the natural death.

Finally, the third argument referred to funeral practices:

Forest Lawn, a cemetery in Los Angeles, proudly claims to minister “not to the dead, but to the living.” And one of our industries has as its major interest the creation of greater “lifelike” qualities in the dead.
The first sentence of this extract seems to originate in the article “The World, the Flesh, and the Devil” by John K. Jessup published in the special Christmas edition of *Life* magazine (1955, p. 141). As I mentioned earlier in this chapter, some other expressions like “embarrassed incuriosity” used in this article by Jessup appeared in the Introduction to the volume *The Meaning of Death* by Herman Feifel. In his article Jessup discussed the challenges to faith American confronted despite religious revival. Speaking about “the challenge of the flesh” Jessup noted that the true health of the Christian soul also included a sense of the inner aim of life, the meaning of creation. However, amid so much health and comfort, the absence of interest in the question of life after death was a sign of danger. As the examples of this lack of interest in death Jessup referred to the Forest Lawn cemetery:

Forest Lawn proudly ministers “not to the dead, but to the living,” with sculptured denials and distortions of death that remind one of the Soviet attempt to achieve an Egyptoid immortality for the corpses of Lenin and Stalin.

In the last sentence of this extract Feifel mentioned the industry, the main interest of which was creation of greater “lifelike” qualities in the dead. This argument in favor of the existence of taboo on death first appeared in the essay by Gorer, where he noted that the art of the embalmers was “an art of complete denial” (p. 51).

To sum it up, the thesis that the repression of death existed was in this paragraph supported by three pieces of evidence: references to the language, funeral practices and mass culture. Some of these arguments seemed to be borrowed from the other sources (Gorer (1955), Jessup (1955)). It is also easy to notice that these arguments were essentially common sense arguments, they were not grounded in scientific research on this subject. In his argumentation Feifel presented individual facts and observations as if they stood for some bigger picture and were signs of the taboo, which was so obvious and so widely spread that it did not need elaborated argument to be proved. This way of argumentation might be viewed as a metonymic: “as death was repressed in these particular instances, so it was repressed in all other aspects of Western culture”.

As I argued earlier in this chapter, the origin of the idea of the Western taboo on death in today’s scientific and scientific popular literature can be traced back to the 1959 volume *The Meaning of Death* edited by Feifel and specifically to the *Introduction* and the essay written by Feifel for this
book. The question can be raised as to what discursive means Feifel used to portray this state of affair as believable? What practice of description made his version of the events convincing? In order to answer these questions, it is possible in my opinion firstly to invoke the concept of extreme case formulation (Pomerantz, 1986). According to Pomerantz (1986), extreme case formulations belong to the “practices of description” with the help of which speakers portray some state of affairs as believable and obvious or unreasonable and illogical, etc. Practices of description is a major resource with the help of which people try convince others to believe in an idea, support a project, buy a product, etc. Extreme case formulations contain “expressions which are semantically extreme, invoking the maximal or minimal properties of objects or events” (Whitehead, 2015, p.579). They usually (but not necessary) contain the extreme terms like “all”, “none”, “every”, “best”, “completely”, “always”, “nothing”, “everybody”, etc. As Edwards (2000) has pointed out, the notion of an extreme case formulation is “first and foremost a participants’ category, part of common sense” (p. 349). That is why the precise definition of extreme case formulations might not always be possible. In some cases, the sentences containing broad generalizations might be considered extreme formulations despite the fact that they may not include overt markers of extremity. As Pomerantz (1986) has shown, the extreme case formulations are often used for defending some position against refutation, for making complains and justifying factual claims. However in the words of Edwards (2000, p. 352) extreme case formulations can be “factually brittle” because it is easy to deflate them by providing a single exception. Thus the extreme case formulations are often taken nonliterally and perceived as an expression of speaker’s attitude rather than a genuine description of the world. The use of “softeners” (“mostly, “almost”, “few”, “hardly any”, etc.), as Edwards (2000) has pointed out, although make the claim weaker, paradoxically also make it rhetorically more robust because it becomes more difficult to refute it by citing one or two counterexamples.

Returning to the extract by Feifel, in the first part of the paragraph he presented his description of a state of affairs in the Western culture related to attitudes to death and characterized it as “camouflage and unhealthy avoidance. The sentence, where the author claimed that camouflage and unhealthy avoidance were features of the Western culture as a whole was a very broad generalization. The sentence also contained a softener “a good deal”, which – as Edwards (2000) pointed out- although made the author’s claim weaker, but strengthened it rhetorically: the softener “good deal” made it difficult to refute this statement by providing counterexamples and
thus made the claim easier to accept. The pronoun “our” (“good deal of our thinking and action in Western culture”) suggested that “we”, “the Western culture” was a single entity and that reacted to death in a single, unified way (by denying and repressing it).

The sentence that contained the first piece of evidence in favor of Western taboo on death (linguistic argument) started with the adverb “even” (“Even the words for death and dying are bypassed in much of everyday language by means of euphemisms”). As Snoeck Henkemans (2010) has noted, in an argumentative context the sentence containing adverb “even” indicated a more extreme case than the other sentences or propositions and thus this adverb was often used to introduce the strongest argument: in everyday language words for death and dying are substituted with euphemisms. This statement contains a very broad generalization and might imply that words for death and dying were avoided in all situations and by everybody. The adverb “even” might be viewed as an indication of extreme case formulation, which was used to defend the death denial thesis against possible challenges to its legitimacy (Pomerantz, 1986). The statement also contained the softener “much” (“in much of everyday language”) making it rhetorically stronger. In the next sentence on the word “death” in The Christian Science Monitor, this newspaper was defined as “outstanding”, which might qualify this statement as another example of extreme case formulation: even one of the most prominent newspapers prohibited this word on its pages. The adverbial “until recently” might be viewed as softener in this context: as I tried to argue earlier, the word “recently” did not specify the time when the prohibition was lifted and allowed the possible counterexamples to be incorporated in the argument. It is interesting to note that Feifel placed the argument containing the adverb “even” at the beginning of his discussion of the taboo on death, though according to Snoeck Henkemans (2010) this kind of arguments can more often be found in the conclusion. Placing the strongest argument first set the tone for introducing other arguments and allowed the author to present fewer arguments and provide less support for them because the task of being the evidence of the taboo was already performed by the strongest argument. “Even” helped to construct these arguments as essentially unnecessary and to justify the sketchy and extractal character of the evidence. References to the American movies and “one of our industries” might be viewed along the same line as very broad generalizations. The sentence starting with “Forest Lawn, a cemetery in Los Angeles…” presented an individual fact, an advertising slogan of the cemetery, as if it stood for the whole industry. This argument in favor of the taboo can be viewed as metonymic.
Using the extreme case formulations limited by softeners and also metonymic argumentation allowed the author to paint the Western taboo on death with a broad brush: single examples of dealing with death in the Western society were constructed as strong evidence in favor of the taboo, which made more detailed evidence unnecessary (as if the extreme examples spoke for themselves). Extreme case formulations in the argumentations allowed the author to limit his argument to the common sense arguments.

In the second part of the paragraph the author tried to explain the taboo and referred to the essay by Gorer:

Geoffrey Gorer, the English anthropologist, has commented [13] that death has become, in a certain sense, as unmentionable to us as sex was to the Victorians. He points out that in the nineteenth century most Protestant countries would seem to have subscribed to Pauline beliefs concerning the sinfulness of the body and the certainty of an afterlife. With the weakening of these concepts in the twentieth century, there appears to be a concomitant decrease in the ability of people to contemplate or discuss natural death and physical decomposition.

The original extract from the essay by Gorer (1955) can be found in the footnote. Gorer in this extract compared the contemporary attitudes to death with the Victorian repression of sexuality and suggested that weakening of beliefs in immortality might be a reason for the repression of death. Herman Feifel cited the essay by Gorer to support his claim that death was repressed with the reference to the authority and used several strategies to construct Gorer as an authority in the subject. Firstly, in the beginning of the sentence the full name (Geoffrey Gorer) was mentioned, followed by the definite description: “the English anthropologist”. The study of definite article and definite descriptions in the English language has a long tradition not only in linguistics but also in philosophy and logics and can be traced back to the 1905 article by B. Russel “On

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90 In his essay Gorer wrote: “It seems possible to trace a connection between the shift of taboos and the shift in religious beliefs. In the 19th century most of the inhabitants of Protestant countries seem to have subscribed to the Pauline beliefs in the sinfulness of the body and the certainty of the after-life. “So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory.” It was possible to insist on the corruption of the dead body, and the dishonour of its begetting, while there was a living belief in the incorruption and the glory of the immortal part. But in England, at any rate, belief in the future life as taught in Christian doctrine is very uncommon today even in the minority who make church-going or prayer a consistent part of their lives; and without some such belief natural death and physical decomposition have become too horrible to contemplate or to discuss” (p. 51).
denoting” (Epstein, 2002). The researchers usually stress familiarity or uniqueness in their analysis of the definite descriptions: the object identified by the definite article is supposed to be either familiar within the discourse or uniquely identifiable to the hearer (Birner and Ward, 1994). In the sentence by Herman Feifel the definite article in the phrase “the English anthropologist” might be viewed as an indication of uniqueness of Gorer and convey his special status and authority, thus making his ideas more trustworthy and persuasive. The phrase “an English anthropologist” in the same context might mean that Gorer one of many anthropologists and would simply indicate his occupation, rather than his special status.

