

DEATH PERCEPTION:
ENVISIONING A CEMETERY LANDSCAPE FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

by
Erin Sawatzky

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Department of Landscape Architecture
University of Manitoba
Winnipeg

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DEDICATION

This thesis/practicum (or thesicum as we have begun to call it) is dedicated to my husband Derek and my parents, Brenda and Eric Ediger and Laurie and Gerry Sawatzky, who have loved, supported and encouraged me throughout this journey.

And to my grandparents, Agnes and Allen Linklater and Neta and Victor Ediger, who have passed on to me their love of horticulture and construction.

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ABSTRACT

This practicum, *Death Perception: Envisioning a cemetery landscape for the 21st century*, is a proposal for an alternative cemetery landscape, responding to changes in Western culture. An investigation into the historical, sociological and psychological evolution of Western society's culture of death followed. Discerned patterns and conclusions were supplemented by sociological research and select interviews with professionals, regarding 20th century Western customs for dying, death and bereavement. The conclusions stemming from this research were then assessed for their implications regarding the landscape, particularly that of the cemetery. Cultural theory was translated into a culturally responsive landscape through further research regarding landscape theories and precedents of therapeutic landscapes, where people connect with nature, themselves and humanity. This research has informed a landscape design for Winnipeg, Manitoba that anticipates and responds to the emerging needs of the dying, the bereaved and the funerary industry of contemporary society.

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INTRODUCTION

This practicum, *Death Perception: Envisioning a cemetery landscape for the 21st century*, is a proposal for an alternative cemetery landscape in light of changes occurring in Western society's culture of death. My interest in this topic began with two publicized instances of disrespect toward war memorials in 2006, one in Ottawa and one in Winnipeg. In Ottawa, a war memorial was urinated on by a group of drunken young men during the July first Canada Day celebrations. The event was photographed by an understandably angered veteran and released to the media. In Winnipeg, another veterans' memorial was covered in gang graffiti. The public outcry that followed demonstrated that these memorials held continued significance to many, though they had clearly lost meaning for the vandals that desecrated them.

A similar, though less sensational, rift was perceived in the modern Canadian cemetery. Here, the inconspicuous flat markers are obscured by the closely cut lawn, creating a wide green plane devoid of any overt indications of death. However, these lush lawns are frequently dotted with the bright jewel tones of flowers left beside the plaques. Though these expansive plains appear to deny the presence of death, the inscriptions and mementos at individual graves indicate the ongoing significance of these spaces for ritual and remembrance. These instances of vandalism and of reverence regarding memorials indicated some form of cultural disconnect between public memorial and private memory. As these phenomena came to my attention, I began to question current norms of burial and memorial, wondering if there may be alternative design solutions that could bridge this apparent dichotomy of private significance and public indifference.

An investigation into the historical, sociological and psychological evolution of the culture of death in western society followed. A sweeping overview of the burial places and customs of Western Europe and North America from the Neolithic era to present day was conducted. With such a broad definition of area and time, this overview is far from comprehensive. There remain numerous cultures and cemeteries that could be studied further. The scope of this historical research is largely interpretive and, though broad,

provides a historical background by which to compare and contrast contemporary customs and current innovations.

This interpretive-historical research is based in analysis of Western cultures of death through the ages by 20th century archeologists, sociologists and historians. Discerned patterns and conclusions were then offset by sociological research regarding 20th century Western customs for dying, death and bereavement. This analysis of contemporary culture was supplemented with personal observation and select interviews with professionals, in an attempt to research a representative sample of the multiple perceptions of death that currently exist in Western culture. The conclusions stemming from this research were then assessed for their implications regarding landscapes, particularly the cemetery.

Rather than reverting to a historical landscape form or abolishing the cemetery entirely, a landscape design solution that responded proactively to current changes in light of historical precedents was sought. Cultural theory was translated into a cultural landscape through further research regarding landscape theories and precedents of therapeutic landscapes, where people connect with nature, themselves and humanity. This research has informed a landscape design for Winnipeg, Manitoba that anticipates and responds to the emerging needs of the dead, the bereaved and the funerary industry of contemporary society. The resulting landscape proposal is not necessarily a new type of landscape. Rather, very basic ecological principles and landscape features are used to adapt the cemetery landscape to better accommodate the demands of death in 21st century Western culture.

PART I: TRADITION

From the outset, this Practicum was not intended to define a funerary landscape “solution” suitable for all peoples of the world. The diversity and complexity of death rites and rituals from around the world and throughout history is staggering, making a comprehensive documentation of all of them a formidable accomplishment. Cultures are dynamic systems made up of individuals and subcultures, all of which develop over time through a complex series of actions, interactions and reactions. Even when the parameters of study are limited to one discernible culture, the task is daunting.

One of the most widely known and respected contributions to the historical study of death, Philippe Ariès’ *The Hour of Our Death*, ambitiously traces more than one thousand years of social transformation due to the human experience of death. This work is one of the best to give the scholar of death a sense of cultural progression from the early Middle Ages to the present era and has been used extensively in the following historical analysis. Though largely applauded, the greatest criticisms for *The Hour of Our Death* stem from its greatest strength, which is its ambitious scope.¹ Some areas are considered to be too subjective, while others too detailed. Of Ariès’ work, critic James P. Carse observes, “Writing about death is like writing about life.”² The complex dynamics contributing to cultural responses to death could include all of human action throughout history, requiring a careful definition of research parameters and purpose from the outset. In failing to identify such parameters, one risks generalizing information specific only to a particular group of a certain period.

In this section, the mainstream landscapes of death in the Western world and their social context are assessed and discernible progressions and patterns that illuminate the present and future of the funerary landscape in North America are sought. The funerary traditions examined here span from prehistoric monumental gravesites in Scandinavian, British and Mediterranean cultures to contemporary cemeteries in Canada, the United States and Western Europe. It is clear that within each place and time exist variations and exceptions

¹ Maris Vinovskis, Review of “The Hour of Our Death,” *Journal of Social History* 16, no. 2 (Winter, 1982): 130.

² James P. Carse, Review of “The Hour of Our Death,” *History and Theory* 21, no.2 (Oct., 1982): 399.

to every rite and ritual. However, in examining general historical practices and landscapes of death, the contemporary cemeteries of Canadian culture can be better understood. Until relatively recent centuries, cultural change came slowly to the communities of Western Europe and this is no less true in the progression of the perceptions and rites by which they were generated. The funerary landscape appears to change with increasing rapidity as western culture moves from an agrarian to an industrial to a post-industrial society.

1. PREHISTORY

CIRCA 7000 TO 500 BCE

Many disciplines use cemeteries to gain knowledge of the people and cultures that created them; namely archeology, anthropology and sociology. In fact, most of what we know about funerary rites of prehistoric cultures is based solely on archeological evidence, as there is scant written documentation of the beliefs underlying these rites. Cultures such as those of ancient Greece and Britain, which have historical documents and literature that can be correlated with archeological findings, are particularly informative as to prehistoric interment practices of Western Europe.

CREMATION

There is a rich history of ancient Western civilizations from Greece to Britain, Northern Mediterranean to Atlantic cremating their dead. In fact, in “pre-Christian Europe cremating the dead on open wood pyres was as customary as burying them.”³ In some periods of North Western European history cremation even became more popular than burial, such as in Denmark where cremation was the most popular funerary rite from 800 BCE to 2nd century CE until Christian influence led to increasing frequency of burial.⁴ Sweden’s oldest cremations date to approximately 7000 BCE but the practice only became widespread around 1000 BCE.⁵ By 500 BCE in Sweden, cremations were more frequent than burials.⁶ Burials still occurred during the Bronze and Iron Ages to varying degrees in Sweden until approximately 1050 CE, when the introduction of Christianity led to burial becoming the dominant funerary rite.⁷ Britain has a similarly extensive history of cremation. Even classical antiquity records rites of cremation. The story of death in ancient Western European civilizations was intimately joined with themes of flame, ash and earth.

³ Elfi Heider, “Germany,” in *Encyclopedia of Cremation*, edited by Douglas J. Davies and Lewis H. Mates (Burlington: Ashgate Publishing, 2005), 217.

⁴ Børge Hansen, “Denmark,” in *Encyclopedia of Cremation*, edited by Douglas J. Davies and Lewis H. Mates (Burlington: Ashgate Publishing, 2005), 162.

⁵ Berit Sigvallius, “Viking Sweden,” in *Encyclopedia of Cremation*, edited by Douglas J. Davies and Lewis H. Mates (Burlington: Ashgate Publishing, 2005), 413.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 413.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 413.

BURIAL AND RITUAL

Early British cremation and burial rites were diverse, but some shared elements can be discerned. One repeated theme is that of fire purifying and releasing the body, as is demonstrated in the Old English poem of *Beowulf*.⁸ The dead king is reverently placed on a funeral pyre where his body is broken in the flames and his spirit released to heaven, which swallows the smoke.

*Lamenting their loss, his warriors woke the most woeful fire to flare on the bluff.
Fierce was the burning, woven with weeping, and wood-smoke rose black over the
blaze, blown with a roar. The fire-wind faltered and flames dwindled, hot at their
heart the broken bone-house [body].*⁹

Cremated remains, dubbed ‘cremains’ by the contemporary funerary industry, have been found throughout most of Britain dating back from 4000-3000 BCE to the Saxon period, approximately 410-650 CE.¹⁰ Though there are some eighth to tenth century examples of Norse cremations, cremation was predominant in Britain largely between the early-Middle Bronze Age (2300-1100 BCE) until the early Roman Period (43-150 CE), with some remnants existing in northern frontiers into the late Roman Period (250-410 CE).¹¹ In all periods but the Saxon, the cemetery vicinity was also commonly the crematorium where pyre sites were often cleared and reused.¹² Once the body was burned (*Figure 1*), as much of the bone as could be gathered was placed in a container,¹³ which was then deposited in a tomb.

In the Neolithic era stone chambers and passage tombs housed the remains, while in the Bronze Age mounded barrows and flat cemeteries were used.¹⁴ In many cases, megalithic tombs were not used exclusively but, depending upon the resources available, in conjunction with slab-lined cysts (*Figure 2*), where flat stones are arranged to encase the body in an earthen grave, trench graves (*Figure 3*), where bodies are buried side by side in

⁸ Jacqueline I. McKinley, “Archaeology of Britain,” in *Encyclopedia of Cremation*, edited by Douglas J. Davies and Lewis H. Mates (Burlington: Ashgate Publishing, 2005), 9.

⁹ *Beowulf*, edited by Sarah Anderson, translated by Alan Sullivan and Timothy Murphy (Toronto: Pearson Education, 2004), 87, lines 2767-2772, 2779.

¹⁰ McKinley, “Archaeology of Britain,” 9.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² *Ibid.*, 12.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 11.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 11-13.

an open trench, and cave burials, with remains placed in niches carved in the walls.¹⁵ These cemeteries ranged in population from a few burials to thousands, with even individual gravesites being reopened repeatedly for additional burials of both bodily and cremated remains.¹⁶

Such megalithic gravesites as those constructed in Britain in the Neolithic and Bronze Ages, are among the most iconic of ancient structures in the United Kingdom, but are not isolated solely to the island. Variations of the burial mound have been found, in Europe, from the Atlantic Ocean to the Ural Mountains and, in Asia, from the borders of Russia to the Pacific Ocean, as far North as Siberia and South to India, and also in the Americas and Africa.¹⁷ In Western Europe, the range of megalithic monuments stretches from the Iberian Peninsula and Western Mediterranean through France and the United Kingdom to the Baltic Sea in a wide array of landscapes and orientations.¹⁸ The exact origins of these tombs have been a subject of debate. Some sources claim the megalithic tomb is an initial stage of construction common to the development of all cultures¹⁹ while others identify Oriental, Mediterranean or Iberian origins.²⁰ However, what is known is that these megalithic peoples frequently erected standing stones (menhirs) individually (*Figure 4*), in rows (alignments) (*Figure 5*) or in circles (cromlechs) (*Figure 6*) often centering on or forming table-stone tombs (dolmens)(*Figure 7*) which were often covered with soil to form a hill (barrows) (*Figure 8*). Some of these tombs were closed while others have varying orientations of passages or arrangements of chambers.

¹⁵ C. Daryll Forde, "Early Cultures of Atlantic Europe," *American Anthropologist* 32, no. 1 (1930): 82; Ian Kinnes, "Monumental Function in British Neolithic Burial Practices," *World Archaeology* 7, no. 1 (1975): 16-29.

¹⁶ McKinley, "Archaeology of Britain," 14.

¹⁷ Hodder M. Westropp, "On Cromlechs and Megalithic Structures," *The Journal of Ethnological study of London* 1, no.1 (1869): 53-54.

¹⁸ Forde, "Early Cultures of Atlantic Europe," 27.

¹⁹ Westropp, "On Cromlechs and Megalithic Structures," 59.

²⁰ Forde, "Early Cultures of Atlantic Europe," 11, 14.