Secondly, it might be important to consider the choice of reporting verbs used to present the ideas of Gorer. Reporting verbs are subtle, but powerful way of expressing author’s position in academic discourse: the choice of reporting verb allows the author to indicate whether the claims in the reported message should be taken as accepted or not (Hyland, 1999). Thompson and Ye (1991) suggested a complex model of classification of reporting verbs: one of the two dimensions of the model was denotation (what kind of action the verb reports), the other- their evaluative potential. The evaluative potential indicated among other features the attitude of the author toward validity claim of the information he presented. The first reporting verb used by Feifel was “commented”. This verb was relatively neutral and did not seem to contain any evaluation. It belonged to the group of verbs that were used to introduce reported speech in any context. However the second reporting verb “points out” contained positive evaluation and indicated that the author marked the opinion of Gorer as true (Thompson and Ye, 1991, p. 372). Also, the tense of the reporting verbs might be important here. According to Swales (1990), “the tense choice may indicate something of the author’s stance towards the cited work”. (p. 154) He considered the strategic tense choice in reporting verbs using the example of the same sentence with the reporting verb in the Past Indefinite, Present Perfect and Present Indefinite tenses and suggested that progression from the first to the last example indicated increasing proximity. The past tense of the reporting verb might help to construct the reported information as more “remote”, placing the cited author’s work in a historical context or preparing the ground or critical discussion. It is interesting, that Feifel used the first reporting verb in the Present Perfect tense (“has commented”) and then switched to the Present Indefinite (“points out”), which can indicate increased “proximity” (in terms of Swales). In the first sentence of the extract the Present Perfect tense and also the choice of a neutral reporting verb (“has commented”) might
indicate the attempt of Feifel to construct Gorer’s claim that “death has become, in a certain sense, as unmentionable to us as sex was to the Victorians” as objective and also to rhetorically strengthen this broad generalization. The limiting modifying phrase “in a certain sense” was added by Feifel and cannot be found in the Gorer’s text. The modifier here might be viewed as contributing to the same goal of rhetorically strengthening the death denial thesis and protecting it against the possible counterexamples. However the Present Indefinite tense in the second sentence might emphasize the relevance and importance of Gorer’s explanation to the discussion of the repression of death and also positive evaluation of this explanation. I think that it might be important to note here that it was Herman Feifel who introduced the essay by Gorer on the pornography of death to academic writing on the subject of death as a legitimate text: the basic analysis of citations of the essay using Google Scholar shows that in the 1950s and up to the middle 1960s, in other words, 10 years after the essay had been published, “The Pornography of Death” was quoted in the scholarly literature only by Herman Feifel. Feifel seemed to provide legitimacy to this essay as an academic text and it was quoted as such by other scholars along with the publications by Feifel. Basically, Feifel constructed Gorer an authority in the field whose work could be cited in order to support the claim that death was repressed.

Finally, I would like to discuss the body of the argument. The first sentence summarized the thesis of Gorer that “death was unmentionable to us as sex was to the Victorians”. This thesis buttressed by the authority of Gorer (as I tried to show earlier) could be viewed as another strong argument in favor of the taboo on death. Although Gorer used the word “taboo” as applied to the Western repression of death throughout the essay, Feifel chose to cite another word used by Gorer, “unmentionable” (“death has become, in a certain sense, as unmentionable to us as sex was to the Victorians”). However Gorer in his essay used the word “unmentionable” in inverted commas and not as adjective, but as a substantivized adjective (for example, “For the greater part of the last two hundred years copulation and (at least in the mid-Victorian decades) birth were the “unmentionables” of the triad of basic human experience… (p. 50)). This usage, as I tried to argue in the chapter 6, reflected the understanding the concept of taboo in the anthropology of the time. By removing the quotation marks and using the word “unmentionable” as an adjective Feifel made the Gorer’s claim less radical and easier to accept. The use of a neutral reporting verb and a softener “in a certain sense” could be viewed as performing a similar task. In this sentence Feifel (following Gorer) brought together the repression of sexuality and the repression
of death. The word “Victorian” (used by both Gorer and Feifel) might be viewed as pointing at the “model repression”, the Victorian repression of sex, which -as I tried to show in the chapter 5 on the notion of repression in the *Time* magazine-had become a common place in the public discourse of the time. Comparing the repression of death with that of the “model”, “publically accepted” Victorian repression of sex suggested the reality of repression and this makes it easier for Feifel to argue that the object of repression has changed over time.

In the next sentence Feifel closely paraphrased the corresponding sentence by Gorer and following Gorer applied the adjective “Pauline” as to the religious beliefs in the Protestant countries in the 19th century (“Pauline beliefs concerning the sinfulness of the body and the certainty of an afterlife”). The word “Pauline” (related to Apostle Paul, his epistles and doctrine) is clearly a specialized term belonging to the professional vocabulary of such disciplines as theology, Biblical studies, history. Using this term in the argument on repression of death added value and authority to Gorer, to whom the citation was attributed, and as a consequence made his thesis more authoritative and persuasive. It is interesting to note that after the word “Pauline” had first appeared in the 1959 article, Feifel used it several times in his subsequent publications in similar phrases (for example, in Feifel, 1961a, p. 64; 1963a, p.447; 1965c, p. 30 ; and 1969c, p. 673). This might indicate the importance of the religious explanation of the taboo on death for Feifel and also the importance of the effect produced by insertion of this theological term into academic publication in psychology. Using the theological concept might be viewed as adding to the voice of a general intellectual in this and other publications by Feifel. It is interesting to note that in the earlier articles (Feifel, 1961a, 1963a) Feifel referred to Gorer while mentioning “Pauline beliefs concerning the sinfulness of the body and the certainty of an afterlife”, whereas in the later articles (Feifel, 1965c, 1969c) this reference was omitted and the sentence containing the word “Pauline” thus was constructed as belonging to Feifel himself.


In this section I will try to answer the question as to what type of texts Introduction and the essay “Attitudes Toward Death in Some Normal and Mentally Ill Populations” were and whether we can view them as belonging to the genre of academic prose. Firstly I would like to discuss the Introduction to the volume that opens with the following epigraph written both in Hebrew and in English:
“What man shall live and not see death?” (Psalms 89:49)

It is a quotation from the Psalm 89, which states the inevitability of death for all people. It might be important to note here that epigraphs are relatively rare in academic discourse (they are very uncommon in the empirical articles, but more common in academic monographs) and usually are not expected there (Katriel and Sanders, 1989). It might be interesting to reflect, what purpose might the epigraph, the quotation from the Psalm, serve here. In my opinion, it firstly contributes to the creation of the ethos of writer, in other words, it contributes to creation of the attributes of the writer – as manifested in the text- which can make his message persuasive (Jasinski, 2001, p. 229). Using this quotation as an epigraph and also quoting the Hebrew text in parallel with the English one, Feifel signalized to the readers that he was in fact much more than just a research and clinical psychologist at Veterans Administration Mental Hygiene Service as his title in the list of contributors to the volume suggested. Rather he was an intellectual of the rank of the distinguished contributors to the volume Carl Jung and Paul Tillich and this added value and authority to his message. Secondly, the epigraph in my opinion set the tone in understanding the whole volume as an important book aimed at a general reader, rather than at some specific professional audience. Together with the title of the book The Meaning of Death, which, as I mentioned earlier, initially sounded in a more scholarly way as Psychology of Death and Dying, the epigraph conveyed the message that a general reader might find here answers to some very important existential questions, also addressed in the Scriptures. As a part of the introduction to the book, the epigraph might have contributed to a quite pragmatic purpose of promoting the book (as a product) on the market (Bhatia, 1997). Also, quoting the Hebrew text in 1959, in the atmosphere of antisemitism in the US (Dinnerstein, 1987) might allow the author to present himself as a liberal and unprejudiced.

In the first paragraph of the Introduction we can find a sentence: “We can postpone, gain reprieves, but ultimately we all must die, hora incerta, mors certa.” It contained a Latin saying “Hora incerta, mors certa” (The hour of death is uncertain, but death is certain)\(^\text{91}\), however no translation was provided for the quotation. Moreover, Feifel did not indicate in what language

\(^{91}\) This saying is more often used as “Mors certa, hora incerta”. It was often quoted as an inscription on the old watches (Lautenbach, E. (2002), p. 471) and most probably was derived from the quotation from Cicero’s “De Senectute”/On Old Age: “Moriendum enim certa est, et id incertum, an hoc ipso die.” (For it is certain that we must die, and, for aught we know, this very day) (Loeb Classical Library, 1923, p. 74)
this quotation was written. As Atkins and Finlayson (2016) pointed out, “from the rhetorical perspective, quotation worked only to the extent that it, or its source, was recognized and approved of by the audience that was to be persuaded by it” (p. 167). So obviously the Latin saying in this sentence was not used to directly support the claim of the author, because at least certain percentage of readers was possibly not capable of understanding it. However it had contributed to the ethos of the author as an intellectual of outstanding knowledge, who also had education in the Classics, and to whom the meaning of Latin aphorisms was so obvious, that he would not even consider translating them. Here it is possible to establish connection between the way Feifel used another ancient language in this extract, namely, Hebrew in the epigraph. The fact that Feifel used Latin in the body of the text might have an effect on the perception of the Hebrew quotation: the use of Hebrew might be viewed here not an indication of religious belonging, but rather as a demonstration of familiarity with a wide range of ancient languages, a characteristic feature of classical education. This strategy might be also perceived also serving the goal of identification with the reader: it was preceded by the pronoun “we” in the first part of the sentence (“we can postpone”, “we all must die”), and flattered the readers by implying they were equal to the author in education and did not need a translation for a Latin saying. However, Feifel here nevertheless seems to demonstrate his superiority in knowledge of ancient languages and rather promotes himself as an intellectual.

In the same paragraph there is another sentence that attracted my attention: “There is a sardonic Viennese saying, “So many people now die who never died before.” Firstly, this saying does not seem to be specifically Viennese. It is most often quoted as an example of an old Irish bull, “verbal blunder or formally illogical statement, not necessarily intentionally humorous, which seems to collude with the patronizing and dismissive stereotype of the Irishman as amiably muddle-headed and dull-witted” (Vance, 2014, p. 50). Bulls, has been associated with the Irish people (usually of lower classes) ill at ease with the standard English (Earls, 1988). In the article by Kirke (1889) on wit and humor this expression was put in the mouth of an Irish coroner who, while holding an inquest over a dead body, remarked to the jury “A great many people are dying this year who never died before” (p. 41). One can find this bull (attributed to an Irish doctor, a
Kerry doctor, a Limerick doctor, etc.) in the American magazines as early as 1866. In fact, this saying was quoted by the Austrian press in 1871 again as an example of a grim Irish joke of the cholera times, whereas in the modern German language media this aphorism is often attributed to Julian Tuwim, the Polish poet, who had included it in his satirical book of 1934. This saying seems to be quite common in the American English, especially in the African American Vernacular English (AAVE): for example I found it in the form “Folks are dying today that ain’t never died before…” in the book devoted to the heritage of the African Americans of the older generation (Wyatt Blair, 2010, p. 130). Also, this aphorism has been reportedly one of the favorite sayings of Ernest Hemingway (Baker, 2003, p. 335; Meyers, 1999, p. 240). The epithet “Viennese” here might imply European metropolitan sophistication and chic and also a link to Freudian Vienna and psychoanalysis, which contributes to creating an ethos of a writer: it conveys erudition, refinement and wit. It is also interesting to note that the quotations in first paragraph of the Introduction implied that the author knew at least three foreign languages (Hebrew of the epigraph, Latin, and German/Viennese dialect), which qualified him as an intellectual of an outstanding erudition. Further in the course of the same paragraph we can see a quotation of a maxim which belonged to the seventeenth century French writer and moralist, La Rochefoucauld. This quotation, the fourth one in this rather short paragraph, might also be viewed first of all as contributing to creation of the ethos of the author as a highly cultured person, an intellectual.