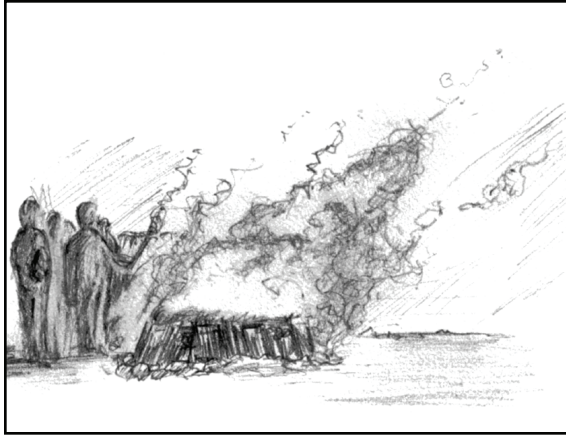


Figure 1: The prehistoric funeral pyre as it may have appeared. Based on 20th century documentation of cremation pyres in India. (A)

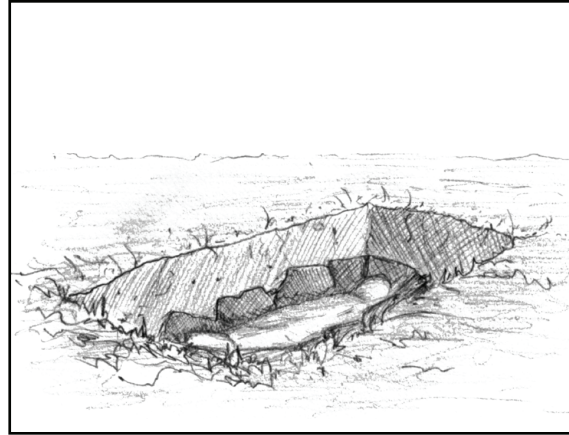


Figure 2: A slab lined cist burial. (A)

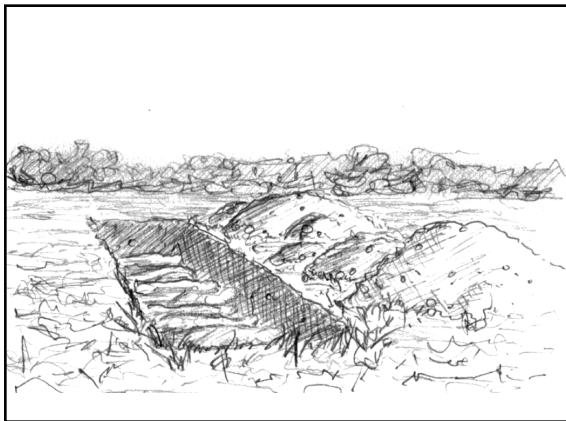


Figure 3: At times of mass death due to war or disease, trench graves would allow multiple burials when time and resources were at a premium. (A)

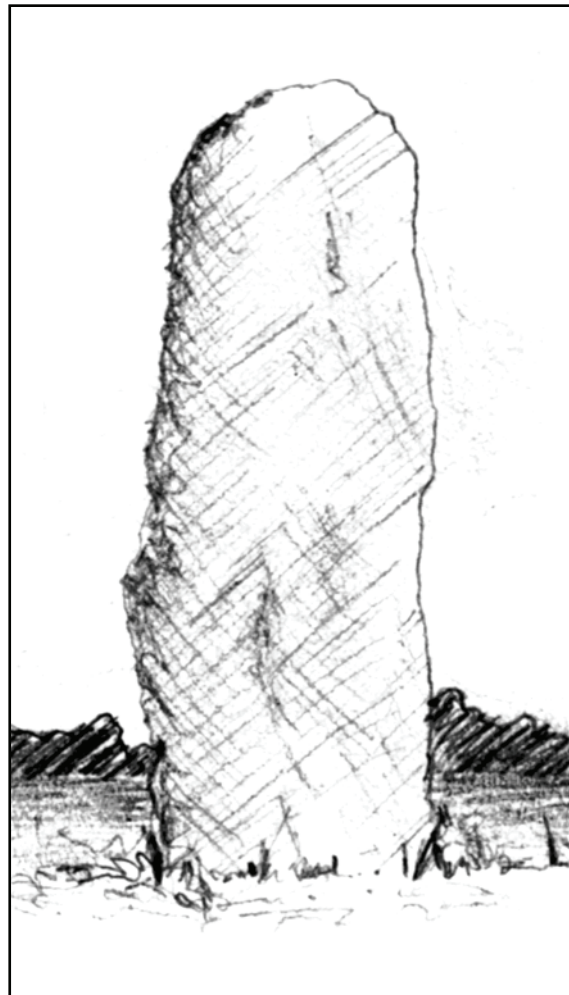


Figure 4: The menhir. (A)

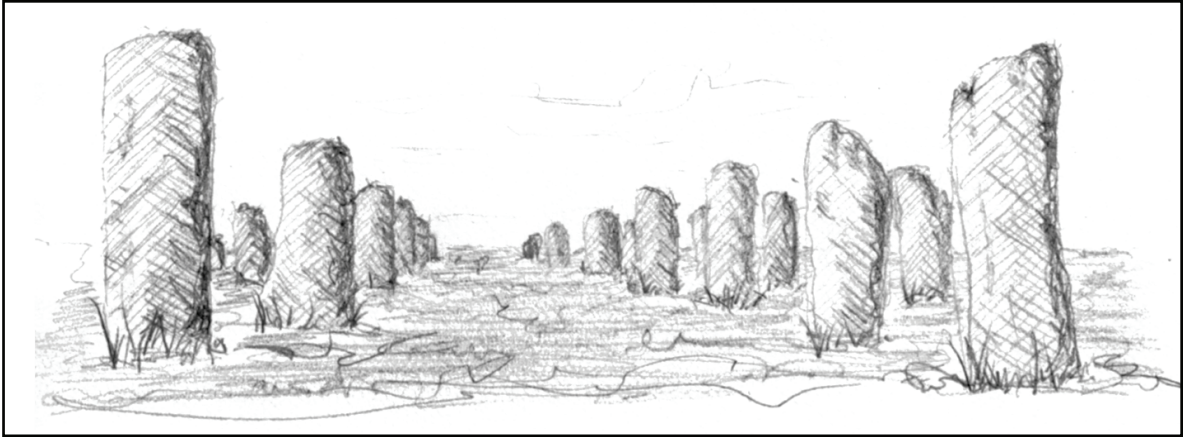


Figure 5: The alignment. (A)

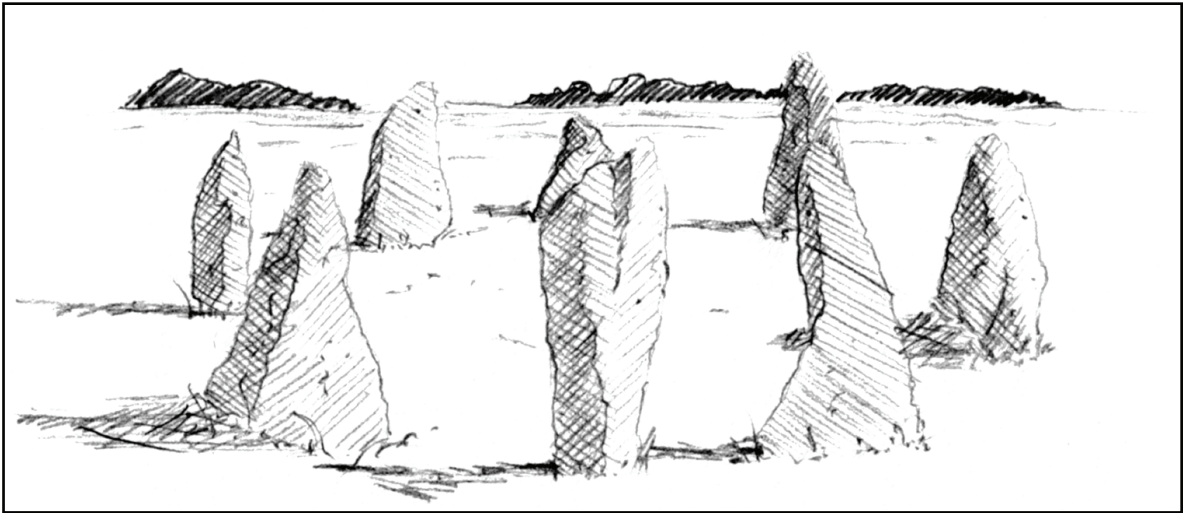


Figure 6: The cromlech. (A)

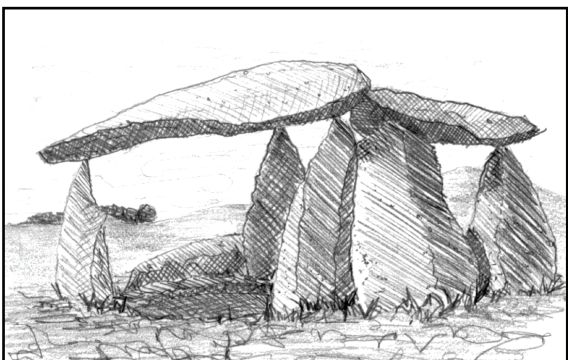


Figure 7: The dolmen. (A)

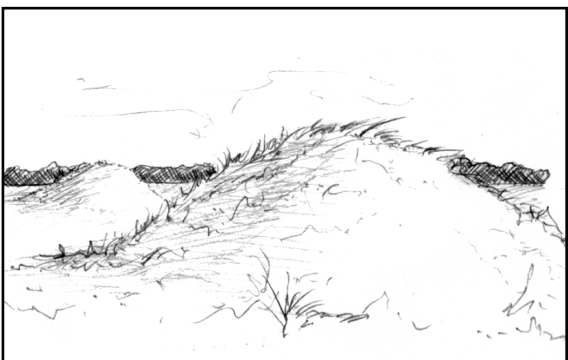


Figure 8: The barrow. (A)

SUMMARY

Though these prehistoric people groups did not leave behind clearly documented historical records outlining their beliefs and rituals for future generations, their remains allow insights into their landscapes of death and burial. Though it appears their popularity waxed and waned over time, cremation and inhumation were apparently considered equally acceptable by these peoples as both forms of remains were often interred together. Diversity is also found in forms of interment. Megalithic monuments, mounded barrows and earthen burials contained numerous variations in arrangement, orientation, combination, grave goods, and population. Of the few consistent traits of these prehistoric European burial grounds are their placement outside the communities of the living and their sheer internal diversity. Despite this diversity of burial, it is the distinct form of the burial mound that now stands as the icon for the prehistoric funerary landscapes of Western Europe.

2. ANTIQUITY

ANCIENT GREECE

CIRCA 1000 TO 100 BCE

Funerary rites in ancient Greece were equally diverse. However, some unifying patterns between customs are discernible. Preference for burial sites varied dramatically over time and cremations appear to be on an equal footing with burial, suggesting that cremation did not significantly affect the perception of death or the afterlife in Ancient Greek civilization.²¹ The Ancient Greeks practiced cremation as well as burial, with burial becoming dominant by about 480 BCE and cremation primarily being used only for foreign deaths, mass burials and some elite burials.²² Ash and bone remains were most commonly gathered from the pyre and saved in a container, which was placed within a tomb built with stone or cut into rock or earth.²³ Earlier cremations are found in multiple-burial tombs or in single burial cemeteries along with burials.²⁴

Death was surrounded by symbols of dwelling and of wandering. Before it was forbidden due to hygiene, the Ancient Greeks would even bury their dead in their cities and homes merging the dwelling places of the dead and the living.²⁵ Death was a spiritual journey to the underworld over the river Styx with coins placed in the hand or mouth of the deceased as fare for Charon, the boatman, who would ferry them on their way.²⁶ This concept of a spiritual journey was reinforced as tumuli were moved outside the city, placed along roadways and marked by funerary columns, vases, statues or stelae (*Figure 9*).²⁷ The dead of ancient Greece traveled through a landscape of fire, shadow and water.

The burial customs of ancient Greece, are better documented than those of prehistory but no less diverse. The locations, arrangements, populations and burials of Greek antiquity's

²¹ Oliver P.T.K. Dickinson, "Ancient Greece," in *Encyclopedia of Cremation*, edited by Douglas J. Davies and Lewis H. Mates (Burlington: Ashgate Publishing, 2005), 6-7.

²² *Ibid.*, 7.

²³ *Ibid.*, 6.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 6.

²⁵ Michel Ragon, *The Space of Death: A Study of Funerary Architecture, Decoration, and Urbanism*, translated by Alan Sheridan (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1983), 36.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 68, 123.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 48.

tombs vary greatly depending on the resources available and innumerable cultural influences. Cremation and burial appear to have been considered equally acceptable within Greek culture though burial appears to have gradually risen in popularity by 5th century BCE. Some semblance of unity can be discerned in the documented beliefs and ritual of ancient Greek society regarding death and the afterlife, with metaphors of the spirit's journey into the underworld and provision of a dwelling place for the remains.



Figure 9: Artistic interpretation of the ancient Greek funeral stela. With commemorative scenes of the deceased's life, the stela is foundational to many versions of Western funerary architecture. (A)

ANCIENT ROME

CIRCA 500 BCE TO 500CE

More is known of funerary rites and ritual in Roman and Italian history due to the writings of Roman historians. Interment for Romans, as for the Greeks, was imperative as the unburied were condemned to endlessly wander on the banks of the Styx.²⁸ Without fare for the boatman, wandering souls would not be permitted across the river Styx and further into the underworld. Although the Romans believed their earliest burial rite was inhumation, archeological evidence indicates the practice of cremation goes back as far as that of burial with the Etruscans practicing both.²⁹

Between the fourth century BCE and the first century CE, cremation was a normative rite in Italy, Rome and the Western Empire.³⁰ Only slaves and the poorest of Roman citizens were buried in common trenches.³¹ For those that could afford the wood, pyres were constructed at sites outside city limits called *ustrinum* or *ustrina*.³² The body was arrayed in its best clothes on an ornamented couch or byre and laid on the pyre.³³ After calling the name of the deceased, the pyre was lit by a close relative.³⁴ Staying with the pyre until the end of the cremation, approximately eight hours, was seen as a sign of devotion and, once the cremation was completed, the cremated bones were gathered and placed in a grave.³⁵ Cremation was acceptable to Roman society as it rendered the corpse inert quickly, allowed for transportation, was convenient for disposal, prevented desecration of a recognizable corpse, and provided opportunity for ostentatious display.³⁶ However, by the end of the second century, burial had replaced cremation almost completely with tumuli previously built for cremations converted to receive inhumations.³⁷

²⁸ Ibid., 18.

²⁹ David Noy, "Romans," in *Encyclopedia of Cremation*, edited by Douglas J. Davies and Lewis H. Mates (Burlington: Ashgate Publishing, 2005), 366.

³⁰ Ibid., 366.

³¹ Ragon, *The Space of Death*, 48.

³² Noy, "Romans," 367.

³³ Ibid., 367.

³⁴ Ibid., 368.

³⁵ Ibid., 368.

³⁶ Ibid., 368.

³⁷ Noy, "Romans," 367.

Proposed explanations for Rome's sudden shift from wide spread cremation to inhumation are numerous, complex and yet inconclusive. Though the influence of Christianity and Judaism is often cited as a probable explanation for the diminishing Western interest in cremation,³⁸ Christian and Jewish influence are seen by some scholars as "unlikely to have been strong enough at the relevant date."³⁹ Rather, Oriental and Egyptian mystery cults pre-existing Christianity within Roman culture would have had more influence.⁴⁰ The then very prevalent Egyptian cults dedicated to Isis and Osiris⁴¹ in particular advocated preservation of the body over cremation and were well established in Roman culture long before the formation of Christianity.⁴² Also, as trade opened with the Far East, where cremation was non-traditional, and Eastern immigrants held increasingly influential positions, marble sarcophagi became more available and Eastern culture became more prevalent (*Figure 10*), influencing the declining use of cremation.⁴³

Though prevalent in Western Europe, cremation was abhorred by most Middle Eastern cultures. In fact, the most ancient reference to cremation is of Eastern origin and is not favorable. The Babylonian poem *The Epic of Gilgamesh* dates back to approximately 2000 BCE. Evident in this poem of grief, fear of death and the afterlife is the importance of entering the next life whole, without loss of limb or affliction.⁴⁴ One entered the netherworld in the same state as this world was left, a lost limb would not be restored.