However in the following paragraph of the Introduction Herman Feifel presented himself not only as a person of outstanding erudition, but also as a scientist. He draw from the vocabulary of psychology (“prototype of human anxiety”, “present behavior”, “orientation toward future evens”, “the notion of individuality”) and also natural sciences (“distinguishing characteristics”, “contrast to other species”, “in chemistry and physics”, “a “fact” is always determined by…”).

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93 Morgen Post (2 October, 1871, p. 2); Grazer Zeitung (1 October, 1871, p. 3)
94 This quotation was first used by Feifel in his introductory speech at the 1956 symposium on death. Feifel wrote: “LaRochefoucauld, the 17th century French writer and moralist, said that man could no more look steadily at death than at the sun, but you will recall the ancient Greek legend of Perseus. He was able, without being turned into stone, to behold the head of the Gorgon Medusa reflected in a mirror given him by the Goddess Athena. Thus, he succeeded in slaying the dreadful monster. I have no illusions about our slaying the monster this morning. I trust, however, that as a result of our miniature mirror we may be able to look him in the eye a little more squarely.”
This change in the discourse might contribute to his ethos as a scientist and not only add credibility to his arguments in support of the idea of the importance of death awareness and inadequacy of death denial, but also bolster his arguments concerning the existence of Western taboo on death. This switch from one type of discourse to another might mark the change of Feifel’s rhetorical voice, or rhetorical persona in the text of the introduction. The first rhetorical persona, an intellectual, a person that possesses outstanding erudition and also wit, is succeeded in this paragraph by the rhetorical persona of an academic psychologist, a scientist, who draws from professional scientific discourse.

One can distinguish the two rhetorical personas of Herman Feifel throughout the text of the Introduction. For example, discussing the Western repression of death in the final part of the Introduction Herman Feifel wrote: “Denial and avoidance of the countenance of death characterize much of the American outlook.” It might be interesting to take a closer look at the wording of the RoD thesis here: Feifel used the words “denial” and “avoidance of the countenance of death” in this sentence. The first word might be perceived as a part of psychoanalytic discourse, whereas the expression “avoidance of the countenance of death” might look slightly archaic and characteristic rather for the religious literature (for example, this expression was used in the English translation of the famous book *Christians defense against the fears of death* (1651) by Charles Drelincourt). The idea of repression of death in this sentence was constructed as belonging both to scientific psychological and religious discourses and supported by their authority. This allowed the author to present this idea as valid and credible.

Next I would like to continue the discussion of ethos and genre in relation to the essay “Attitudes toward death in some normal and mentally ill populations”. Here we can find a very similar picture and distinguish the two voices or rhetorical personas of the author, the first of them being the voice of academic psychologist who draws from the psychological and psychoanalytic discourse. The second voice reflected the position of an intellectual, a widely educated person.

The article opened as followed:

> A discerning passage from the Talmud states that “for all creatures, death has been prepared from the beginning.” To be alive is to face the possibility of death, of nonbeing. As far as we can determine, man is the only animal who knows consciously that he has to
die. Death is something which we all must, sooner or later, come to grips with. Life insurance, Memorial Day, the belief in immortality—all attest to our interest and concern. Historical and ethnological information [6] reveals that reflection concerning death extends back to the earliest known civilizations and exists among practically all peoples. Some investigators [7, 26] hold that fear of death is a universal reaction and that no one is free from it. Freud [12], for instance, postulates the presence of an unconscious death wish in people which he connects with certain tendencies to self-destruction. We have only to think of sports like bobsledding and bullfighting, the behavior of the confirmed alcoholic or addict, the tubercular patient leaving the hospital against medical advice, etc. Melanie Klein [17] believes fear of death to be at the root of all persecutory ideas and so indirectly of all anxiety. Paul Tillich, the theologian, whose influence has made itself felt in American psychiatry, bases his theory of anxiety on the ontological statement that man is finite, or subject to non-being [24]. Others [15] feel that time has meaning for us only because we realize we have to die. Stekel [21] went so far as to express the hypothesis that every fear we have is ultimately a fear of death (p. 114).

The first paragraph of the article is a modified introductory paragraph, which first appeared in the 1955 article by Herman Feifel. In the opening sentence Herman Feifel quoted from the Talmud, the statement “for all creatures, death has been prepared from the beginning”. The quotation from the Talmud appeared in the writing Herman Feifel for the first time. The following two sentences might be perceived as interpreting this quotation and building on it. However the third sentence of the paragraph on man being the only animal who knew consciously that he had to die (as I have shown in the Appendix 2) had already appeared in the publications of Herman Feifel in 1956 and it was not used in relation to the Talmud, but in relation to the medieval German epic Ackerman aus Bohmen (p. 127). This might signify the importance of the reference to the Talmud for the author and also contributed to his ethos of an intellectual who possessed an outstanding broadness of knowledge which allowed him to approach such a complex phenomenon as death. However it is interesting to note that Feifel did not provide any reference to the part of the Talmud he was quoting or to the secondary literature where this quotation can be found.
The following part of the paragraph had already appeared in the 1955 article by Feifel (p. 375). Some of the sentences were used with modifications, for example “All of us, at one time or another in life, come to grips with the problem of death” (Feifel, 1955, p. 375) was transformed into “Death is something which we all must, sooner or later, come to grips with”. The others were used verbatim (“Historical and ethnological information reveals…”, “Some investigators hold…”,”Freud for instance postulates…”). In the middle of this paragraph Feifel inserted three new sentences (and edited out the sentence on Teicher). One of them was used to buttress the idea of Freud with the examples of self-destructive behavior (bobsledding, bullfighting, etc.) and the following two sentences quoted Melanie Klein and Paul Tillich’s ideas of death to the effect that death played an important role in human functioning. The following sentence had already appeared in the 1955 article, but in the 1959 version Feifel attributed this idea to “others” rather than for Heidegger as in the 1959 version. The final sentence was repeated almost without changes.

This paragraph can be viewed as a part of classical introduction to research article (Swales, 1990), where the author tries to create a research space for his study and to justify its importance. In this paragraph Feifel stated the importance of the subject of death for the human psyche and used two types of citations, integral and non-integral (Swales, 1990, p. 148). Integral citations are those in which the name of the cited author can be found in actual citing sentence as its element, whereas the non-integral citations contain the cited author in parenthesis or in superscript numbers. The choice of integral over non-integral forms of citation reflects greater emphasis on the reported author rather than the reported message. In the paragraph by Herman Feifel, the reference to “some investigators” might be viewed as stressing the importance of the message that “fear of death is a universal reaction”. However the names, which were better known to the non-specialist public (like Freud, Klein or Tillich) were used in the integral citations, which might be viewed as an identification strategy: the author appeals to the names of famous intellectuals and their authority in order to support his argument.

Feifel here not only briefly reviewed the psychological and psychoanalytic literature on death, but also touched upon the subject of death in the history and ethnology and in the religious text (the Talmud). In doing so he justified the relevance and importance of his work and also contributed to his ethos as a wide-ranging intellectual. As Hyland (2009) has noted, there is a
marketization involved in the process of arguing for relevance and novelty of the research which involved promotion of the study itself and also self-promotion of the author. In first paragraph these tasks were accomplished by stressing the importance of the subject of death for the human psyche and also by constructing the ethos of the author as competent professional and a highly educated intellectual. The use of the personal pronoun “we” in this paragraph (“Death is something which we all must, sooner or later, come to grips with”; “We have only to think of sports like bobsledding and bullfighting...”) might be viewed as the rhetoric of identification, which suggests a bond with the readers and constructs them as sharing common background knowledge and understanding with the author.

The second paragraph also first appeared in the 1955 article by Feifel. This paragraph was reprinted in the 1959 article with very few changes:

Death themes and fantasies are prominent in psychopathology. Ideas of death are recurrent in some neurotic patients [5, 23] and in the hallucinations of many psychotic patients [3]. There are the stupor of the catatonic patient, sometimes likened to a death state and the delusions of immortality in certain schizophrenics. It may well be that the schizophrenic denial of reality functions, in some way, as a magical holding back, if not undoing, of the possibility of death. If living leads inevitably to death, then death can be fended off by not living. Also, a number of psychoanalysts [11, 19, 20] are of the opinion that one of the main reasons that shock measures produce positive effects in many patients is that these treatments provide them with a kind of death-and-rebirth fantasy experience.

In this paragraph Feifel stressed the importance of the topic of death in psychopathology and cited the previous research on this subject. One may notice that Feifel here once more switched to the rhetorical voice of a scientist and academic psychologist: he quotes relevant research in the field and draws from academic discourse while discussing them.

However in the third paragraph Feifel once more used the rhetorical persona of an intellectual:

In broader perspective—the meaning of death is no side issue but the central theme at the core not only of the Babylonian epic of Gilgamesh but of some of our most important present philosophic or religious systems, e.g., existentialism and its striking
preoccupation with dread and death; Christianity, where the meaning of life is brought to full expression in its termination. This orientation has enormous practical consequences in all spheres of life, economic and political, as well as moral and religious.