³⁸ James Stevens Curl, *The Victorian Celebration of Death* (Gloucestershire: Sutton Publishing, 2000), 179.

³⁹ Noy, "Romans," 367.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 367.

⁴¹ In *Osiris and the Egyptian Resurrection* vol. 2(1973), E. A. Wallis Budge observes that the Hellenization of Isirian and Osirian cults in many cases saw the deities' names and characters altered as their legend was mixed with those of non-Egyptian pantheons (293). However, the legend sets the stage for belief in resurrection and reverence for the body. R.E. Witt summarizes the relationship between the god and goddess in "Isis in the Graeco-Roman world"(1971) as "a drama of birth, death and resurrection" (38), with Osiris as the lord and judge of the dead and Isis as the goddess of life and renewal. In a simplistic rendering of the legend, Osiris suffers a sudden death, commonly attributed to Seth his brother, his body is maimed and portions are scattered throughout the land. Isis, wife and sister of Osiris, searches many days and finally reconstitutes the body with the help of Anubis, god of mummification. Isis then restores Osiris to life as the wind of her wings enters his nostrils. Horus, son of Osiris and Isis, then assumes the task of avenging his father's murder (Witt, 36-41).

⁴² Curl, *The Victorian Celebration of Death*, 179; R.E. Witt, "Isis in the Graeco-Roman world," in *Aspects of Greek and Roman Life*, edited by H.H. Scullard (Ithica, NY: Cornell University Press, 1971), 20-21.

⁴³ Noy, "Romans," 367.

⁴⁴ Douglas J. Davies, "Gilgamesh," in *Encyclopedia of Cremation*, edited by Douglas J. Davies and Lewis H. Mates. (Burlington: Ashgate Publishing, 2005), 220.

Those that were burnt to death did not enter the afterlife as they went to the air, thus explaining a strong Babylonian emphasis on burial over cremation.⁴⁵

According to Judaism, cremation was considered akin to human sacrifice, which was practiced by neighboring pagan nations and considered detestable to God.⁴⁶ Biblical references to burning relate primarily to destruction of evil or offerings to God, as cremation was neither, burning of the corpse was reserved for acts of severe punishment.⁴⁷ Due to the swift decomposition of the body in Palestine's arid climate, Jewish customs dictated a speedy burial, usually in a rock-hewn grave, followed by a precise schedule of mourning⁴⁸ The schedule was: weeping until the third day, based in "a Near Eastern belief that the soul lingered near the corpse for three days after death"⁴⁹ ceasing to work, bathe or adorn oneself until the seventh day followed by mitigated formal mourning up to the thirteenth day.⁵⁰ As the prayers sung during these periods were passed down by oral tradition and have no record, the sentiments of the dying and bereaved are difficult to determine.⁵¹ However, it is understood that Eastern emphasis of wholeness of the body at time of burial, did not include the rite of cremation. These non-Christian cultural influences indicate it was Roman/Eastern conquest rather than Christian influence that was responsible for the diminished popularity of cremation in Western Europe.

Regardless of the origins of this shift to burial, its influence would dramatically alter the funerary and urban landscape of the Roman world. As with the Greeks, Roman death was imbued with concepts of dwelling and journeying. In the era where all roads led to Rome, the roads were bordered with the dwellings of the dead; a practice that remained in Western Europe until the 8th century CE.⁵² The Apian, Catinan and Flaminian ways in particular

⁴⁵ Ibid., 220.

⁴⁶ Tim Pursell, "Judaism," in *Encyclopedia of Cremation*, edited by Douglas J. Davies and Lewis H. Mates. (Burlington: Ashgate Publishing, 2005), 285.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 285.

⁴⁸ Frederick S. Paxton, *Christianizing Death* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990), 21.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 21.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 21.

⁵¹ Ibid., 21.

⁵² Ragon, *The Space of Death*, 49.

were known for their ranks of patrician tombs.⁵³ Though removed from the city, the dwellings of the dead often emulated the forms and arrangements of the homes and cities of the living (*Figure 11*). Use of sarcophagi became increasingly popular and funerary architecture rose in elaboration and frequency, with rich families constructing family tombs for their entire household, both slave and freedman.⁵⁴ The Romans translated the Gallic and pre-Etruscan stela hut, a miniature stone or wooden house entombing cremated remains, into elaborate architecture of mausoleums and towering stela mansions.⁵⁵ They invented the columbarium (*Figure 12*), which consisted of rows of niches that house urns of cremated remains, and ornate funerary cippus, a small house-like shrine that concealed a niche for family remains.⁵⁶ Some of these structures were large enough to be used by later generations for other purposes such as fortresses, theatres, citadels and prisons, with many smaller sarcophagi commonly reused for burials in the Middle Ages.⁵⁷ The funerary landscape became a veritable city of the dead as Roman necropolai spread out along its outlying roads.

The culture and ritual of ancient Rome would most significantly influence the death customs of the Western European world. As Roman culture shifted from using both cremation and burial to sole use of burial, so too did those cultures under its rule where cremation was often as if not more popular. Burial places within Western Europe were increasingly architectural, becoming expansive cities of the dead rather than simple dwellings for the dead. The dwelling appears to have become increasingly important as tombs and sarcophagi increase in size and elaboration. The landscape of death became increasingly architectural with many of the architectural forms and motifs of the Ancient Roman and Greek tradition used frequently in modern cemeteries of Western civilization (*Figure 13 & 14*).

⁵³ Ibid., 49.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 49.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 32.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 76.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 277.

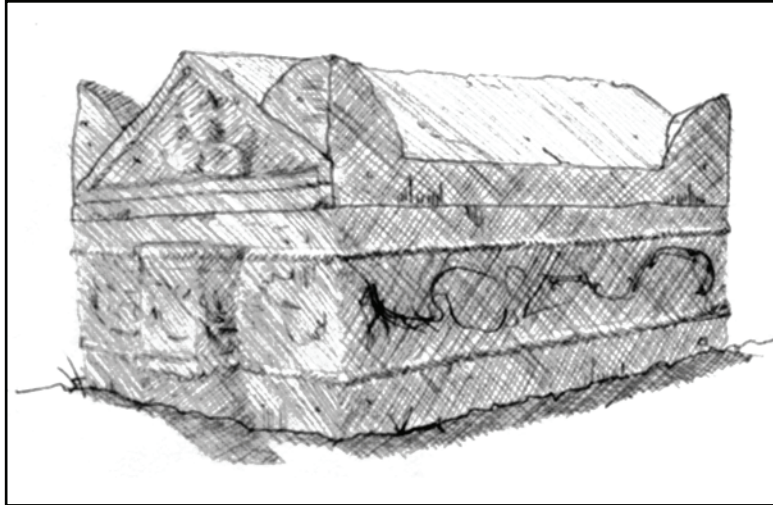


Figure 10: The ancient Roman sarcophagi. (A)



Figure 11: Outside ancient Roman cities funerary tombs and monuments lined the roadways, creating cities of the dead outside the cities of the living. (A)

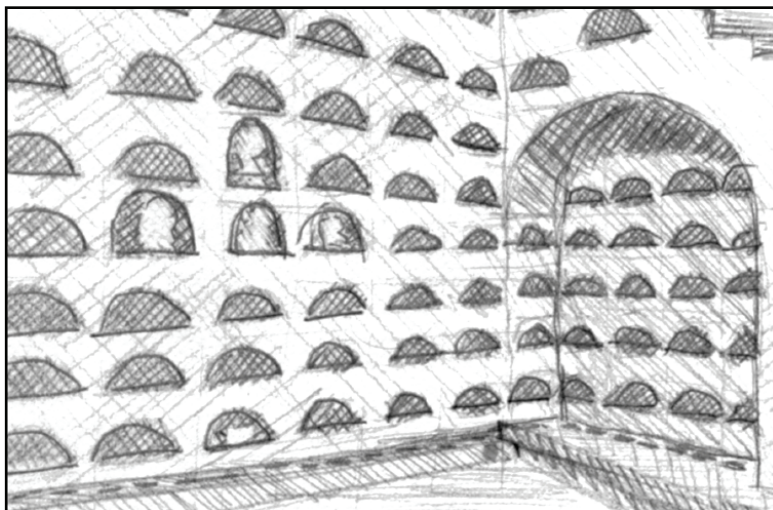


Figure 12: Artistic interpretation of a columbarium interior. (A)



Figure 13: 20th century columbaria demonstrating the influence of Ancient Roman practices in 21st century funerary architecture. Thompson “in the park” Funeral Home & Cemetery, Winnipeg, Canada. (A)



Figure 14: 20th century family vault demonstrating the continued use of ancient Roman motifs and architecture. St Mary’s Cemetery, Winnipeg, Canada. (A)

SUMMARY

From this very cursory overview of the diverse burial customs of ancient Western civilizations, some general observations can be derived. In glaring contrast to Eastern civilizations and religions, prehistoric and classical Western cultures appear to have held cremation as a funerary rite equal to or greater than burial. As life was communal, so too was death as there are many instances of families, clans and communities sharing tumuli. Though death was in many ways communal, the individuality of the deceased was often expressed through funerary furnishings, positioning of the remains themselves and personal items accompanying the remains, indicating great diversity and individuality of expression in the customs surrounding death in the ancient world. Most apparent of consistencies of Western burial was the positioning of the community of the dead outside that of the living. However, the role of the dead in the lives of the living did not cease though the communities were divided. Rites and rituals performed for the dead continued connections between realms, making the cemetery a mysterious meeting ground of the dichotomous worlds of living and dead.

3. CHRISTIANIZATION

EARLY CHRISTIAN DEATH

CIRCA 1ST TO 5TH CENTURY CE

Rome's influence spread as the Empire expanded and the funerary landscape of the Western world was dramatically altered. Within the Roman Empire, cultural beliefs were allowed to mix and spread. It is within this fertile cultural climate that early Christian ritual developed from the 1st to the 6th century with infusions of both Jewish customs and Roman mystery cults.⁵⁸ Despite the fact that “the Christian attitude toward death was in some ways a radical break with the past, the Christian communities of antiquity did not immediately develop distinctive ritual practices around the care of the dying and the dead, but continued in the ways of their Jewish or pagan ancestors” for centuries later.⁵⁹ The first Egyptian converts continued to embalm and mummify their dead, while Greek and Roman Christians continued practicing cremation.⁶⁰

Christian dead did not have a segregated resting place until the 1st century when Christian communities began digging their own catacombs century adding to already extensive networks of ancient Roman subterranean necropolai (*Figure 15*), a practice that continued until the 5th century.⁶¹ Early Christian funerals differed from their contemporaries in a hopeful view of death. Death was seen as “the door of salvation”⁶² and, as such, death and the dead were not to be feared. However, mourners were more concerned for the state of the soul than care of the body.⁶³

Due to the many cultural influences surrounding Christian society, Christian rites and rituals regarding death remained diverse. However, the earliest Latin death and burial ritual, the old Roman *ordo defuorum*, provides a guide to these early death and burial rites.⁶⁴

⁵⁸ Paxton, *Christianizing Death*, 21.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 21.

⁶⁰ Ragon, *The Space of Death*, 282.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 59.

⁶² Paxton, *Christianizing Death*, 25.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 202.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 38-39.

Immediately following death, hopeful readings and psalms were said; the body was then washed, placed on a bier and conveyed to the church accompanied by psalms and antiphons.⁶⁵ Once the body was placed within the church, psalms and readings of the book of Job were chanted continuously until burial where a final antiphon, a response that is chanted following religious teaching or worship, and psalm were sung.⁶⁶ Along the narrow corridors of the catacombs, bodies were placed in compartments sealed by marble or more economical tiles on which was recorded the deceased's name, age and profession in Latin or, occasionally, Greek.⁶⁷ It appears that the burial customs of early Christians were greatly influenced by those of surrounding cultures.

Like their pagan and Jewish neighbors, Christians continued to commemorate the Christian dead with food, drink, song, and dance.⁶⁸ During persecution of Christians in the 3rd century, the catacombs became a refuge for the living as well as the dead, with Christians assembling underground alongside the remains of their own and ancient Romans under the pretext of practicing final funerary rituals.⁶⁹ Due to the nature of their genesis, the first Christian churches were communities comprised of members both living and dead.

Anthropologist Arnold van Gennep's tripartite rights of passage are particularly useful in reviewing the progression of Christian death rituals from the 1st to 6th centuries. Within this schema there are three sets of rites: *preliminal* concerned with separation rites, *liminal* concerned with transition rites, and *postliminal* concerned with incorporation rites.⁷⁰ Interestingly, the optimistic attitude towards death in Christian antiquity appears to contain few or no rites of separation. The transition of the dying person to the after-life was marked by *viaticum*, the sacrament of communion, and the celebration of incorporation. Prayers and anointing for healing were also optimistic prayers for the physical health of the body. However, healing and death rituals were conducted separately and it would not be until later centuries that the two began to merge to form the full Christian ritual.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 39-40.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 39-43.

⁶⁷ Ragon, *The Space of Death*, 59-60.

⁶⁸ Paxton, *Christianizing Death*, 26.

⁶⁹ Ragon, *The Space of Death*, 59.

⁷⁰ Paxton, *Christianizing Death*, 6.

As Christian commemoration rituals evolved so too did rituals for the sick and dying, preparing the individual for their journey through the next life in this one. The division between life and death became blurred further. Two responses to illness developed in Roman antiquity: prayer for healing in a mass or visitation, and the ‘laying on of hands’ or anointing with oil accompanied by prayer.⁷¹ The concept of using oil for healing and a link between sickness and sin was not new to Near Eastern religious communities and it is connections between these concepts that influenced divergent attitudes regarding healing, some camps emphasizing spiritual health, others physical health and others both forms of health.⁷² For the dying, the central rite was the reception of the Eucharist as a *viaticum*, a provision for the journey to the afterlife. As one had to be a member of the Christian community to receive the Eucharist, the additional ritual practices of emergency baptism and deathbed reconciliation were developed so that one could still receive the Eucharist.⁷³ Prayers and anointing for healing the sick and an optimistic attitude towards death were the primary ritualistic behavior that set Early Christian death apart from synchronous systems.