In the beginning of the paragraph the author mentioned the Babylonian epic of Gilgamesh and existentialism and stressed that death was a central topic for some of the most important philosophic or religious systems. It is interesting to note that the author decided to add this short paragraph to the core introduction paragraphs, which had already appeared in the previous publications (Feifel, 1955, 1957) and seemed to successfully perform the task of introducing the same research projects on attitudes to death carried out by Feifel. This paragraph did not contain any essentially new information (for example, about the new studies on the subject of death), rather it can be viewed as elaboration on the first paragraph, especially the sentence “Historical and ethnological information reveals that reflection concerning death extends back to the earliest known civilizations and exists among practically all peoples.” Addition of this paragraph to the text might have performed several functions: Firstly, the mentions of existentialism, Christianity and especially the epic of Gilgamesh helped to construct the author of the text not only as an academic psychologist, but also as a person of outstanding erudition, which allowed him to present his ideas (including the idea that death was repressed) as persuasive. However the author did not provide references or quotes from specific philosophers or texts, which is a normal practice in scholarly works on history, philosophy or theology. Secondly, it presented weighty arguments in favor of the idea that the subject of death was important topic for study: death was a key concept not only for psychology, but also for philosophy and religion. Here as I argued earlier Feifel once more switches to the voice of general intellectual who presents himself as familiar with wider philosophical, theological, historical sources, which are however not precisely quoted. Using the voice or rhetorical persona of general intellectual Feifel here flattered the readers by suggesting that they might also be intellectuals and might not require precise references to the texts that are familiar to them. The pronoun “our” (“our most important present philosophic or religious systems”) might be viewed here as a means of identification (Burke, 1950). I discussed this concept of Burke earlier in this chapter.

The next paragraph of the Introduction was relatively short:
The underemphasis on the place of the future in psychological thinking is surprising because, in many moments, man responds much more to what is coming than to what has been. Indeed, what a person seeks to become may, at times, well decide what he attends to in his past. The past is an image that changes with our image of ourselves. It has been said that we may learn looking backward—we live looking forward. A person’s thinking and behavior may be influenced more than we recognize by his views, hopes, and fears concerning the nature and meaning of death.

This paragraph in a slightly modified form appeared in the Introductory speech Herman Feifel held at the 1956 symposium on death. The extract about underemphasis of the future in psychological thinking formed a part of the second paragraph of the speech:

Historical and ethnological information reveals that reflection concerning death extends back to the earliest civilization and exists among practically all people. Some people feel that time has meaning for us only because we know we have to die. William Steckel went so far as to express the hypothesis that every fear we have is ultimately a fear of death. It is striking how little psychology speaks of the future. Yet, in many moments, man thinks incomparably more of what is to come than of what has been. It has been said that we may learn looking forward—we live looking forward. A person’s ideas and his behavior may be influenced more than we recognize by his views, hopes and fears, concerning the nature and meaning of death. This audience realizes only too well, for example, the prominence of death themes and fantasies in psychopathology. Ideas of death are recurrent in some neurotic patients and in the delusions and hallucinations of many psychotic patients.

Here Feifel is using the voice of general intellectual despite the fact that he was speaking about psychology. Rather he refers to psychology very broadly without quoting or referencing specific psychologists or psychology texts. The first, second and third sentences of the 1956 paragraph belonged to the core introduction and first appeared (in slightly different form) in the introduction to the 1955 article by Feifel (p. 375). These sentences were used to stress the

95 The first sentence “historical and ethnological information reveals” was not changed. The second sentence in 1956 became more generalized. Instead of Heidegger (“Heidegger states that time has meaning for us only because we know we have to die”) the author attributed idea on the meaning of time to “some people”. The third sentence had minor changes (instead of “goes so far” Feifel in 1956 used the verb “went so far”).
importance of concept of death for human psyche. Further in the paragraph Feifel placed the knowledge of one’s mortality within the broader context of knowledge about the future. This allowed him to present one more argument in favor of importance of the concept of death for human functioning. Also linking lack of research on death with underemphasis on the place of future in psychology made it possible to stress the gap not only in research on death but also in theoretical understanding of this subject in psychology. This made the symposium on death and the research projects on death carried out by Feifel look as an important contribution to the field. However in the 1959 article Feifel redistributed the parts of this paragraph. The first three sentences (the core introduction sentences) were re-untied with the rest of the 1955 paragraph and formed a part of the first paragraph of the essay. The extract on underemphasis of the concept of future formed the fifth paragraph. Placed after the discussion of Gorer’s ideas on weakening of Pauline beliefs concerning the sinfulness of the body, the discussion of the concept of future in psychology looks unconnected to line of reasoning in this extract. However the final sentence of the paragraph linked this discussion to the idea of death being a future of all people and made this paragraph another argument in favor of importance of the concept of death for human functioning.

The final paragraph of the Introduction started as follows:

Both theology and philosophy have grappled with the problem of death and its meaning. A review of the psychiatric and psychological literature, however, highlights the lack of any systematic endeavors to bring this area into the domain of controlled investigation. I want to indicate some general findings on attitudes toward death resulting from a continuing series of research investigations which I am now carrying on.

This paragraph in a slightly modified form had already appeared in the articles by Feifel published in 1955 (p. 375) and in 1957 (p. 51). In the 1955 article on attitudes of mentally ill patients toward death Feifel wrote:

Both theology and philosophy have grappled with the problem of death and its meaning. Nevertheless, a review of the literature indicates few studies of an empirical nature dealing with attitudes toward death. This is particularly true with reference to mentally ill persons. The author could find none which focused on hospitalized adult patients. The
studies that have been reported emphasize the attitudes toward death of children (16, 18), college students (2, 15, 20), and a small number of psychoanalyzed neurotic patients (3) in whom ideas of death were noticeable.

A very similar paragraph appeared also in the Introduction to the 1957 article. It is interesting to note that here Feifel changed his rhetorical voice within a paragraph: he started the paragraph using the voice of general intellectual while talking about theology and philosophy in general and then switched to discussing the specific scholarly article for which he provided references. The first sentence of the 1955 and the 1959 versions of paragraphs was exactly the same: the author stressed the importance of the problem of death for theology and philosophy. The verb “grapple” also suggested that death might not be an easy concept to study. Then in the 1955 version Feifel noted that there were only a few empirical studies on the problem of attitudes to death, mostly dealing with that in children, students and psychoanalyzed neurotic patients. However no study had been conducted on attitudes to death in hospitalized mentally ill patients, which was the subject of the 1955 article by Feifel. The rhetorical moves in this paragraph conformed to the classical model of a typical introduction to a research article (“Create-a-Research-Space” (CARS)) suggested by Swales (1990): Feifel briefly reviewed the items of the previous research in the narrow field of studies of attitudes to death and indicated a gap in the knowledge on the subject, which his study attempted to fill (Move 2 “Establishing a niche” according to Swales).

However the 1959 version of the paragraph looks different: after indicating the importance of the topic of death for philosophy and theology Feifel stated, that there was “the lack of any systematic endeavors to bring this area into the domain of controlled investigation”. Analyzing this description of the state of affairs in the field of death studies I would like once more to use the notion of “extreme case formulation” (Pomerantz, 1986; Edwards, 2000). The expression “lack of any systematic endeavors” might be viewed as an example of an extreme case formulation. The sweeping nature of this generalization was however softened by the adjective

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96 In the introduction to this article Feifel wrote, “Both theology and philosophy have grappled with the problem of death and its meaning. Nevertheless, a review of the literature indicates few studies of an empirical nature dealing with attitudes toward death. The author, for example, could find none which focused on hospitalized mentally ill patients or persons sixty-five years of age and over. The studies that have been reported emphasize the attitudes toward death of children (16, 18), college students (15, 20), and a small number of psychoanalyzed neurotic patients (3) in whom ideas of death were noticeable.” (Feifel, 1957, p. 51)
“systematic”, which would make it possible to construct counterclaims (existence of psychological studies on death in general and on attitudes to death in particular) as being “non-systematic”. The extreme case formulation here might be viewed as a tool to make the depiction of the state of death studies obvious and indisputable. The expressions “review of the psychiatric and psychological literature”, “systematic endeavors”, “the domain of controlled investigation” belong to scientific discourse. They contributed to creation of the ethos of the author as a scientist and made his statement on lack of research on the subject of death (“this area”) more convincing. It seems that the idea of taboo on death, which Feifel developed in the previous paragraphs allowed him to continue using broad generalizations and made it possible not only to construct attitude to death as a total taboo in the Western culture (as a part of a binary opposition taboo/awareness, as I tried to argue earlier), but also to indicate a total, complete lack of scientific knowledge and research on death. The phrase “continuing series of research investigations” in the next sentence contrasts with “the lack of any systematic endeavors” to research death and presents the three research projects of Feifel as the first truly scientific and systematic attempt to research the problem of death within psychology. Also, the personal pronoun I (“continuing series of research investigations which I am now carrying on”) in this context, as Harwood (2005) has shown, might help to construct the author as an authority and originator of the research indicate self-promotion. After this introduction further in the article Feifel discussed the results of his three research projects on death.

The two voices or two rhetorical personas were present not only in the introductory part, but also in the conclusion of the essay. For example, the following paragraph can be found at the concluding part of the essay after the presentation of the research data:

Along this line, I believe that the frenetic accent on, and continual search for, the “fountain of youth” in many segments of our society reflects, to a certain degree, anxieties concerning death. One of the reasons why we tend to reject the aged is because they remind us of death. Professional people, particularly physicians, who come in contact with chronically and terminally ill patients have noted parallel avoidance tendencies in themselves. Counterphobic attitudes toward death, for example, may be observed frequently among medical interns. Now this reaction on the part of the physician is understandable—the need to withdraw libido investment, the reality that
others may benefit more from his time, etc. But I would submit that some physicians often reject the dying patient because he reactivates or arouses their own fears about dying—that, in some, guilt feelings tied up with death wishes toward one’s own parents may play a role, not to speak of the wounded narcissism of the physician, whose function it is to save life, when he is faced with a dying patient who represents a denial of his essential skills. I think it would prove interesting to pursue the relationship aspect of choice of occupation here—where the “saving of life” is paramount, with the personal attitudes concerning death in physicians. In truth, most healthy people feel anxious and guilty at seeing someone else die. Being faced directly with the existential fact of death seems to cast a blight on ego functioning.

The first, second and third sentences of the paragraph could be found in the corresponding paragraph (the first paragraph of the conclusion) in the 1956 symposium presentation of Herman Feifel and also in the 1957 article by Feifel. In the 1956 and 1957 versions of this paragraph the three sentences were followed by the sentence, which contained the idea of repression of death: “Conscious denial of death permeates a good deal of our thinking”. This idea was developed further in the paragraph and supported by the arguments in favor of repression of death and also by reference to the essay by Gorer. However, as I mentioned earlier, Feifel transferred the part of the paragraph where he developed the idea of repression of death to the introduction and supported this idea by additional evidence and arguments. In the conclusion to the article the idea of the Western repression of death was not discussed in detail, rather it was mentioned in passing like in the first paragraph. The first sentence on “frenetic accent on, and continual search for, the “fountain of youth” in many segments of our society” was used to introduce the idea of repression of death in the earlier versions of the paragraph. It contained a broad generalization about the Western society as a whole softened by the adjective “many” and limiting qualifier “to a certain degree”, which strengthened this claim rhetorically. The word “frenetic” contained negative evaluation of the accent on the “fountain of youth” and as a consequence of the repression of death. Herman Feifel widely used the personal pronouns “we” and “our” throughout the paragraph. For example, in the second sentence he mentioned that “we tend to reject the aged”. This sentence is interesting because the questionable idea of rejection of the aged was followed by the explanation “because they remind us of death”, which presupposed that the rejection of the aged was an accepted fact and did not need to be supported by evidence.
However this idea was strengthened by the reference to the authority of the “professional people, particularly physicians” who also noticed that they were avoiding terminally ill patients. It is interesting to note that in this extract the author although criticized the rejection of the aged, in fact reinforced the negative stereotypes about the old age as an age of chronical illnesses and proximity to death: the paragraph started with the discussion of the attitudes of the ordinary people to the aged, but as an supporting evidence the author cited avoiding tendencies among the professionals towards terminally and chronically ill and thus linked the old age with chronical and terminal illnesses.

The first paragraph of conclusion in the 1957 article was preceded by the presentation of the results of Feifel’s study of the attitudes to death and old age in the elderly people and could be viewed as a continuation of author’s discussion of this issue and his attempt to make sense of these results within the broader context of society as a whole. The phrase “along this line” which opened the paragraph was indicating that the author was moving from presenting the results to their discussion. Further in the 1957 version of the paragraph the author moved from the very strong evidence of repression of death in a group of people (professionals, who noticed repression of death in themselves) to repression of death in the Western society as a whole. In the 1959 (and also in the 1956) version of the paragraph this logics of presentation was disrupted: the last paragraphs of the main section of the article were devoted to attitudes to death in the religious and non-religious young people and thus the connecting phrase “along this line” did not actually link the ideas in the conclusion (on the rejection of the aged) with the previous research.

Also, after presenting a striking example of rejection of the terminally ill among the professionals Feifel did not move to the broader generalizations on society as a whole. Instead he switched to professional psychological and psychoanalytic discourse and used the phrases like “counterphobic attitudes”, “withdraw libido investment”. These phrases do not seem to be intuitively understandable by the general reader, but they contribute to the ethos of the author as a mental health professional. The ideas that society as a whole and also health professionals in particular tend to repress death were used by the author here in order to introduce and justify the importance of the research hypothesis that physicians tend to repress death more than ordinary people, which was pursued in his next research project and published in 1967. Also, this line of reasoning allowed Feifel to note that death in fact might be repressed by all healthy people because “being faced directly with the existential fact of death seems to cast a blight on ego
functioning”. This idea contradicts not only the ideas on the specifically Western character of the repression of death expressed in the introduction to the article but also the ideas expressed throughout the introduction and conclusion that death was one of the essential realities of life and that “man can completely understand himself only by integrating the death concept into his life.”

Another paragraph, where we can find a similar pattern was paragraph four. This paragraph was as following:

The democracy of death encompasses us all. Even before its actual arrival, it is an absent presence. To deny or ignore it distorts life’s pattern. Some will say “Don’t waste time thinking about death—live well the time you have, forget that it ends. To remember that there is an end does something, in spite of good intentions, to cut the nerve of present effort.” But what kind of adaptation is it not to consider the end of individual consciousness, which is pertinent to every undertaking of the individual? Our concern with death is not the sign of a cult of indifference to life or a denial of it. Rather, in gaining an awareness of death, we sharpen and intensify our awareness of life. Augustine in his Confessions implies that it is only in the facing of death that man’s self is born. Man can completely understand himself only by integrating the death concept into his life. In the first century, Seneca, the Roman philosopher, put it this way: “No man enjoys the true taste of life but he who is willing and ready to quit it.” In 1956, the American poet Jesse Stuart [22], recovering from an almost fatal coronary attack, phrased it: “No man really begins to live until he has come close to dying.” One of Lael Wertenbaker’s perceptions in her book Death of a Man [25], a moving account of how her husband faced his impending death, is also relevant here. …

This paragraph seems not to be very well connected to the previous text: in the third paragraph the author discussed the necessity of discussing death with terminally ill patients. Also, this paragraph did not contain any formal markers of connection and thus might be placed in any part of the introduction or conclusion. The main idea of the paragraph might be expressed as “acknowledging one’s mortality is an important part of human functioning”. Feifel stressed this idea in the Introduction to the volume The Meaning of Death (in the opening and in the final paragraphs) and also in the introduction to his article in this volume. Basically, this idea was
included in almost every paragraph of the two texts, though the conclusion of the essay seem to be dedicated to it: Feifel discussed this idea in detail throughout the conclusion.

In my opinion, several issues might be important in relation to this paragraph. Firstly, the expression “an absent presence” as applied to death is an important concept borrowed from the 1953 book *The Experience of Death: The Moral Problem of Suicide* by Paul-Louis Landsberg, German Jewish existential philosopher who died in a concentration camp at the end of the war. Discussing death in human experience Landsberg stressed that death was in no sense linked with the process of growing old. Rather

“…I am face to face, at every moment of my life, now and always, with the immediate possibility of death. Death is very close to me. Human uncertainty with regard to death is not merely the result of a lacuna in biology, but also of my ignorance of my destiny, and even this “ignorance” is an act in which there is a presence as well as an absence of death. *Mors certa, hora incerta.* The dialectic of death is secret. It is an absent presence” (p. 6).

In the book by Landsberg the concept of “absent presence” indicates that death accompanies people every day of their life and to be aware of one’s mortality is a part of the human condition. However in the text by Feifel this expression seems to be taken out of context and changed its meaning. According to Landsberg, death as an “absent presence” cannot be “denied or ignored” as Feifel put it. It is a contradiction in definition, because “absent presence” means death awareness “now and always”, “at every moment of life”.

Second, in this paragraph Feifel creates the “straw reader” (“some”). This rhetorical manoeuvre has been already used in his Introduction to the volume *The Meaning of Death*, as I mentioned earlier in this chapter. Here the function of the “straw reader” might be similar to that in the introduction: it helped the author to construct his own arguments as important as if they contradict a widespread, but wrong belief that needs to be refuted. The “straw reader” here also allowed Feifel to once more repeat his arguments in favor of the idea that awareness of death is important for human functioning. This idea will be linked further in the text with the necessity of doing more research on the subject of death. Thus, the idea of importance of death
awareness in the texts of Feifel might be viewed as preparing the ground for the creation of thanatology as a discipline.

Finally, in this paragraph Feifel mentioned Augustine of Hippo, the early Christian theologian and philosopher, and his book *Confessions*, an account of his early life and confession to Christianity. He also mentioned Seneca, the Roman philosopher and Jesse Stuart, the American poet, providing a reference only to the book by Stuart. Here Feifel seems once more to switch to the rhetorical voice of an intellectual, who quotes with ease from a variety of sources from ancient philosophers and early Christian theologians to modern poets. The idea of the necessity and beneficial character of death awareness expressed from this position might be viewed as complementary to the similar discussion in the extract three. There Feifel argued that death was an important component of life using the second rhetorical persona, that of a scholar, a psychologist, and he draws from scientific discourse in order to support his position. Thus both rhetorical voices were used to support the important idea of the necessity of death awareness and as a consequence of academic research on this subject and creation of the new scientific discipline of thanatology.

### 7.8. Conclusion.

In conclusion, I would like firstly to take a closer look at how the Western repression of death was constructed by Herman Feifel in the volume *The Meaning of Death*. Speaking about how this idea was introduced in the volume, I would like to stress the importance of the position of the RoD thesis in the text: placing the discussion of the Western taboo on death in the introduction allowed the author to construct it as a common knowledge, as a concept that had already been established in the field and on which the author was basing his further reasoning and research. The discussion of the Western repression of death in the introduction facilitated the task of showing that repression of death in the Western society existed in reality and presented this idea as persuasive. It allowed the author to present some disconnected observations about the contemporary attitudes to death as if they stood for some bigger picture (metonymic argumentation) and also made it possible to use very broad generalizations speaking about it.

If we consider, how the idea of the Western repression of death was constructed by Herman Feifel, we need first of all to note that this construction was modelled after (and partly also borrowed from) Gorer’s ideas developed in his 1955 essay “The Pornography of Death. At the
time when Gorer wrote his essay, the notion of taboo began to mean something “slightly ridiculous, embarrassingly unscientific and an unnecessary consideration for an “enlightened” modern world” (Gilmore et al, 2013) and lifting the taboo became a synonym to progress. Feifel also followed this line of reasoning and constructed the repression of death or taboo on death as something unhealthy, “a form of ostrich adjustment”, “a fraud perpetrated on ourselves”. The manifestations of repression of death in the essay by Feifel, which were borrowed from the essay by Gorer, might be viewed as representing the anthropological view on the taboo.