With both Roman and Jewish funerary rites advocating burial over cremation, a Christian tradition of burial began. However, the funerary landscape, where Christians were buried with their pagan counterparts in pagan necropolises outside the city, saw little change until approximately the 5th century.⁷⁴ Rome’s adoption of Christianity as its state religion allowed separation of the living from the dead as Basilicas were built to house worship and the dead were once again the masters of the necropolis.⁷⁵ The Christian community emerged from the subterranean houses of the dead to worship in the light of day. After the sacking of Rome in 410 BCE by Alaric the Visigoth, the catacombs were looted for treasure and these underground cities were abandoned.⁷⁶

Though early Christian ritual surrounding the body of the deceased differed little from contemporaneous cultures, the Christian belief in spiritual salvation and bodily resurrection

⁷¹ Ibid., 27.

⁷² Ibid., 27-29.

⁷³ Ibid., 33-37.

⁷⁴ Philippe Ariès, *The Hour of Our Death*, translated by Helen Weaver (New York: Vintage Books, 1981), 30.

⁷⁵ Ragon, *The Space of Death*, 61.

⁷⁶ Ibid., 60-61.

starkly contrasted other belief systems. Early Christian communities continued to care for the dying and the dead in the ways of their ancestors, whether Jew, Greek, Roman or Egyptian. However, an optimistic view of death where the dead were not to be feared allowed the realms of the dead and the living to converge in ways unprecedented in other cultures where the dead were to be kept separate from the living. Increasing Christian desire to be buried on sacred ground either within or immediately outside churches,⁷⁷ the dead began to populate houses of worship, merging the realms of the living and the dead from the 5th to mid 19th century. Burial became the primary funerary rite of Western Europe for approximately 14 centuries.

TAME DEATH

CIRCA 5TH TO 19TH CENTURY CE

What Ariès terms ‘Tame Death’ was dominant throughout the medieval era, though vestiges of it would continue into the 19th century. Death was not to be feared. Unlike modern associations with death, there was a marked awareness and acceptance of its nearness.⁷⁸ The life of the medieval community was public and so too was the death of its members.⁷⁹ In the ideal tame death, the dying made final preparations on their deathbed saying farewells and commendations to loved ones, choosing the mode of their burial and commending their soul to God before waiting for death in silence.⁸⁰ This acceptance of death translated into an acceptance, bordering on indifference, of the sites and artifacts of death from the 5th century to the 18th century that was previously unseen in pagan traditions where the dead were buried in relatively clearly defined graves outside the city.⁸¹

As the kingdoms of the Roman Empire converted to Christianity in the 6th to 8th century, greater changes were made in Christian rituals of healing and death. Roman imperialism began to fail in the early 6th century and the church hierarchy gradually became the dominant administrative structure in the Frankish, Burgundian, Ostrogothic, and Visigothic

⁷⁷ Ariès, *The Hour of Our Death*, 37-40.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 8, 28.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 18-19.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 14-18.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 29-30.

kingdoms.⁸² To prevent converts in these regions from returning to pagan practices, a ritual system separate from neighboring ‘pagan’ practices was gradually developed. Through this process, anointing and prayer for the sick acquired an additional meaning of spiritual purification, leading to them becoming rites for the dying in some communities. Penance also began to be increasingly associated with the transition ritual of *viaticum*, preparation for the journey into the next world originally referring to the coin for Charon placed in the mouth of the deceased, but later meaning reception of the Eucharist or Holy Communion,⁸³ as converts became less confident of their salvation. Ritual created a sense of agency for the bereaved and security for the deceased.

To set Christian healing apart from local superstitions and medicine, Caesarius of Arles linked anointing the sick with the Eucharist emphasizing that they be conducted in a church, separating them but also subtly altering the meaning of anointing the sick from pure physical healing to include spiritual healing as well.⁸⁴ In Visigothic Spain, spiritual and physical health were seen as linked, creating a ritual of visitation and anointing of the sick, while in Ireland, anointing was aimed more at spiritual purification of the sick rather than physical healing.⁸⁵ The ritual of deathbed penance also continued and was eventually deemed part of *viaticum*, emphasizing cleansing of the soul prior to death.⁸⁶ However, this ritual was given different significance in different regions.

For new converts from traditionally non-Christian regions, death “held more terror”⁸⁷ and, less assured of salvation, preparation of the dying for death through penance became more important than in antiquity. For the Visigoths, penance was performed at the death bed as part of the *viaticum*⁸⁸ while the Irish included anointing as part of the rites for the dying⁸⁹ with a penitential lifestyle decreasing the felt need for clerical visitation of the deathbed.⁹⁰

⁸² Paxton, *Christianizing Death*, 48.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 32-33.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 50-51.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 202.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 52.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 203.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 73.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 88.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 60.

Though offered from antiquity, mass became increasingly important from the late 6th century on as a sense of some form of purgation, suspension between heaven and hell, made commemoration of the souls' incorporation into the community of the blessed more meaningful.⁹¹ These rites created linkages between the living and the dead making death appear less menacing.⁹² Divergent regional rituals developed as the rites for illness, dying and death were interpreted differently; some emphasized the physical needs of the dying while others emphasized the spiritual journey of the deceased.

It was not until the Carolingian era of the 8th and 9th centuries that one common ritual for a single Christian society was sought and an attempt at drawing together these disparate views throughout Western Europe was made. Frankish Kings issued decrees and canons to encourage uniformity in Christian life and death.⁹³ Existing divergent traditions were blended with traditions from Roman antiquity, yet conflicting rituals persisted. In general, Irish and Anglo Saxon traditions concentrated on prayer and vigils after death, with a penitential lifestyle primarily preparing the individual for death, while Frankish traditions concentrated on prayers to ease the passing of the dying.⁹⁴

The communal sense of these rites assured the individual that they would neither die alone nor be forgotten by their community or God. The structure of a communal ritual eased the fear of death and created unity in a relatively young Christian society. In the early 9th century, Charlemagne combined a Gregorian sacramentary called the *Hadrianum* with supplements to make it applicable for ritual life for the Franks.⁹⁵ Some rites of death and burial, such as Benedict of Aniane, emphasized care and anointing of the sick with little sense of preparation for death, while other Visigothic and Roman prayers described the relationship between God, emphasizing the needs of the soul following death, but providing no rights for the dying.⁹⁶ Through combining these disparate traditions, a complete death ritual of separation, transition and incorporation was developed for both body and soul.

⁹¹ Ibid., 66-67.

⁹² Ibid., 203.

⁹³ Ibid., 92-95.

⁹⁴ Ibid., 205-206.

⁹⁵ Ibid., 131-132.

⁹⁶ Ibid., 132, 148-149, 161, 206-207.

Despite Carolingian attempts at unity, the mid-to-late-9th century did not see complete conformity to one Christian ideal. However, a basis of unity was formed as the clergy was educated and the basic ideal of the Gregorian sacramentary was transmitted.⁹⁷ Though cloistered communities and monasteries primarily participated in and received these rites, the Carolingian ideal was to have the priests administer the sacraments to the laity⁹⁸, which may be seen in later texts. Special commemorative services also became more readily available to the laity in the later part of the 9th century,⁹⁹ although they were not generally available until the 12th century.¹⁰⁰ By the end of the 9th century, Roman, Irish, Visigothic and Gallican rituals were blended into an overall structure spanning from grave illness, to death and burial, and final incorporation of the soul.¹⁰¹ Over centuries the basis for a common and uniquely Christian ritual process for death was formed.

Little is mentioned in early Christian writings of the physical burial of the body, but it is assumed that, as the body was seen as immaterial, established Jewish and Roman treatments of the body were adopted.¹⁰² By the 3rd century, some Christian communities had formed their own cemeteries, usually concentrated around a martyred saint's tomb (*Figure 16*) and, by the 4th and 6th century; western Mediterranean urban form was designed around

⁹⁷ Ibid., 207.

⁹⁸ Ibid., 195-197.

⁹⁹ Ibid., 199.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 200.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 17.

¹⁰² Palestinian Jewish customs of washing the body and wrapping it in linen followed by a quick burial is well documented as is the schedule of Jewish mourning, which consisted of three days of mourning, up to seven days of cessation of work and personal care, and formal mourning to the thirteenth day. As Christian and Jewish prayers spoken during the ceremony were passed on orally, later sources can only suggest that these prayers emphasized God's righteousness and, in some communities, the hope that God will resurrect believers at the end of time. Considerably more is known of pagan Roman death rituals. Upon the death of the individual the eyes and mouth were shut and the name of the deceased called repeatedly to avoid premature preparation. After the corpse was washed, anointed, and appropriately laid out came a funeral of public lamentation where the procession would be accompanied by mourners and musicians. The body was cremated, but a small portion of the body (*os resectum*) was set aside to be interred at the conclusion of the rites. Roman commemorative services were elaborate with an initial meal eaten at the grave on the funeral day, with other meals on the ninth and fortieth days, the deceased's birthday and festivals of the dead. If life was a journey, that journey continued in death with stages of incorporation into a new world. (see Frederick S. Paxton, *Christianizing Death* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990), 21-23.)

holy sites dedicated to the martyrs.¹⁰³ Over time, a desire emerged to be buried on sacred ground, either within or immediately outside places of worship and pilgrimage.¹⁰⁴

Burial within or immediately outside the basilica was felt to make one's resurrection more certain. The desire was first and foremost to be inside the church, closer to the Saints that would be the first to be resurrected, rather than in the cemetery, creating a social hierarchy of the rich within the church near alter, the poor outside in the churchyard and gradients between.¹⁰⁵ Eventually these areas became crowded and, by the 14th century, it became common practice to exhume the dried bones and place them in charnel houses, buildings or vaults where bones are stored as a cluster or arrangement (*Figure 17*).¹⁰⁶ Little appears in liturgical documentation regarding burial rituals themselves, which may be due to the nature of the documents themselves or a prevailing sense that the dead body was less important than the dying individual's soul. The concept of life continuing after death was an accepted reality;¹⁰⁷ death was a long slumber with the anticipation of awakening at the resurrection.¹⁰⁸

As Christian rituals of healing and death evolved over the centuries, divergent Christian traditions were brought together to form a unified and uniquely Christian ritual for healing of the sick and preparation for death. These observances created linkages between the living and the dead and death was made less menacing. One's inevitable death was greeted with calm preparation under community observation and death was 'tamed'. The dying and the dead were not alone, but part of a larger community of blessed believers that would slumber in anticipation of bodily resurrection.

¹⁰³ Ibid., 25-26.

¹⁰⁴ Ariès, *The Hour of Our Death*, 37.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 79-90.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., 51-53.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., 95.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 22-26.

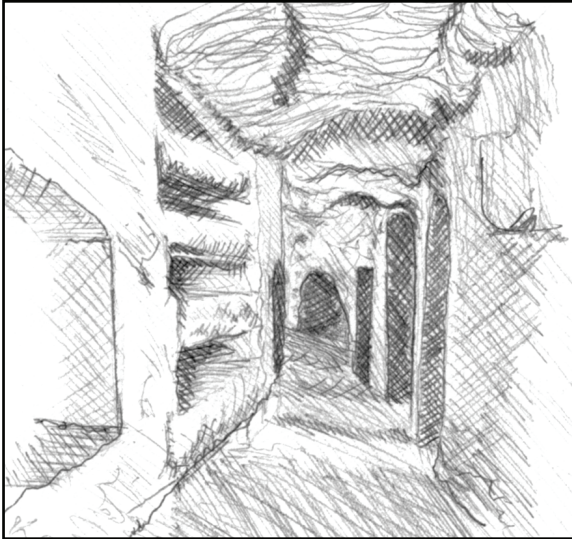


Figure 15: The catacomb. (A)

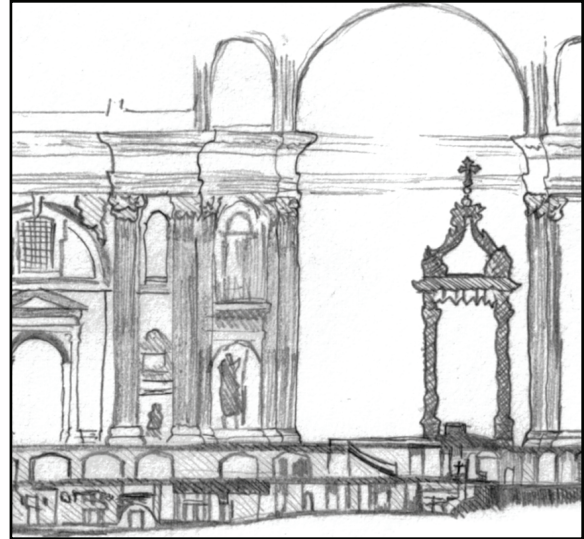


Figure 16: Section sketch of St. Peter's Basilica showing the catacomb labyrinth below. The altar is positioned above the tomb of St. Peter with other tumuli radiating from this sacred area. (A)