In the text of the article Feifel presented the Western attitude to death as a part of a binary opposition “repression-awareness”, as a single, unified reaction of the Western society to the idea of death (which might also be modelled after the concept of taboo). It is interesting that in his essay and also in the Introduction to the volume Feifel discussed only individual mortality and passed over in silence the possibility of the collective mortality (for example, nuclear threat), which was a very important issue at the time and was discussed in the contemporary psychological literature on death and dying, as I tried to show in this chapter. In other words, Feifel discussed the collective repression of the individual mortality, which became a part of the collective unconscious. However the early writings of Feifel did not contain any indication as to how this repression was accomplished on the individual level, how people repress death. The nominalizations in the depictions of repression of death as I tried to argue earlier in the chapter allowed the author to discuss repression on an abstract, metaphorical level and avoid touching upon the mechanisms of repression. The way Feifel discussed the repression of death here might be viewed as similar to the way repression proper was discussed by Freud (Billig, 2011). Feifel offered the readers some manifestations of the repressed mortality (funeral practices, euphemisms for the word “death”, absence of death in the popular culture etc.), or better to say with the observations, which were presented as standing for the Western taboo on death. Western people according to Feifel had to deal with the consequences of the collective repression of death and to overcome them on an individual level, by increasing personal awareness of their own mortality. However, it is not immediately clear how one could become more aware of individual mortality and the early thanatological literature, stressing the importance of the topic of death for human functioning, does not discuss this issue. At the same time, the role of mental health professionals, the experts, who deal with the subject of death was constructed as increasingly important for the society. The idea of “death education” as a synonym of death studies or
thanatology, the necessity of this education as the way of overcoming the societal repression of death was discussed in the writings of Feifel in the early 1970s, further developed in the publications of Pine (1977) and become a part of the ideology of the death awareness movement as I tried to argue in the chapter 2 on the early history of death studies. Thus the idea of the taboo on death might be viewed not only as serving the purpose of promoting the volume *The Meaning of Death* (by appealing to conspiracy rhetoric as I mentioned earlier in the chapter) and also promoting of Herman Feifel not simply as a scholarly author but also as the founder of the death awareness movement, the movement that was designed to change the attitudes to death in the West. Thus in broader perspective, the idea of repression of death or taboo on death (as I argued in the chapter 5) grants the mental health professionals the authority and power over death related issues and gives them in the words of Hilgartner (1990, p. 534) “something akin to the epistemic equivalent of the right to print money”: it is up to them to decide what counts as repression of death, whether it is healthy or not, whether it should be combated and how.

Secondly, I would like to discuss the characteristic feature of the essay and the Introduction for the volume *The Meaning of Death*, namely the two rhetorical personae or two voices, which Herman Feifel used throughout his writings. The first voice – as I argued earlier in the chapter - could be defined as that of an academic psychologist. It is manifested first of all in the lengthy quotations/borrowings of Feifel from his own empirical articles published in the peer-reviewed journals in 1955 and 1956. The scientific voice speaks the language of knowledge and expertise: Feifel widely uses academic psychological discourse and quotes the authoritative figures in the field. His stance (Hyland, 2005), the way (academic) writer presents himself in the text as a “community recognized personality”, might be viewed as typical for scientific discourse: Feifel widely used hedges and attitude markers. His writing style also contained passive voice, impersonal constructions and nominalizations which allowed him to construct his claim (for example, the idea of the Western taboo on death) as the “scientific truth”.

The second voice might be defined rather as that of a general intellectual. This voice was marked first of all by changes in Feifel’s writing style: for example, he often used metaphorical language and also widely quoted important intellectual or religious figures (theologians, philosophers, poets, historical figures). In total, the conclusions and introductions of the two texts written by Feifel for the volume *The Meaning of Death* contained 17 references to and citations from
various non-psychological sources from the Hebrew Book of Psalms to La Rochefoucauld, the Talmud, Paul Tillich, the epic of Gilgamesh, existentialism, Christianity, Augustine of Hippo, the poet Jesse Stuart, Montaigne, Shakespeare, Lord Balfour, the poet Dylan Thomas, the general of the American War for Independence Ethan Allen, and also Goethe and Seneca.) In these extracts Feifel also implied knowledge of at least three foreign languages (Hebrew, German and Latin). It might be important to note that similar to the persona of the academic psychologist (which in many cases was constructed with the help of the quotations from the Feifel’s earlier empirical articles), the persona of the intellectual contained ideas and quotations borrowed from the writings of the other intellectuals (for example, from the article by Jessop (1955), the book by Landsberg (1953), etc.). The references to these sources were often omitted, conveying the impression that these ideas might belong to the author himself. It is also important that Feifel did not mentioned the exact sources of his quotations (book or article, part (for example, of the Talmud), page, etc.). These sources were not included in the list of references either (except for the references to Tillich and Augustine). This type of quoting is not typical for the academic literature on psychology (nor for academic writing history, theology, or philosophy) where the quotations are used first of all to support one’s claim or to demonstrate the familiarity with the field of inquiry (Atkins and Finlayson, 2016). In the writings of Feifel they may rather indicate the belonging of the author to a certain cultural community and contribute to his ethos of an intellectual. Also, taking a closer look at the way Feifel edited his texts might allow us to better understand the role these citations played in his writings. For example, the reference to the German epic Ackerman aus Bohmen was borrowed from the book by Kurt Eissler (1955) and first appeared in the 1956 article and conference presentation by Feifel. Later this reference was substituted for the reference to the Talmud in the otherwise very similar passage of the 1959 essay, which might testify to the effect that the author considered these two sources to be equally suitable for illustrating his point, and that in his choice of quotations he was often guided not by the contents of the source, but by some other considerations, for example, they might be related to self-presentation.

The polyphony of voices in the essay and Introduction for the volume The Meaning of Death (along with the information on the history and the purpose of volume which I tried to discuss in the Chapter 3) might serve as an indication that these writings might not be viewed as typical examples of the scholarly prose and that the essay “Attitudes Toward Death in Some Normal and
Mentally Ill Populations” cannot be classified as a research article proper. These observations might lead us to interesting theoretical considerations: we can consider the development of thanatology as a discipline from the point of view of genre and the interplay of different genres in it. The relations between scientific and popular scientific prose had first been studied within the so called “diffusionist model”. This model depicts science communication as a “one-way exchange of ideas from scientists to the public” (Paul, 2004) that is ‘totally and homogeneously’ ignorant about scientific knowledge. Popularization is aimed at bridging the ‘gap’ between science and lay audience, but scientific knowledge in this process is inevitably distorted, “vulgarised”. This model has been criticized since the early 1980s (Gieryn, 1983, Hilgartner, 1990, Myers, 2003). The main lines of criticism were connected firstly with the status of lay knowledge and the concept of knowledge production (lay knowledge is quantitatively different from scientific knowledge, it is not an impoverished version of expert knowledge). Secondly, it turned out that scientists did not depend that much on journalists and popularizers for science communication and were themselves involved in it. Moreover many scientists were willing to be visible in the media (Goodell, 1977).

The new model developed by Cloitre and Shinn (1985) advocated “public communication of science” rather than “scientific popularization”. Within this framework Cloitre and Shinn (1985) suggested a continuity model of science communication (instead of sharp distinction between science and popularization in diffusionist model). This model considered science communication as a continuum of texts with gradual differences in the way scientific ideas were presented and did not treat the public discourse as deficient and inferior in comparison with the scientific discourse. This model also allowed the researchers to speak about “deviations” from it. Deviations might happen in situations of crisis and are related to definition and negotiation of the boundaries of science or a specific discipline. Thus, in order to establish the discipline, scientists might consider the “bottom up way” and appeal to the public level in order to set the boundaries of the discipline and to prove its relevance to the society. The new discipline thus gains public recognition first and this provides a basis for its institutionalization. Boundary work is especially important for the newly emerging scientific disciplines unrecognized by scientific community and therefore lacking authority and prestige. The use of public level of scientific communication makes the task easier for the communicator: at this level it is not necessary to comply with the constraints of the professional academic discourse. The 19-th century German biologists for
example paid great attention to popularization of their work and thus generated public interest which led to institutionalization of biology (Bucchi, 1996). Evolutionary psychology represents a more recent example of boundary work on the popular level (Cassidy, 2005). The foundation of the discipline was laid by several popular books written by biologists and social scientists, where the authors tried to apply Darwinian ideas to the modern human behaviour. After debates in the mass media, in which both academics and members of the public took place, evolutionary psychology was eventually established as a new subject of study, a branch of social research in its own right. Thus the public discussion contributed to recognition of evolutionary psychology on the academic level.

If one considers the early history of thanatology from this point of view, one might find it in many aspects similar to evolutionary psychology. Death studies as a scientific discipline seemed to originate at the essentially public level of communication. The discussion of Western attitudes to death in the Gorer’s essay “The Pornography of Death” caused interest in this problem of death in the wider public on both sides of the Atlantic and introduced the idea of death denial, death being a modern pornography to the public discussion. The volume *The Meaning of Death* in the words of Kenneth Doka was one of the most significant books of this era and “clearly established death studies as an academic discipline” (2003, p. 51). It was reviewed in Time magazine right after its publication and further promoted the idea of the Western repression of death which was in this volume constructed also as applying to the scientific research on death. Thus, the making of thanatology might be interesting not merely as a relatively unknown page in history of psychology (and, more broadly, social sciences), but also as an illustration of “deviation” – in the words of Cloitre and Shinn- in science communication and as an example of interplay between the genres which can occur in social construction of an academic discipline.
8. Conclusion.

Overview of the thesis and concluding remarks.

In my thesis I have attempted to analyse how thanatology emerged as a scientific discipline and also what role the idea of repression of death played in it. In chapter 2 I considered the role the idea of the Western repression death had been playing in the accounts of the history of thanatology and argued that this idea had formed an important part of the “origin myth” (Samelson, 1974) of the discipline: the birth of thanatology had been depicted as a reaction to the taboo on death and thanatology had been credited with the lifting of this taboo in society at large. However as I tried to show in chapter 3 the archival research does not corroborate many perceptions related to the role of taboo on death in the key events in the early history of thanatology. Thus, the history of the discipline might need re-conceptualization and the role of thesis of repression of death in it might need a close study.

In the analytical chapters I argue first of all that by the late 1950-early 1960s when, according to the existing accounts of its history, thanatology emerged as a discipline, the concept of repression proper had not completely lost its ties with psychoanalysis and had not become an integral part of everyday speech (or in terms of Moscovici had not fully undergone the process of “objectification”). Geoffrey Gorer in his essay “The Pornography of Death” contributed to the dissemination of the notion of repression and introduced to the public discourse the idea of the repression of death, death being the new taboo. The taboo on death was constructed by Gorer first of all in line with the understanding of this concept in the anthropology of the time. It was perceived as something “slightly ridiculous, embarrassingly unscientific and an unnecessary consideration for an “enlightened” modern world” (Gilmore et al, 2013, p. 340) and lifting the taboo became a synonym to progress. The idea of taboo on death in the essay was introduced in connection with the repression of sex, which had already been established as commonplace in the public discourse as I tried to show in my analysis of the concept of repression in Time magazine. Thus the concept of taboo on death in Gorer’s essay received additional features, which made it similar to the concept of repression (as reflected in the public discourse): taboo was not only constructed as something generally negative, irrational and pathological, but also as something that might have negative consequences for the psyche and the society in general (in
line with the construction of repression in the public discourse as the analysis of the construction of this concept in *Time* magazine shows) and that would eventually cause the tabooed elements to reappear (similarly to the return of the repressed ). Gorer argued that the taboo on natural death created “the pornography of death”, the vivid and naturalistic depiction of violent death in the mass culture of the time. Essentially, the ideas of taboo on death and the “pornography of death” were used in the essay to criticize the popular culture of the time, which might suggest a strong class undercurrent in the essay. This seems to be in line with the agenda of the conservative *Encounter* magazine, where the essay was published.