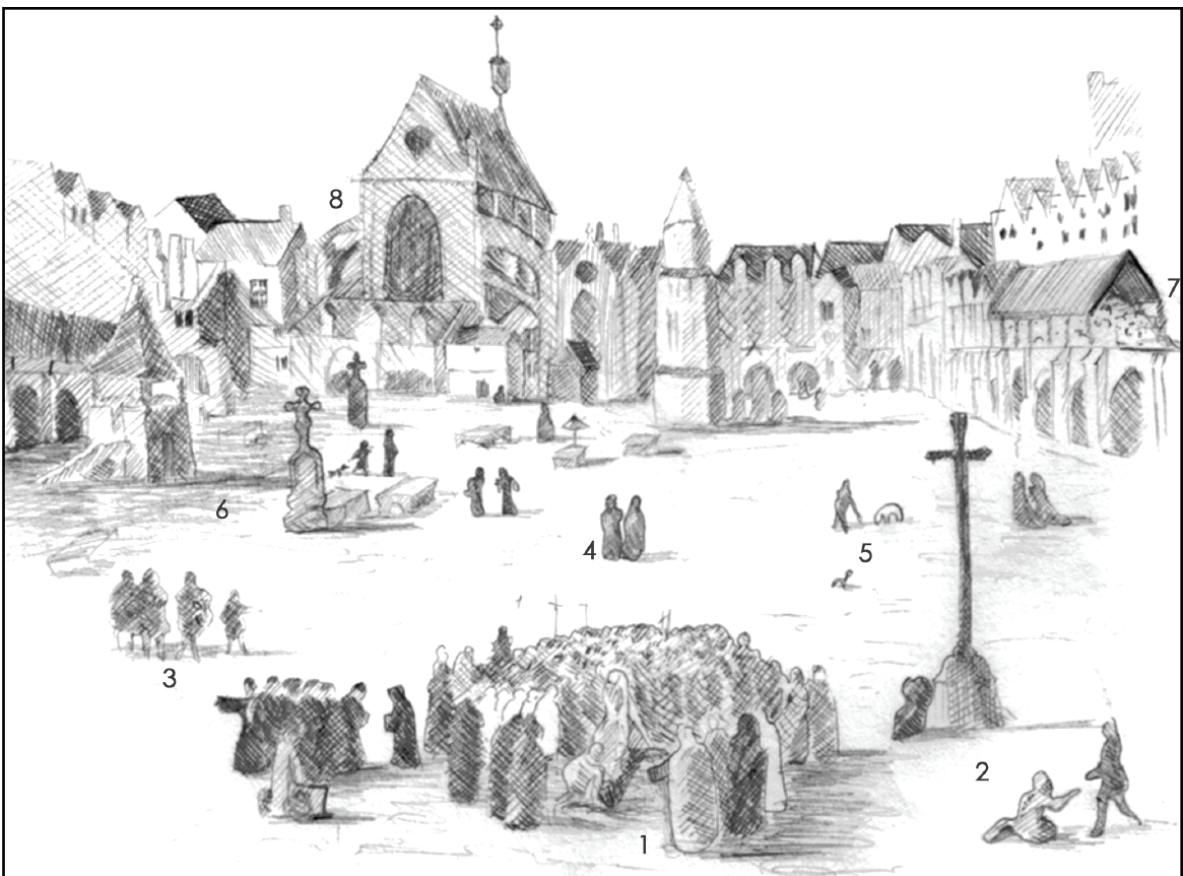


Figure 17: Depiction of the 16th century cemetery of Les Innocents, Paris, based on historical representations. (A)

The Medieval cemetery was an important part of urban public life: 1) Burials were public; 2) Those seeking sanctuary would often live and work within the confines of the cemetery; 3) It was a place to conduct business; 4) Pets and livestock were permitted; 5) The cemetery also served as a place for private meetings and strols; 6) There were few individualized markers. Rather, large communal monuments and platforms for public addresses dotted the grounds; 7) The cemetery was bordered by charnel houses, which stored the bones exhumed from the cemetery; 8) Though outside the church, the cemetery was considered an extension of the basilica itself.

FEARSOME DEATH

CIRCA 12TH TO 19TH CENTURY CE

As theology developed around the nature of this slumber and awakening, death gradually became increasingly fearsome. Ariès defines this stage as “wild death” or “the death of the self”, where death and the afterlife are perceived to be unforeseen, uncontrollable and individual. Early Christians in the “tame” era saw death as a slumber until the end of time when they are resurrected collectively and meet God.¹⁰⁹ The resurrection, end of days, Judgment and death were not to be feared. However, the perception of death as benign gradually changed.

By the 12th century, iconography of the Resurrection was superimposed with imagery of the Last Judgment and division of the just from the damned.¹¹⁰ Focus increasingly concentrated on the concept of Final Judgment at the Resurrection until, by the 14th century, judgment was eventually separated conceptually from the resurrection with judgment occurring at the moment of death.¹¹¹ Judgment occurring at the time of death held dramatic implications for the dying. Death became more personal than corporate and therefore more intimidating.¹¹² The dead would meet God as individuals. There would be no one to shelter them from scrutiny. Attachments to life became greater with a rise of macabre and regretful reflections concerning death.¹¹³ New rites were developed to aid the dying in judgment, beginning with those of exclusive ecclesiastical societies and spreading to the general laity by the 13th century.¹¹⁴ Caring for the dead became the province of the clergy rather than the family.¹¹⁵ It was seen as necessary for the living, particularly the clergy, to intercede for the deceased as lawyers before the Judge.

This growing fear of judgment spawned a need to never be forgotten. Tombs increased in elaboration and individuality¹¹⁶ and were increasingly dominated by the biography of the

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., 97.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., 100.

¹¹¹ Ibid., 107.

¹¹² Ibid., 107.

¹¹³ Ibid., 111, 130-131.

¹¹⁴ Ibid., 161.

¹¹⁵ Ibid., 165.

¹¹⁶ Ibid., 270-271, 293.

deceased and their endowments, as the need to be interceded for and remembered by God, the saints, and the living increased.¹¹⁷ Rituals became increasingly elaborate to prepare the dying for the afterlife and monuments became more ostentatious to remind the living to pray for the dead. Anonymity became ignominy.

Beginning around the 5th century, inscriptions and portraits on the graves had begun to disappear and tombs became increasingly anonymous, which persisted except in cases of saints or kings into the 11th century.¹¹⁸ This early Christian tradition of burial in a simple shroud in an anonymous grave within a collective cemetery,¹¹⁹ where only saints and martyrs were given a tomb,¹²⁰ eventually became a humble honour reserved only for the poor. For those who could afford the expense, high ranking aristocracy and officials, the common burial shroud was replaced first by the leather envelope beginning in the 7th and 8th century and then by coffins of wood, plaster, stone or lead, reminiscent of the Egyptian and Roman sarcophagi, from the Carolingian period onward.¹²¹

Humble flat graves with stone markers appeared in Medieval churches, timidly asserting the deceased's individual identity and forming the paving for church courtyards, porches and naves until by the late 15th century many churches were paved entirely of gravestones.¹²² It is important to note that the body and commemorative marker, unlike in cases of ancient tombs or modern cemeteries, were not necessarily united, but were within the same ecclesiastical enclosure, burial *ad sanctos*.¹²³ Walking over a tombstone did not necessarily imply treading on a gravesite. These markers created an intermediary step between the communal grave and the individual tomb. Gravestones began to be engraved with increasingly detailed epitaphs, which contained biographic details, moral admonitions and pleas for remembrance, and elaborate imagery until these engravings inspired the

¹¹⁷ Ibid., 280.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., 203-204.

¹¹⁹ Ragon, *The Space of Death*, 74-75; Ariès, *The Hour of Our Death*, 207.

¹²⁰ Ragon, *The Space of Death*, 84; Ariès, *The Hour of Our Death*, 209.

¹²¹ Ragon, *The Space of Death*, 73-75.

¹²² Ibid., 84.

¹²³ Ariès, *The Hour of Our Death*, 208.

gisant, a life sized recumbent carving of the deceased, by the 12th century.¹²⁴ Churches became museums of the memories of past parishioners and their perception of death.

The representational evolution of the gisant is particularly reflective of the changing perception of death in the Medieval era from a tame to fearsome reality. Early recumbent figures or gisants (*Figure 18*) are carved as if standing, eyes open with calm gestures, the blessed awaiting the resurrection in peaceful repose.¹²⁵ These early monuments represented the deceased in a sort of limbo not alive but not dead, simply waiting in a state somewhere between, reminiscent of later representations increasingly divided physical and spiritual realities of death. Many gisants of the 14th century onward continued the imagery of the blessed in the representations of the praying figure, life-like sculptures of the deceased kneeling in prayer.¹²⁶ However, these are no longer souls existing in expectation but spiritual beings already in the presence of God, what Ariès terms “a figure of eternity.”¹²⁷ On the other end of the spectrum are those gisants of recumbent figures of the 14th and 15th centuries that became increasingly realistic with falling folds and closed eyes,¹²⁸ no longer represented as “the blessed” these were effigies of the deceased.

This sense of realism increased over time, inspired by increasing macabre reflections in the 14th to 16th centuries, to result in the *transi*, representation of the partially decomposed corpse, (*Figure 19*) the skeleton and the weeping figure, which were most popular in the 15th and 16th centuries.¹²⁹ As the final judgment and death were linked, death was no longer considered by all to be a peaceful repose in expectation of resurrection. Death became increasingly fearsome and images of peaceful slumber in expectation began to be abandoned in favor of funerary imagery concentrating either on the spiritual splendor of the righteous with God or the physical reality of death and decay. Death was no longer a period of transition or waiting, but the separation of body and spirit.¹³⁰ The gisant exhibited

¹²⁴ Ragon, *The Space of Death*, 85.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, 85; Ariès, *The Hour of Our Death*, 241.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, 254-259.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, 255.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, 242-243.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, 113-114, 242; Ragon, *The Space of Death*, 85-87.

¹³⁰ Ariès, *The Hour of Our Death*, 128, 300.

dichotomous states and sentiments of death. Representations of physical death were increasingly sensational and macabre, while representations of the deceased's soul were increasingly pious (*Figure 20*). No longer a transition, death was either a joyous meeting with God or horrific separation from life and loved ones.

As emphasis on the final judgment increased and as that judgment became increasingly personalized, death became increasingly fearsome. No longer a benign transition where one slumbered until awoke at the end of days; death became personified as an increasingly gruesome thief that could strike at anytime. With and, perhaps, because of this growing fear memorials also grew in size, individuality and elaboration. Like the rituals of the tame death era, memorials and burial *ad sanctos* connected the communities of the living and the dead, diminishing how lonely and fearsome death had become. As monuments and inscriptions abounded, churches became museums and mausolea as well as houses of worship. Elaborate depictions of the departed were often sensational and macabre or pious and reverent, with some sarcophagi using both forms of representation. Body and soul were separate with the body succumbing to rank decay and the soul, hopefully, ascending to heavenly bliss.

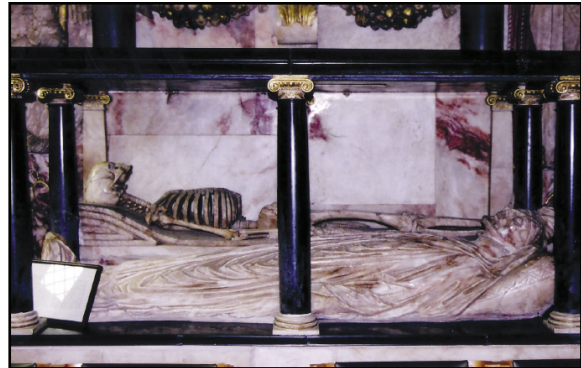


Figure 19: The transi. Monument to Bess of Harwich's two sons. Henry Cavendish (d. 1616) and Willaim Cavendish, Earl of Devonshire (d. 1626). Edesnor, Derbyshire, England. Photograph by Catherine MacKendrick.

Figure 18: (Left) Early gisants, similar to this interpretation, represented the deceased as if standing and alive. (A)

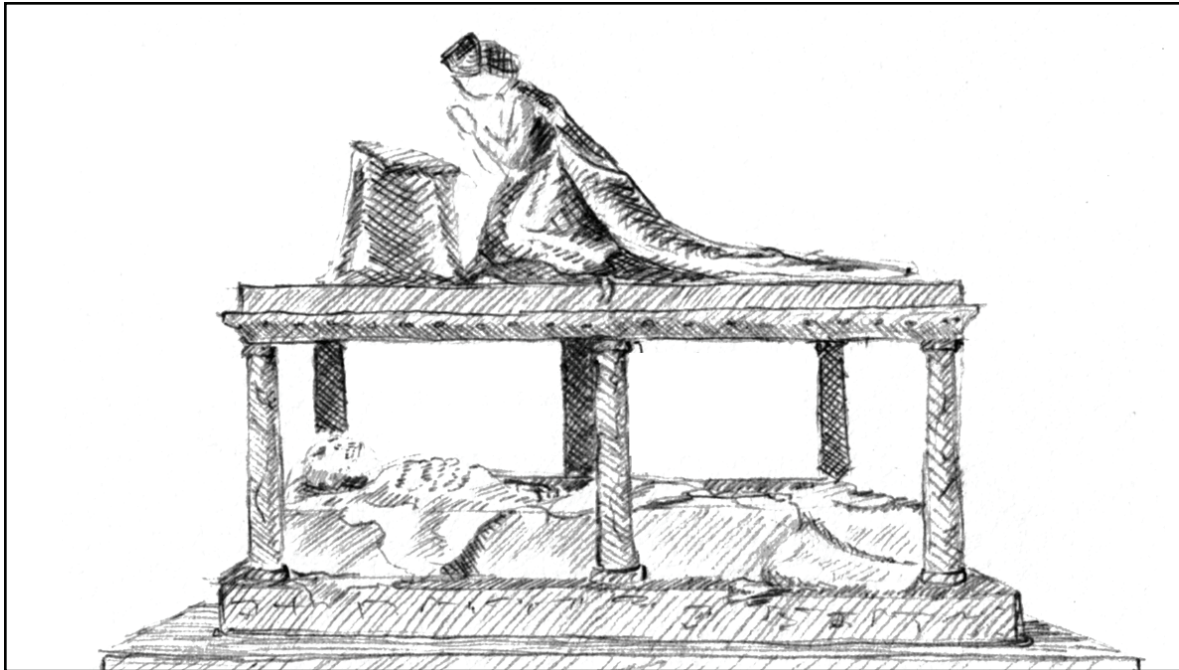


Figure 20: Artistic rendering of the dual gisant with spiritual reunion with God depicted above and the couple's physical decay depicted in the transi beneath the stone canopy. (A)

ENLIGHTENED DEATH

CIRCA 17TH CENTURY TO PRESENT

Death seen as a termination of life rather than a life transition altered the perception of life as lived. Depictions of Death became increasingly sinister in their personification. Iconography, known as the *danse macabre*, (*Figure 21*) abounded in the 15th century. In these images, grimacing and grinning *transi* pull the living into their ceaseless dance regardless of age, wealth or position. Death was no longer “tame”, allowing a grace period of preparation, it grabbed one unexpectedly to join in its reel.¹³¹ The *artes moriendi*, illustrated books on the art of dying well, could be circulated into people’s homes with the advent of the printing press.¹³² Funerals and processions became venues for exhibitionism with spectacular demonstrations of mourning.¹³³ The deathbed became a theatre with an audience of human and heavenly spectators. Artists’ renderings showed the cosmic drama occurring at the deathbed as spiritual powers vied for the soul of the departing.