Finally, Herman Feifel in his early publications introduced the idea of repression of death or taboo on death as a characteristic feature of the Western society to the scholarly literature on death of the 1950s and 1960s. Feifel based his construction of the taboo on death on that of Gorer and presented Gorer as a conventional scholar, an anthropologist, in his article for the book *The Meaning of Death*. This not only allowed Feifel to construct the Western repression as something that existed in reality and was observed and researched by other social scientists, but also legitimized the essay “The Pornography of Death” as a part of scholarly discourse on death, as was reflected in the existing histories of the death studies (Pine, 1977; Doka, 2003; Bryant, 2007). In his essay for the volume Feifel constructed repression of death as a part of binary opposition “repression versus awareness”. He discussed the Western repression of death as a collective repression, pertaining to the society as whole. However this repression had negative consequences for individual members of the society, who were supposed to cope with the problem on individual level and increase awareness of their individual mortality. In chapter 7 I argue that the article by Feifel cannot be viewed as a conventional scholarly text. Similarly, the volume *The Meaning of Death* cannot be regarded as a conventional scholarly book, as I tried to show in the chapter 3. The idea of the Western taboo on death helped to promote this book as a commodity on the market and was used for this purpose in the review of the book in *Time* magazine. Besides this, the idea of the Western repression of death contributed to construction of thanatology as a discipline and also to self-promotion of Herman Feifel, its editor, who received multiple awards and was credited to be the first scientist to break the taboo on death.

As I tried to argue in the thesis, the essay “The Pornography of Death” (1955) by Geoffrey Gor...
cannot possibly be considered scholarly texts. This may lead to the conclusion that death studies as a scientific discipline originated at the essentially public level of communication. This scenario is not uncommon in the history of science according to Bucchi (1996). In order to establish the discipline, scientists sometimes consider the “bottom up way” and appeal to the public in order to set the boundaries of the discipline and to prove its relevance to the society. The new discipline thus gains public recognition first and this provides a basis for its institutionalization. Boundary work is especially important for the newly emerging scientific disciplines unrecognized by scientific community and therefore lacking authority and prestige. The use of public level of scientific communication makes the task easier for the communicator: at this level it is not necessary to comply with the constraints of the professional academic discourse. For example, the 19th century German biologists paid great attention to popularization of their work and thus generated public interest which led to institutionalization of biology (Bucchi, 1996). Evolutionary psychology represents a more recent example of boundary work on the popular level (Cassidy, 2005). The foundation of this discipline was laid by several popular books written by biologists and social scientists, where the authors tried to apply Darwinian ideas to the modern human behaviour. After debates in the mass media, in which both academics and members of the public took place, evolutionary psychology was eventually established as a new subject of study, a branch of social research in its own right. Thus the public discussion contributed to recognition of evolutionary psychology on the academic level.

Returning to thanatology, the discussion of Western attitudes to death in the Gorer’s essay “The Pornography of Death” caused interest in this problem of death in the wider public and introduced the idea of death denial, death being a modern pornography to the public discussion. The volume The Meaning of Death in the words of Kenneth Doka was one of the most significant books of this era and “clearly established death studies as an academic discipline” (2003, p. 51). It was reviewed by Time magazine right after its publication and further promoted the idea of the Western repression of death, which was in this volume constructed also as applying to the scientific research on death. The thesis of the Western repression of death in this volume might be viewed as contributing to the boundary work leading to the establishment of death studies as a scientific discipline.

In the introductory chapter (chapter 1) I mentioned that the idea of the Western taboo on death was still very much in use in the modern public discourse on death, despite more than six
decades of academic research on the subject, multiple popular books on death, grief and bereavement, hospice movement and even special cafes established solely to provide ground for discussing death and dying. The way the Western taboo on death was constructed in the early thanatological literature of the 1950s might contribute to the popularity of this idea today. As Kellehear (1984) has pointed out, the concept of death denial “has the best of both worlds - valid with and even more without - any evidence” (p. 713), in other words, questioning the idea of death denial is often perceived precisely as manifestation of this denial. In my opinion, it might be potentially fruitful to consider the concept of repression of death in the public discourse from the Foucauldian perspective and in relation to the concepts of the “regime of the self” (Rose, 1998) or more generally that of govermentality (Dean, 1999; Lemke, 2001). The role of “psy professionals” (psychologists, psychiatrists, social workers) in spreading of this idea might also require consideration. These professionals offer assistance in death related matters, for example, personal assistance (grief counselling, psychotherapy, funeral enterprises), group assistance (courses, group therapy), or mediated assistance (through specialized literature on death and grief and publications in the press). With interference of professionals comes normalization of attitudes to the end of life issues: they diagnose normal and pathological grief reaction, normal and pathological death anxiety, normal and pathological way of dying – with prolonged denial being labelled as pathological (Palgi and Abramovitch, 1984; McNamara et al., 1994). Thus, the repression of death thesis may be viewed as a first step on the way of normalization and psychologization of the end of life issues. The ideology of “good death” (Hart et al., 1998) that prescribes desirable and undesirable ways of passing away in our culture is essentially based on the thesis of repression of death. If death were not proclaimed to be repressed, there would be no ground for constructing certain forms of death awareness as desirable.

Contribution to knowledge.

In my thesis I tried first of all to contribute to the existing body of knowledge on the history of thanatology and on the idea of the Western repression of death. Firstly, I tried to show that the existing histories of the discipline could not be accepted at face value and that they contained a number of inaccuracies and misconceptions, which were related to the role the thesis of repression of death played in them. I tried to address this gap in knowledge on the key events in

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97 For example, as I have argued the repression of death was constructed as a binary opposition “denial versus awareness”.
the history of the discipline in chapter 3. The reason for the inaccuracies in the history of thanatology lay in the origin of this discipline: the genre analysis of the key early thanatological publications shows that they cannot possibly be classified as belonging to scholarly discourse and thus death studies as a discipline did not emerge from the scholarly reaction to a general taboo on death and general ignorance about repression (as I tried to show in my study of the concept of repression in the American press of the time). Rather thanatology has its origin in the intersection of public and academic discourses, which is evident from the genre analysis of its texts, the rendering of the idea of repression of death in them, and in the self-presentations of their authors.

Also, the study of the history of thanatology might be viewed as a case-study of how a new discipline or sub-discipline can emerge in social sciences. As I discussed earlier, Cloitre and Shinn (1985) developed the model of “public communication of science”, which made it possible to study a “bottom up” way of emergence of a new discipline, when scientists appeal to the public level of communication in order to set the boundaries of the new discipline and to prove its relevance to the society. In this way the new discipline gains public recognition, which provides a basis for its institutionalization. The study of the origin of thanatology presented in my thesis can serve as an illustration that a new discipline can emerge from an interaction between academic and non-academic discourses. In my study I tried to show that detailed rhetorical analyses of key texts in the early history of the discipline can be helpful for examining the genres of these texts and that such analyses would be important for examining the emergence of any new discipline.

**Limitations of my thesis.**

As with all research, this thesis has its limitations too. These limitations should be taken into consideration because they affect the interpretation of the results and the possibility of making generalizations on their basis. The limitations of the research presented in my historical chapter (Chapter 3) are related first of all to the limited access to archival materials in the USA and in the UK. Some material that might be essential for understanding of the first symposium on death organized by Herman Feifel, the publication history of the volume *The Meaning of Death* and other publications and events in the early history of thanatology, and also the career of Geoffrey Gorer and his involvement in the thanatological movement were very hard or even impossible to access (for example, Arnold Hutschnecker papers stored at the University of Albany Department
of Special Collections and Archives were closed for research at the time I was writing my thesis). I did not manage to access the corporate archive of the McGraw-Hill publishing house either. This archive might possibly contain some information about the publication history of *The Meaning of Death* and the way this volume was conceptualized by its authors and the editors of the publishing house. Also, the US military archives that could throw light at the possibility of military funding of the Herman Feifel’s research on death were not accessible from the Mediterranean due to political situation.

The limitations of the study on dissemination of the notion of repression in *Time* magazine presented in chapter 5 are related to the limitations of *Time* magazine as a corpus -first of all to the fact that *Time* is a newsmagazine and that it is famous for its characteristic style as I tried to argue in chapter 5. This means that the results obtained on the basis of corpus analysis of *Time* magazine could be supplemented in further research by the analysis of the usage of the words “repression” and “repress” in the other corpora of written and spoken English, for example, by examining COHA (Corpus of Historical American English).

Speaking about the limitations of the analysis presented in the chapters 6 and 7, I would like first of all to stress that perceived limitations of research methodology depend on the methodological standpoint. The constructionist approach to studying psychological phenomena can be criticized by those researchers who work within positivist paradigm as making arbitrary conclusions on the basis of insufficient data. Some limitations of the thesis are related not only to the chosen methodology, but to the execution of the analysis. In my opinion, it is important to stress here that doing discourse analysis can be viewed as a craft (Potter and Wetherell, 1994, p. 55) rather than as a replicable research method similar to that developed within the positivist paradigm. Consequently, the factor that plays an important role in the analysis performed within constructivist methodology is reflexivity (Burr, 2003, pp. 157-158). The fact that I am not a native speaker of the language and also my status as a novice researcher has undoubtedly affected my analysis. However the position of an outsider (in terms of language, culture, and also in terms of research experience) may have some advantages too, because it sometimes allows the outsider to notice certain things that insiders may overlook and to provide another point of view on the events and facts that seemed to be well established.
Suggestions for further research.

Finally, I would like to stress that doing social research always involves a trade-off between different considerations (that of scientific rigor, but also practicality and feasibility of a particular research project). Being aware of the inevitable limitations of my study makes me cautious while making generalizations on its basis and also encourages supplementing the existing results by additional research on the subject. Speaking about “the historical part” of my thesis as I tried to argue in the chapters 2 and 3, the existing histories of the discipline have gaps and misconceptions and might require reconsideration. The New History (Furumoto, 1989) offers possible ways of approaching the history of thanatology. Of course, I do not intend to propose some coherent program of research in the early history of thanatology in the light of what New History suggests. Rather I would like apply some core ideas of the New History to the historical material I tried to get familiar with. By analogy with the strands of new historical research singled out by Furumoto (1989), the New History as applied to thanatology should mean the investigation of the original sources, in other words thorough and critical re-reading and re-examining of the early thanatological texts and archival documents. The important sources for the critical examination should include not only the early publications by Geoffrey Gorer (his essay “The Pornography of Death”) and Herman Feifel (his early articles, the book The Meaning of Death (1959), etc.) which I tried to consider in my thesis, but also other early thanatological texts and documents, for example, the early publications by Irving Alexander (Alexander et al, 1957; Alexander & Adlerstein, 1958), prewar publications on attitudes to death by Paul Schilder (Bromberg & Schilder, 1933; Schilder & Wechsler, 1934; Schilder, 1936; Schilder, 1942) and also publications on death and grief by Edgar Jackson (Jackson, 1957).

Also, very little is written about the social history of thanatology, but it might be worthwhile to trace the contribution of the different social groups to the early history of the discipline. For example, it is interesting to note that although Pine (1977) mentioned women’s contributions (strikingly small in his article⁹⁸) to the early history of academic research on death, he openly

⁹⁸ In his article Pine (1977) mentioned thirty six thanatologists active in the field between 1928 and 1968 (the period that covers “The Era of Exploration” and the “Decade of Development”) and offered brief review of their main publication or publications. Only five of these authors were women: Sylvia Anthony (1940), Cicely Saunders (1959), Jessica Mitford (1963), Jeanette Folta (1965), and Jeanne Quint (1966).
stated that thanatology was a male dominated field at the time (p. 58) and also tended to view the entry of women into the field rather negatively: women according to him “became interested in the problems of dying and death primarily for affective rather than scientific reasons” (p. 76). Pine depicted female thanatologists as mostly interested in “the humanistic problems surrounding the life cycle, including birth, death, and the attendant emotional problems of the family, friends, and others” (p. 76) thus limiting women’s interests and contribution to what was considered traditional women’s sphere. At the same time Pine expressed concern over “disproportionate representation of women entering the field compared to men from disciplines such as nursing, health education, social work, and elementary and secondary education” (p. 76), which seemed to be only natural considering “women interests” which Pine mentioned on the same page. The early history of thanatology is a men’s history not only in terms predominantly male researchers and practitioners of the discipline, but also in terms of the research topics: for example, I could find only a few studies (mostly about grief reaction in widows) carried out between 1945 and 1965 where the attitude or emotions regarding death were researched with the help of women participants.

Contributions to the field made by ethnic and religious minorities should also be acknowledged. For example, I could not find studies on the contribution of black thanatologists to this predominantly white male field. Also it might be fruitful to investigate the role of religious minorities in the development on the discipline, as Death Awareness Movement may be viewed to a certain degree as a religious movement (Bregman, 2001; Bregman, 2003). One of the possible topics might be the contribution of catholic thanatologists to the discipline and the interrelation between death studies and the neo-scholastic psychology of the period preceding the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965). Gregory Zilboorg, a celebrity psychoanalyst and convert to Catholicism who authored several articles on suicide and fear of death (Zilboorg, 1936; 1937; 1943) and was invited to present his paper at the historical 1956 symposium on death organized by Herman FeifeI, might deserve additional attention in this context. Menninger institute in Kansas also played some role in the 1950-1960s attempts to amalgamate the catholic doctrine and psychology: it was a psychiatric/psychological body that organized psychological training for catholic clergy (Gillespie, 2001). At the same time Menninger institute was holding a seminar on death and dying and apparently one of the nuns, Franciscan sister Mary Stephen Cerney attended it and later contributed to the field with the works of grief and bereavement.
Finally, it might be important to analyze the role of socio-historical forces in the emergence and development of the death studies rather than to contend ourselves with “the origin myth” of death denial. The emergence of thanatology should be considered within the broader social and political context of the postwar America, in connection with the development of post-war social sciences in the US and taking into consideration their troubled relations with the Federal government and its funding, the US army and its funding, etc. (Capshew, 1999; Herman, 1995; Pickren and Schneider, 2005; Baker and Pickren, 2007). Also in this context it might be interesting to take a closer look at the early qualification works in the field of death and dying (doctoral and master’s dissertations), the research grants on the subject of death, offered not only by federal bodies, but by the private foundations, at the formation of the courses on death, thanatological journals and scholarly societies.

Another topic worth investigating in this context might the role place and geography played in the origin, further development and expanding of death studies. David Livingstone in his book *Putting Science in Its Place: Geographies of Scientific Knowledge* (2003) asked very valid questions as to whether the location of scientific endeavor could make any difference to the conduct of science and furthermore whether the location could affect the content of science. He answered affirmatively to both these questions. A similar idea was expressed by Thomas Gieryn (2002) in his concept of “truth-spots” in science: these are places where knowledge is produced, but which paradoxically allow knowledge to move from local to universal level. Similar to the research of Pickren (2011) on the role of New York City in the history of psychology, it might be possible to consider the role of two places, Topeka in Kansas and Los Angeles in California, in the creation of death studies as a discipline. The former might also require consideration of the role Menninger clinic played in the early history of death studies. The latter might involve a closer look at the culture of the Radical Sixties in California (similar to the research of Anthony Ashbolt (2013)) and at the relation of the emerging death awareness movement to the social movements and trends of the 1960-s in that it asserted the rights and the dignity of the dying, as Doka (2003) pointed out. Special attention should be payed to the University of Southern California in Los Angeles where some of the leading thanatologists (like Herman Feifel or Robert Kastenbaum) taught and also where gerontology as a discipline emerged (Achenbaum, 1995).
Second, speaking about the thesis of the Western repression of death, in my opinion it is important not limit ourselves to the early essays by Gorer and Feifel and to investigate how this thesis was used in the later writings by Feifel, especially in those specifically devoted to the topic of the Western taboo on death (for example, Feifel, 1962; 1963, 1975). The important questions here might be whether the idea of the Western taboo on death underwent some changes in the publications by Feifel of the 1960s and 1970s and what these changes were. It might also be important to trace, whether and how the idea of repression of death was disseminated in the public discourse of the time and what role this idea played in the emerging hospice ideology.
Appendix 3. List of archives consulted.

Archives and Library, American Psychological Association, Washington, DC, USA.

Associated Press Corporate Archives, New York, USA.

David Goodman Mandelbaum Papers, The Bancroft Library Special Collections, University of California at Berkeley, Berkeley, USA.

Erich Lindemann Papers (1950-1974), Center for the History of Medicine, Harvard University Library, Cambridge, MA, USA.

Gardner and Lois Murphy Papers, Drs. Nicholas and Dorothy Cummings Center for the History of Psychology, University of Akron, Akron, Ohio, USA.

Geoffrey Gorer Archive, University of Sussex Library Special Collections, Brighton, UK.

George Klein Papers, Drs. Nicholas and Dorothy Cummings Center for the History of Psychology, University of Akron, Akron, Ohio, USA.

Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., USA.

Martin Buber Archive, The National Library of Israel, Jerusalem, Israel.

Papers of Gardner Murphy (1924-1987), Menninger Foundation Archives, State Archives, Topeka, Kansas, USA.

Paul Tillich Papers, Andover Theological Library, Harvard Divinity School, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA, USA.

Records of the Office of War Information (1926-1951), US National Archives, College Park, MD, USA.

The UK National Archives, Kew, Richmond, Surrey, UK.

US National Institute of Mental Health, Office of Science Policy, Planning and Communications, Bethesda, MD, USA.
Appendix 4. List of archival materials referred to in Chapter 3.


Feifel, H. (1958, October 24). [Letter to George Klein and attached Vita]. George Klein Papers (Correspondence, Folder F, M 870). Drs. Nicholas and Dorothy Cummings Center for the History of Psychology, University of Akron, Akron, Ohio, USA.


Gorer, G. (1942, February 7). [Letter to Dr. John F. Embree]. Geoffrey Gorer Archive (SxMs52/1/4/8/1/1, Box 30). University of Sussex Library Special Collections, Brighton, UK.

Gorer, G. (1951). [Curriculum Vitae]. Geoffrey Gorer Archive (SxMs52/1/4/8/1/1, Box 63). University of Sussex Library Special Collections, Brighton, UK.


Johnstone, P.H. (1942, May 1). [Letter to Geoffrey Gorer]. Geoffrey Gorer Archive (SxMs52/1/4/8/1/1, Box 30). University of Sussex Library Special Collections, Brighton, UK.


Murphy, G. (1959, March 12). [Comments of Murphy as a discussant on the papers presented at the APA symposium “Concept of Death and Its Relation to Behavior” in Chicago, 1956]. Gardner and Lois Murphy Papers (M 1078, folder “Notes for discussion of Feifel book”). Drs. Nicholas and Dorothy Cummings Center for the History of Psychology, University of Akron, Akron, Ohio, USA.

Political Intelligence Department of the Foreign Office (April 5, 1946). [Letter to Geoffrey Gorer]. Geoffrey Gorer Archive (SxMs52/1/4/8/1/1, Box 63). University of Sussex Library Special Collections, Brighton, UK.


Rosten, L. (1942). [Correspondence with Geoffrey Gorer]. Records of the Office of War Information (1926-1951) (Record Group 208, General Correspondence of Leo Rosten, box 1 (232), NC 148 75, 956219). US National Archives, College Park, MD, USA.


US National Institute of Mental Health, Office of Science Policy, Planning and Communications (2014, October 16). [Response to information request based on a historical spreadsheet of the NIMH Reports and Analysis Branch]. National Institute of Mental Health, Bethesda, MD, USA.
References.


Harwood, N. (2005). “Nowhere has anyone attempted ... In this article I aim to do just that”: A corpus-based study of self-promotional I and we in academic writing across four disciplines. *Journal of Pragmatics, 37* (8), 1207-1231.


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