Such macabre imagery of the early 15th century gradually became less sensational and more contemplative as the century wore on. Reformations within Christianity began to question the effectiveness of hastily uttered last rights.¹³⁴ Ecclesiastical emphasis shifted from preparation for the afterlife at the moment of death to lifelong preparation. Instead of a brief sojourn with a dramatic end, life was the period in which to earn salvation.¹³⁵ “The art of dying was replaced by an art of living.”¹³⁶ The *artes moriendi* became pious literature for daily devotions rather than a handbook on how to die well.¹³⁷ More than a warning of one’s impending doom, such imagery as bones and tombstones, even the *danse macabre*, became reminders of one’s mortality (*Figure 22*). The concept of a fearsome and unexpected death generated a transition to the perception that life was to be lived with an overriding sense of life’s fleetingness.

¹³¹ Ibid., 118.

¹³² Ibid., 107.

¹³³ Ragon, *The Space of Death*, 141.

¹³⁴ Ariès, *The Hour of Our Death*, 303.

¹³⁵ Ibid., 128-129.

¹³⁶ Ibid., 300.

¹³⁷ Ibid., 303-304.



Figure 21: Artistic rendering of the Danse Macabre where clerics, rulers and serfs were all drawn into Death's dance regardless of status, knowledge or wealth. (A)



Figure 22: As memorialization moved outside the basilica, monuments gradually became less ostentatious in the 18th century. St. Paul's cemetery, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada. Photograph by Kenneth MacKendrick.



Figure 23: The pastoral cemetery aesthetic. Gretna, Manitoba, Canada. (A)

This contemplative response to the images of death spawned a reflexive relationship between death, literature and landscape. Interestingly, from the 14th and into the 18th century, when macabre imagery abounded, the cemetery landscape was far from sinister or morbid. Cemeteries were public places, bustling with crowds focused more on the activities of daily life than those of death.¹³⁸ The Christian rights of sanctuary and pilgrimage had turned the area surrounding churches, the cemetery, into a forum, plaza, market and fairground free from taxation and law enforcement, indifferent to the shallow graves, regular exhumations and surrounding ossuaries.¹³⁹ However, mid-18th century edicts against these practices and festivities, many of which conflicted with the moral tenants of the Church and hygienic strictures of the Enlightenment, emptied the cemeteries of such animation.¹⁴⁰

Beginning in the late 17th century and into the 18th century, a desire for simplicity rose out of a sense of life's temporality coupled with anxiety regarding the afterlife.¹⁴¹ 18th century writers, poets and philosophers such as Alexander Pope, James Thomson, Robert Blair, Thomas Gray and Edward Young extolled the melancholy virtues of the landscape, particularly those of tombs and country churchyards.¹⁴² Gothic became a literary genre, where the supernatural, horrific, and melancholy are celebrated.¹⁴³ Simultaneous with contemplation of mortality, the Gothic landscape began to be admired for its "aesthetic, poetic, and emotional aspects."¹⁴⁴ Memorials and mourning gradually became more subdued and the humble outdoor cemetery rose in popularity (*Figure 23*).¹⁴⁵ Rising stoic and pantheist perspectives sought to again "tame" death, transforming it to a kindly return to the bosom of the earth.¹⁴⁶ Death, like nature, was serene, at least to the poet.

¹³⁸ Ragon, *The Space of Death*, 143.

¹³⁹ Ariès, *The Hour of Our Death*, 68.

¹⁴⁰ Ragon, *The Space of Death*, 145; Richard A. Etlin, *The Architecture of Death: The Transformation of the Cemetery in Eighteenth-Century Paris* (Cambridge MA: The MIT Press, 1984), 12.

¹⁴¹ Ariès, *The Hour of Our Death*, 322-4.

¹⁴² Ragon, *The Space of Death*, 209; Curl, *The Victorian Celebration of Death*, 1-11.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, 2.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 2.

¹⁴⁵ Ariès, *The Hour of Our Death*, 333-7.

¹⁴⁶ Ragon, *The Space of Death*, 209.

The poetry, philosophy and imagery that transformed the perspective of death were also inspirational in the formation of the Picturesque garden, the two landscapes paralleling one another. Writers began combining melancholy contemplation with the landscape. Of these “graveyard poets,” the most influential was Edward Young¹⁴⁷ and his poem ‘Night Thoughts’.¹⁴⁸ Lines such as:

*This is Creation’s melancholy Vault,
The Vale funeral, the sad Cypress gloom;
The land of Apparitions, empty Shades;
All, all on earth is Shadow, all beyond
Is Substance; the reverse is Folly’s creed*¹⁴⁹

formed a poetic context of melancholy remorse and contemplation. Although the poem’s intention was to encourage contemplation of the afterlife, it inspired a European emphasis on remembrance, memorial, and contemplation in the landscape.¹⁵⁰

As musings on the sublime and awe-inspiring wonders of the natural world abounded, 18th century estates were transformed into expansive idyllic gardens.¹⁵¹ These were classical Arcadian landscapes, idealized representations of Virgil’s pastoral landscape dwelling of Pan.¹⁵² In the English garden of Leasowes, poet William Shenstone connected the elegy with the landscape creating a model Arcadian landscape where both death and life dwelt.¹⁵³ Monuments to classical ideals and recreations of poetic scenes began to be set into many European estates to varying degrees of success (*Figure 24*). However, the English Elysian gardens would most greatly influence the development of the 19th century cemetery. The gardens of Leasowes near Birmingham and Stowe in Buckinghamshire profoundly influenced the French concept of the cemetery,¹⁵⁴ which would in turn dramatically alter the funerary landscape of the western world.

¹⁴⁷ Curl, *The Victorian Celebration of Death*, 3.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 5.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 5.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 7.

¹⁵¹ Etlin, *The Architecture of Death*, 163; Ragon, *The Space of Death*, 210.

¹⁵² Curl, *The Victorian Celebration of Death*, 11.

¹⁵³ Etlin, *The Architecture of Death*, 176.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 184.

The catalyst for the joining of the Arcadian landscape and the cemetery would be the burial of Jean Jacques Rousseau on the picturesque estate of Ermenonville, France. At his estate the Marquis de Girardin designed an intimate Elysian garden for Rousseau, calling it the Leasowes of France.¹⁵⁵ On his death, Rousseau was temporarily interred in the garden¹⁵⁶ and a great monument erected in his honour. The image of the funerary monument to Rousseau set on an island surrounded by poplars (*Figure 25*) became iconic for burial in the landscape and “the tomb entered the garden.”¹⁵⁷ Gradually, a vogue for private burial in an Arcadian, pastoral landscape developed as the ideal ‘civilized’ death.¹⁵⁸ Humble tombs set into peaceful landscapes far removed from the horrors of rank decay, were replicated,¹⁵⁹ although contradictions abounded. The peaceful country churchyard contrasted sharply with Gothic crypts of novels while imagery of Rousseau’s tomb contrasted renderings of macabre tombs.¹⁶⁰ A humble burial, viewed to be in keeping with Nature, took on two forms: return to Nature, in the form of the country churchyard, and return to nothingness, in the form of dark underground vaults.¹⁶¹

A landscape of trees, water, and plants grew to become the most widely accepted setting for the private tomb in North-Western Europe.¹⁶² However, the majority of burials fell far short of the idyllic garden burial.¹⁶³ The tradition of crowding bodies into mass church graves within the confines of the city persisted in many parts of Europe leading to health concerns and a very bleak view of death.¹⁶⁴ The peaceful landscape garden cemetery became preferred to the chaotic minefields of decay lingering from the Middle Ages.¹⁶⁵ The development of Père-Lachaise Cemetery of Paris in 1804, a cemetery separate from the church and within a picturesque landscape, was revolutionary as it removed the cemetery

¹⁵⁵ Ibid., 204.

¹⁵⁶ The body of Jean-Jacques Rousseau was moved to the Pantheon in Paris in 1794 (Etlin, *The Architecture of Death*, 245-246).

¹⁵⁷ Etlin, *The Architecture of Death*, 1984, 163.

¹⁵⁸ Curl, *The Victorian Celebration of Death*, 11.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid., 11.

¹⁶⁰ Ragon, *The Space of Death*, 211.

¹⁶¹ Ariès, *The Hour of Our Death*, 346.

¹⁶² Curl, *The Victorian Celebration of Death*, 17.

¹⁶³ Ibid., 23.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid., 23.

¹⁶⁵ Etlin, *The Architecture of Death*, 163.

from connotations of judgment and decay.¹⁶⁶ This garden cemetery became known as a peaceful place of mourning and remembrance and became the prototype for the 19th century funerary garden.¹⁶⁷

With the Enlightenment came the need to abolish irrational fear and sensationalist depictions of death, which were to be replaced by rational and moral reflection. Salvation, no longer secured by last rights or memorialization, was to be attained through a moral life. The cemetery became less public and more private as community fairs, markets and meetings were discouraged by the clergy. Rituals and burials became more simplified than sensational, favouring themes of nature and Arcadia over the macabre and grandiose. However, though a simple country burial was increasingly idealized, the majority of urban cemeteries remained overcrowded and rank with decay, preparing the ground for the peaceful landscapes of garden cemeteries.



Figure 24: Bridge and Pantheon of Stourhead, Wiltshire, England. An excellent example of the influential British arcadian landscape. (A)



Figure 25: The Island of Poplars Ermenonville, France based on historical representation. (A)

¹⁶⁶ Curl, *The Victorian Celebration of Death*, 25.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 24-25.

SUMMARY

As the history of death is traced in the Christianized Western World, a gradual transformation of Christian death, burial and memorial is evident. Early Christian burial was not separate from those of surrounding influential cultures, with Christian's buried alongside the unbelievers of their communities using similar customs. What set Christian burial apart was the attitude towards death rather than the rituals of death and interment. However, this attitude would profoundly influence the rituals of death and interment in the centuries to follow as Christians, not fearing death or the dead, began to merge the resting places of the dead with those of the living.

Over the centuries, Christian death and burial, once perceived to be a shared repose until the bodily resurrection and reunion with God, became an individualized decent into bodily decay and spiritual uncertainty. With this uncertainty, the tangible memorials and rituals surrounding Christian death rose in importance. As this fear of death increased so too did the elaboration of rituals and of individual memorials in attempts to alleviate the dread and isolation now associated with death, transforming deathbeds into stages for spiritual battles and churches into museums of past parishioners. This sensationalism related to death and dying was not to last. With the Enlightenment came a desire for more rational and moral approaches to both life and death and the concept of a simple country burial of the individual rose in popularity. Death, perceived by early Christians as a tame and benign reality, had become a wild and fearsome fate, which would be tamed again through the intellectual and moral ideals of the Enlightenment.

4. ROMANTICIZATION

CIRCA 18TH CENTURY TO PRESENT

Written accounts and graphic illustrations describing the deplorable conditions of most urban cemeteries of the 18th century make the transition to the garden cemetery model understandable. By the end of the 17th century, urban cemeteries, particularly in England and France, had reached a crisis as the grade of the churchyards rose higher than the streets.¹⁶⁸ This congestion coupled with regular visitations of plagues led to the push for cemeteries removed from the church proper. The first generation of cemeteries was no longer adjacent to the church, but remained in proximity.¹⁶⁹ Many of these 16th and 17th century relocations had less to do with sanitation than they did expansion of the church building itself.¹⁷⁰

However, by the middle to late 18th century concerns regarding sanitation generated greater receptivity to removal of cemeteries from the vicinity of the living.¹⁷¹ This second generation made a more dramatic break with tradition, by allowing land prices and sanitation rather than the holiness of a site to determine a cemetery's location.¹⁷² This new generation of cemeteries reflects the beginnings of a very different perspective of death; one more influenced by economics, sentimentality and sanitation rather than spiritual significance or well-being. Though previous burial practices held some form of hierarchy and segregation, by the 18th century, many churches had two cemeteries: one nearby for the rich who would demand a church ceremony and one remote and, therefore, cheaper cemetery for the poor where a graveside service could be held.¹⁷³ A radical shift in the purpose, design and maintenance of the cemetery had begun.

¹⁶⁸ Curl, *The Victorian Celebration of Death*, 32.

¹⁶⁹ Ariès, *The Hour of Our Death*, 318-319.

¹⁷⁰ Ariès, *The Hour of Our Death*, 479.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 479.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*, 319.

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*, 320.

FRANCE

This shift was most dramatic in late 18th century Paris, where the Revolution flooded the cemeteries, but also created a political climate of reform.¹⁷⁴ Communal graves, made necessary by plague and civil war, became abhorrent to authors advocating a new kind of cemetery.¹⁷⁵ These new cemeteries proposed after the Terror, a period of mass executions during the French Revolution, called for the secularization and egalitarianization of the cemetery, but also an overall aim to diminish the horror associated with death and places of death.¹⁷⁶ By the final years of the 18th century, numerous decrees and reports had been issued and new cemeteries were being proposed.

In 1794 the Administration of Public Works reflected these changing ideals in the pivotal Avril report, by Jean-Baptist Avril. Instead of a mass grave the cemetery was to be a “field of rest”. Bodies were to be buried in individual graves, forming orderly rows in a landscape of grass and trees with a central monument recording those buried in the cemetery.¹⁷⁷ The Avril report proposed four municipal “fields of rest” that were to be in isolated, rural settings (*Figure 26*): one in the South West which would become the Cemetery of Montparnasse, one in the North which would become the Cemetery of Montmartre, one in the South East which was never realized and one in the East which also failed to be realized after the Cemetery of Père Lachaise opened slightly north of it.¹⁷⁸ Of those cemeteries that were realized, Montparnasse most clearly reflects the original intentions of the Avril report¹⁷⁹ in its centralized plan and ordered plots (*Figure 27*). However, it was Père Lachaise cemetery (*Figure 28, 29, 30 & 31*) that would form the final stage of years of planning and proposals, eventually becoming the iconic image of the garden cemetery throughout the Western world.

The garden cemetery of Père Lachaise was not designed in a vacuum, but in a climate where reform and proposals proliferated. The end of the 18th century saw the social climate

¹⁷⁴ Etlin, *The Architecture of Death*, 229.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 229.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 236; Curl, *The Victorian Celebration of Death*, 24-25.

¹⁷⁷ Etlin, *The Architecture of Death*, 240.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 240; Curl, *The Victorian Celebration of Death*, 25.

¹⁷⁹ Etlin, *The Architecture of Death*, 241.

shift to once again permit the visible expression of socioeconomic diversity in the cemetery, as the contrasts of freedom to do what one wished and status in society became matters of reflection to be delighted in rather than concealed.¹⁸⁰ Death was already egalitarian, why not also the cemetery? Proposals to follow would combine the growing interest of memorializing people of merit in picturesque gardens with the “field of rest”. Some of the proposals were grandiose in their scale and architectural ambition as pretenses to egalitarianism waned over time, while other more conservative designs were modest in scale, with the most simple and economic schemes essentially returning to the model of the mass grave only with greater provisions to shield the public from the horrific scenes within.¹⁸¹ Many proposals contained combinations of both models with grandiose tombs for the wealthy and concealed mass graves for the poor. Père Lachaise was no different.

Although hierarchies existed in the traditional church cemetery, all parishioners were given the honor of burial on holy ground in essentially the same location. The hierarchical layout of Père Lachaise signifies a break with the past as the economic means of the deceased and the deceased’s family determined its program more than the rituals and observances of faith. The site was an 18th century formal garden of a country estate located to the East of Paris once inhabited from 1675 to 1709 by Jesuit Francis d’Aix de la Chaise,¹⁸² thus the name Père Lachaise was adopted for the cemetery. The gardens had a distinctively sloped topography, which Alexandre-Théodore Brongniart, Chief Inspector General of the Second Section of Public Works for the Department of the Seine and the City of Paris, divided into distinct zones of burial according to modes and areas outlined by Prefect Forchot.

The lower plains of the estate were designated as public cemeteries for the poor where the graves would be reopened on a six-year schedule and temporary, unobtrusive memorials were permitted.¹⁸³ For those of modest means, individual graves with a monument, purchased with a five year renewable lease, were located on the lower plains not already

¹⁸⁰ Ibid., 273-280.

¹⁸¹ Ibid., 273.

¹⁸² Ibid., 303-305.

¹⁸³ Ibid., 310.

used for public burial and along the alleys and paths.¹⁸⁴ For those of means, burial in perpetuity was available in two forms: a covered arcade made up of a series of tombs that would eventually surround the cemetery, which was never realized, or family vaults or mausolea located within the garden.¹⁸⁵

The garden's geometry radiated from the main feature of the site, a gradually sloping hill, with a grand, tree lined entry leading to its crest on which was proposed a pyramidal chapel. A combination of geometric and sinuous tree lined alleys fanned out from the hill's apex into to the cemetery, terminating in *rond-point* where elaborate mausolea were to be located. These carriageways divided the cemetery into distinct sections that were, in turn, broken up into smaller section by paths that wound through the hilly terrain. The plantings along the carriageways reinforced the cemetery's sense of order with double rows of lime trees lining the entry sloping up to the chapel, meeting with a transverse alee of chestnut and poplar lined the carriageway that ran along the lower right corner of the grounds.¹⁸⁶ Traditionally cypress and yew were used in the cemetery, but it was felt that the thick foliage of the lime, chestnut and poplar maintained a sober and melancholy aspect without harkening back to the cemeteries of the past.¹⁸⁷

Though a beautiful garden in itself, the prestige of Père Lachaise cemetery increased with the number of stunning funerary monuments placed within it. In the years between 1816 and 1825, a vogue for magnificent tombs began, resulting in memorials that increased in size and number.¹⁸⁸ By the 1830s, tourists often visited the cemetery before sightseeing in Paris with guidebooks and itineraries published to help sightseers plan their visit.¹⁸⁹ Interestingly, it became desirable to be buried in such a magnificent garden just as it was once desirable to be buried *ad sanctos*, near the relics of the Saints.¹⁹⁰ With its fame spread the cemetery's influence throughout Europe and across the Atlantic.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid., 310-312.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid., 312.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid., 343.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid., 343-344.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid., 335, 340.

¹⁸⁹ Curl, *The Victorian Celebration of Death*, 69; Etlin, *The Architecture of Death*, 340.

¹⁹⁰ Curl, *The Victorian Celebration of Death*, 25.



Figure 26: Mid 18th century Paris showing proposed sites for rural cemeteries. (A)

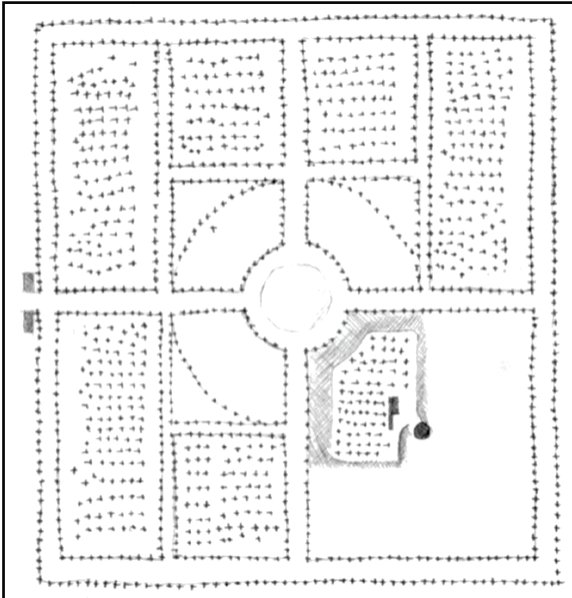


Figure 27: (Left) Late 18th century plan of Montparnasse, Paris, the rural cemetery most true to the vision of the Avril Report. (A)



Figure 28: 1862 plan of Pere Lachaise. Paris, France. (A)

1) Primary Entrance; 2) Monument Aux Morts;
 3) Hill crest; 4) Rond Point of Casimir, Perier;
 5&6) Expansions following 1839.



Figure 29: One of the many monument lined avenues of Pere Lachaise. Photograph by Alan Tate.



Figure 30: Pere Lachaise, the Avenue North of the Primary Axis. Photograph by Alan Tate.



Figure 31: Pere Lachaise, Monument Aux Morts. Photograph by Alan Tate.

NORTH AMERICA

Problems of overcrowding, pollution and desecration of graves were not isolated to the European continent. The 19th century was full of change and new ideas in the new world as well. Prior to the 19th century, Americans initially interred their dead in disorganized, isolated and poorly marked pioneer gravesites usually very near the place of death.¹⁹¹ Eventually, more formal, domestic burial grounds were formed on family homesteads made and tended by the families themselves (*Figure 32*). These unprecedented cemeteries were usually situated on high ground and occasionally enclosed by a stone wall or wood fence with markers placed irregularly around the enclosure.¹⁹²

Following the establishment of churches, burial was permitted within the churchyard and even in urban churches, within church vaults, similar to the European style.¹⁹³ The typical American churchyard was unlike the majority of its European counterparts as it was rarely fenced or enclosed, allowing fairs, markets, meetings and occasionally grazing to take place between the flat, carved wood and stone markers dotting the cemetery.¹⁹⁴ For those unable to afford a vault or grave there was the Potter's Field, an area in the community graveyard set aside for strangers and the poor.¹⁹⁵ Although clearly based on European models and history, the American cemetery formed a culture of death unique to the challenges of eking out an existence in the New World.

As with the French Revolution, the American Revolution of the late 18th century created a culture desirous of change and cemeteries full of bodies.¹⁹⁶ In the effort to forge a new American identity, colonial graveyards of the preceding century were deemed passé: their location within the urban centre was regarded as unsanitary and their continuation of economic distinction in death was undesirable.¹⁹⁷ Although American cities had not yet experienced the same degree of horrors due to overcrowded cemeteries as many European

¹⁹¹ David Charles Sloane, *The Last Great Necessity: Cemeteries in American History* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991), 13-14.

¹⁹² *Ibid.*, 13-15.

¹⁹³ *Ibid.*, 13, 17-24.

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 20-22.

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 13, 24-25.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 2, 11.

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 11.

cities, war and epidemics of diseases such as Yellow Fever and Cholera increased the desire for burial to be moved outside urban centers.¹⁹⁸ Some smaller 18th century cemeteries were developed such as the new burial place of the New Haven Burial Ground (1797), where a grid of Lombardy poplar lined avenues spread from an axial entrance avenue.¹⁹⁹ However, the opening of Mount Auburn (*Figure 33, 34, 35 & 36*) in 1831 on a densely wooded site near Boston Massachusetts, gave North America its first rural cemetery in the true garden style.²⁰⁰

Unlike its inspiration, Père Lachaise, Mount Auburn was a private cemetery unconcerned with profit as it was supported and run by the Massachusetts Horticultural Society.²⁰¹ A success from the beginning, Mount Auburn was both cemetery and garden, serving to bury the dead in a respectful manner and elevate the tastes and aspirations of the living.²⁰² Although inspired by Père Lachaise, the organization and atmosphere of Mount Auburn varies greatly from the original. The American cemetery is more informal in organization with sinuous carriageways meandering through the site's hilly terrain around groves of trees and pools of water, indirectly leading to the highest point, Mount Auburn, as opposed to the direct avenues of Père Lachaise that lead to a prominent chapel.²⁰³ In the place of architectural icons set in the grounds, the chapels and mausoleums of Mount Auburn are nestled into the rolling landscape.²⁰⁴ Heralded as superior in landscaping to Père Lachaise and the United Kingdom's Kensal Green, this American cemetery would inspire several others on both sides of the Atlantic.²⁰⁵ Though inspired by English and French gardening of the 18th century, the naturalized elegance and organization of the Mount Auburn Cemetery make it an unmistakable American first in landscape architecture.

¹⁹⁸ Curl, *The Victorian Celebration of Death*, 71, 73-74; Sloane, *The Last Great Necessity*, 29, 34-43.

¹⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 32-34.

²⁰⁰ Curl, *The Victorian Celebration of Death*, 71; Etlin, *The Architecture of Death*, 359.

²⁰¹ Curl, *The Victorian Celebration of Death*, 71.

²⁰² *Ibid.*, 71-72.

²⁰³ Etlin, *The Architecture of Death*, 366.

²⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 366.

²⁰⁵ Curl, *The Victorian Celebration of Death*, 73-74.



Figure 32: As families moved far away from the community church and cemetery, the remote homestead gravesites of early settlers became a part of the North American landscape. (A)

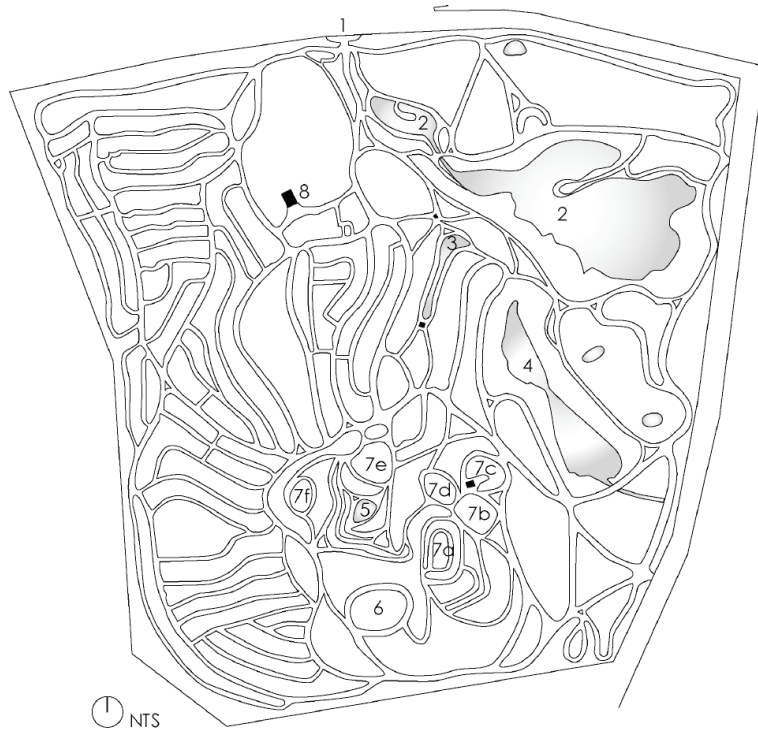


Figure 33: Plan of Mount Auburn circa 1841. Boston, Massachusetts. (A)

1) Entrance; 2) Garden Pond; 3)Forestry Pond; 4)Meadow Pond; 5)Consecration dell; 6)Mount Auburn; 7) Hills
 a)Harvard; b)Juniper; c)Temple; d)Cedar; e)Pine; f)Laurel; 8)Mount Auburn Cemetery Chapel

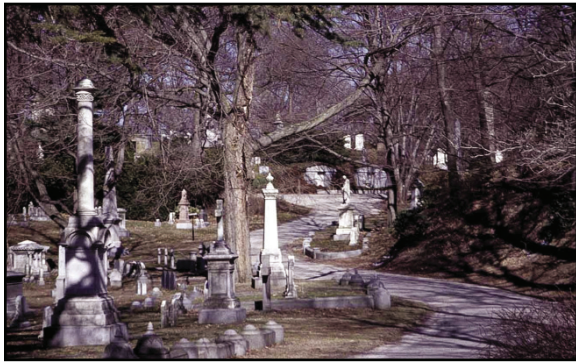


Figure 34: The winding paths of Mount Auburn Cemetery. Photograph by Alan Tate.

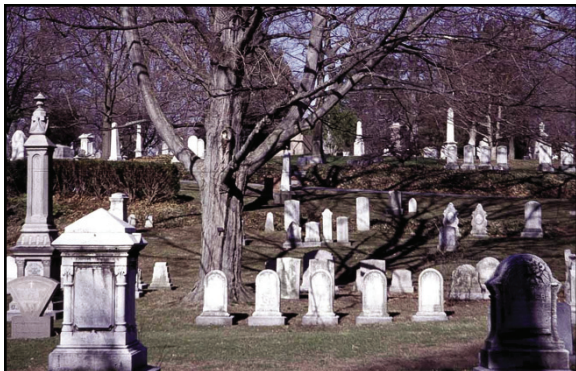


Figure 35: Mount Auburn Cemetery monuments. Photograph by Alan Tate.

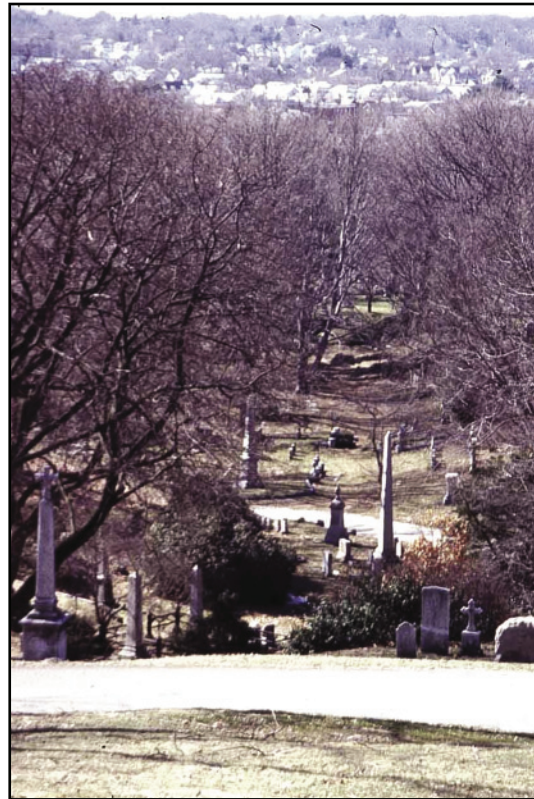


Figure 36: View from over Mount Auburn Cemetery from Mount Auburn. Photograph by Alan Tate.

THE UNITED KINGDOM

The United Kingdom also failed to be immune to the conditions of overcrowded cemeteries and began to institute change. By the 19th century, many private British cemeteries were largely separate from crowded churchyards, but that did not necessarily mean improved conditions, as safeguards against an undignified death often proved to be illusory.²⁰⁶ With burial grounds being so long in deplorable condition, it was not customary for mourners and the general public to visit the grave, leaving new isolated cemeteries to be visited only by vermin and grave robbers.²⁰⁷ By the 1830s the press and medical personnel began to draw attention to the shoddy conditions of these unregulated burial sites, calling for suburban cemeteries open to all as a preventative measure against disease.²⁰⁸

Impressed by Père Lachaise, London philanthropist George Carden sought to improve burial in London.²⁰⁹ The late 1830s saw the development of London's General Cemetery of All Souls on Kensal Green.²¹⁰ The burgeoning celebration of family and individuality with in the middleclass led to the cemetery's success²¹¹ and, over time, it became filled with a rich collection of eclectic monuments.²¹² In Britain, more cemeteries opened as Kensal Green's success became apparent.²¹³ Gothic architecture pervaded these new developments as the Gothic style became associated with Christianity and British patriotism.²¹⁴ Despite the fact that several new cemeteries were being opened, high-density burial and deplorable conditions continued as part of general practice in the United Kingdom.²¹⁵ Several of the cemeteries established were, like Kensal Green, private, joint stock ventures with profit as their primary aim. This meant the dead, particularly the poor dead, remained subject to what was increasingly considered by the educated classes to be the indignity of interment in repeatedly opened, anonymous mass graves.²¹⁶

²⁰⁶ Ibid., 40.

²⁰⁷ Ibid., 39.

²⁰⁸ Ibid., 113, 116.

²⁰⁹ Ibid., 44-45.

²¹⁰ Ibid., 48-60.

²¹¹ Ibid., 60.

²¹² Ibid., 66.

²¹³ Ibid., 84.

²¹⁴ Ibid., 86.

²¹⁵ Ibid., 109.

²¹⁶ Ibid., 112.

Pressure for reform climaxed in 1837 with the first ‘scientific’ report on the condition of cemeteries written by Thomas Southwood Smith and Edwin Chadwick.²¹⁷ Their findings echoed those of Walker and other writers. Smith’s recommendations drew on the writings of John Claudius Loudon, which advocated garden cemeteries, going one step further to prophesy that cremation would become the universal mode of burial in the future.²¹⁸ In 1843 a supplementary report, issued by Chadwick, the recommendations were widened to include corpse houses to store the bodies until their burial and national cemeteries rather than private ventures,²¹⁹ arguing that private ventures could not and would not help conditions and calling for a reuse of national gravesites every 10 years in the style of German cemeteries.²²⁰ Progress was slow as the Irish famine, which drew attention away from matters of sanitation though ironically swelling cemetery populations, and oppositional pamphlets, circulated by those profiting from unregulated private cemetery enterprise, among other political distractions impeded implementation of Smith and Chadwick’s recommendations.²²¹

More Reports and Acts were generated, becoming increasingly stringent in their regulations and broad in their provisions until the Metropolitan Burial Act of 1852. This Act marked a significant change in cemetery development as it began the institution of public cemeteries outside the city limits, where the burial needs of the working class would be met.²²² By 1857, use of the Act extended through England, Wales and Scotland, effectively bringing the burial crisis to an end.²²³ Finally those less well off were cared for as a “working system of inexpensive public interment”²²⁴ was created by the Act, using existing administrative powers such as parishes to regulate burial grounds.²²⁵ Many vestries established burial

²¹⁷ Ibid., 119.

²¹⁸ Ibid., 121.

²¹⁹ Ibid., 122.

²²⁰ Ibid., 124-126.

²²¹ Ibid., 131-133.

²²² Ibid., 141.

²²³ Ibid., 141.

²²⁴ Ibid., 141.

²²⁵ Ibid., 142.

boards²²⁶ and several public cemeteries were formed throughout London.²²⁷ Although private ventures persisted in the mid 19th century, by the 1890s municipal boards became more prevalent.²²⁸ The morbid horrors of 17th and 18th century cemeteries in the United Kingdom began to be replaced with more tender references to slumber and remembrance.

VICTORIAN MOURNING

The Victorian era of the mid to late 19th century ushered in a new perspective on cemetery design in England and her colonies, but saw even more dramatic changes regarding the rituals and sentiment surrounding death and mourning (*Figure 37*). This Victorian celebration of death can trace its beginnings back as far as 16th century literature themed with melancholy reflections on death and life.²²⁹ Such musings ushered in the age of what Ariès terms Beautiful Death in the 19th century where individuals began to focus on the death of the other.²³⁰ 18th century fears spawned the desire for solace and 19th century concepts of repose and reunion in the afterlife. Death became a subject and source of poetry and love²³¹ with reveries that would have been portrayed as erotic, macabre or gothic in the 17th and 18th century displayed as reverently passionate and funereal in the 19th.²³² A rising belief in communication between the dead and the living, generally termed spiritualism, spurred the cult of the dead to become a cult of memorial, where mementos of loved ones and their tombs and funerals gained prominence and elaboration.²³³ Death was no longer to be feared, but to be romanticized.

For the Victorian mourner, the trappings and rites of mourning (*Figure 38*) were as much an expression of rank and status as were the permanent memorials within the cemeteries.²³⁴ A rising middleclass wishing to ‘show up’ the gentry in both life and death led to the mimicry of a baronial funeral with attendants, plumes, and processions, which many could

²²⁶ Ibid., 150.

²²⁷ Ibid., 150-159.

²²⁸ Ibid., 166.

²²⁹ Ibid., 1.

²³⁰ Ariès, *The Hour of Our Death*, 409.

²³¹ Ibid., 415.

²³² Ibid., 443.

²³³ Ibid., 460-462.

²³⁴ Curl, *The Victorian Celebration of Death*, 195.

ill afford.²³⁵ This display created an entire industry to meet the demand for mourning clothes, jewelry, stationery and souvenirs.²³⁶ The funeral procession was a major Victorian event as well as a major expense.²³⁷

However, by the 1870s and 80s street rituals, which were seen as exploitive, began to be toned down and a desire for simplicity began in the upper classes and gradually trickled down to the lower classes.²³⁸ State funerals remained spectacular with ornate settings of “lying-in-state”, long processions and heroic architectural monuments,²³⁹ which became common sights in the urban landscape.²⁴⁰ Though waning by the beginning of the 20th century, the rituals surrounding the Victorian celebration of death were revolutionary for Western funerary practices, where grief and memorialization became a cultural preoccupation. The funeral became more focused on the journey of the dead and their survivors to the cemetery than that of the soul into eternity, marking yet another change in the cultural perception of death.

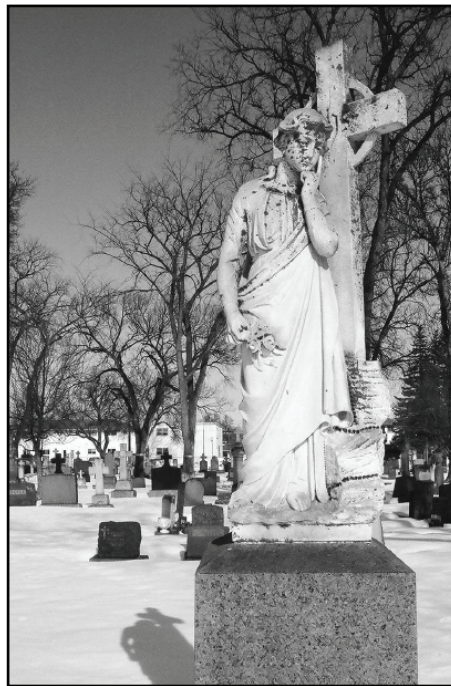


Figure 37: Late 19th and early 20th century tombstones demonstrate the growing sentimentality and reflection of Victorian mourning. St Mary's cemetery, Winnipeg. (A)

²³⁵ Ibid., 197.

²³⁶ Ibid., 199-204.

²³⁷ Ibid., 204.

²³⁸ Ibid., 208-209.

²³⁹ Ibid., 214-216.

²⁴⁰ Ibid., 220.

SUMMARY

Though a desire for a simple outdoor burial had risen in popularity during the latter years of the 18th century, the majority of Western European burial grounds fell far short of this ideal. The issues related to these crowded conditions escalated until they could not be ignored. Scientists, doctors and reformers began to seek solutions through government regulation and urban sanitation, removing graveyards to the outskirts of communities and prohibiting overcrowded conditions. Spiritual concerns began to be outweighed by those of sanitation and economics. The Parisian garden cemetery of Père Lachaise became influential in the reform of cemeteries throughout Western Europe and North America, with burial in these beautiful cemeteries becoming as desirable as burial *ad sanctos* was centuries earlier. Such a landscape permitted the previously morbid cults of the dead to become sentimental cults of memorial. Death became romanticized and further ritualized. The trappings of funerals and rites of mourning, particularly in Victorian England, increased elaboration until the early decades of the 20th century when such dramatic sentiment began to wane.



Figure 38: Victorian funeral procession. Regardless of socio-economic status, proper Victorian mourning was public and elaborate. (A)

5. MODERNIZATION

CIRCA 19TH CENTURY TO PRESENT

INDUSTRIALIZATION & SECULARIZATION

The 19th century romanticism surrounding death could not be maintained for long as the harsh realities of death and decay became increasingly evident in the 20th century. As early as the 17th century it was apparent that cemeteries within areas of human occupation were issues of public health. In the 17th and 18th centuries, death became a subject of medical and scientific study²⁴¹ rather than theological meditation. Sanitation concerns, particularly in Parisian cemeteries, made the need to change traditional practice of burial in mass graves within towns to more hygienic solutions.²⁴² Such solutions evolved towards a system of individualized burial in cemeteries outside of the town that were dominated by themes of nature, regret for life, and the tomb with its poetic epitaph.²⁴³ The ancient tradition of burial outside the community was revived only this time on scientific grounds of sanitation rather than superstition.

By the end of the 18th century, ‘doctors’ were the authorities and handlers of death rather than the clergy; and sanitary concerns outweighed those of faith.²⁴⁴ Ironically, science played a part in generating as many fears of death as it appeased in the 18th and 19th centuries. Two camps developed within the scientific community of the 17th and 18th centuries; those who believed in separation between body and soul at death and those who believed in the sensibility of the corpse even after death.²⁴⁵ For some, the soul and body were separated in death, making the corpse less esteemed than a living body, while for others, the body remained intertwined with the soul, making any sense of disrespect to the body atrocious.

This unclear delineation between life and death would form the basis for two major fears of death in the early 19th century, premature burial and dissection. A scientific demand for

²⁴¹ Ariès, *The Hour of Our Death*, 354.

²⁴² *Ibid.*, 477-500.

²⁴³ *Ibid.*, 500-551.

²⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 353.

²⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 355.

cadavers created a fear of ‘resurrection men’ or ‘body-snatchers’. In order to gain intimate knowledge of anatomy, doctors, scientists, philosophers and artists performed human dissections, creating a demand for cadavers.²⁴⁶ This scientific demand conflicted with a desire for respect of the body. Cemeteries had to be guarded to prevent the theft of corpses²⁴⁷ and other preventative measures such as reinforced coffins and secure vault burial were sought.²⁴⁸ The second and longer lasting fear of burial alive was perpetuated by accounts of re-animation and scientific evidence of premature burials.²⁴⁹

Various preventative measures were mentioned in wills and writings such as specified waiting periods, being left as was, or scarification.²⁵⁰ Industrialization led to acceptance, even celebration, of innovative solutions.²⁵¹ For some, the solutions to burial alive and being ‘resurrected’ were one and the same. Either bury the body once it had deteriorated past the point of use to would-be anatomists and any doubt of death or cremate the body, thus achieving the same effect more quickly.²⁵² In this climate of fear, pro-cremationists promoted the use of cremation to prevent premature burial.²⁵³ Far from the open pyre of antiquity, cremators began to be designed with the mechanized efficiency the industrial era esteemed.

German engineer Friederich Siemens, who sought to make the cremation process as rapid as possible with minimal smoke and odor, designed one of the very first successful cremators in 1874 and this ‘Siemens System’ would provide the basis for the majority of Western cremators to come.²⁵⁴ Unlike historical pyres, this process did not use direct heat from combustion, but rather took gasses from original combustion and mixed them with the

²⁴⁶ Ibid., 364-366.

²⁴⁷ Ibid., 368.

²⁴⁸ Curl, *The Victorian Celebration of Death*, 40.

²⁴⁹ Ibid., 123-124.

²⁵⁰ Ariès, *The Hour of Our Death*, 399-400.

²⁵¹ Douglas J. Davies, Elizabeth Kent & Henry Keizer, introduction to *Encyclopedia of Cremation*, edited by Douglas J. Davies with Lewis H. Mates (Burlington: Ashgate Publishing, 2005), xx.

²⁵² Curl, *The Victorian Celebration of Death*, 120, 122-123, 182.

²⁵³ Ibid., 182.

²⁵⁴ Ibid., 182; Lewis H. Mates, “Cremators,” in *Encyclopedia of Cremation*, edited by Douglas J. Davies with Lewis H. Mates (Burlington: Ashgate Publishing, 2005), 148.

air (oxygen), thereby achieving higher temperatures that could be carefully regulated.²⁵⁵ The process was completed within 60 to 90 minutes without smoke or odor, leaving only white ashes to be collected once cooled.²⁵⁶ Cremation became the scientific solution to three prominent fears of the age: contamination, premature burial, and illegal dissection.

For the scientific world, Darwin's theory of evolution in the mid 19th century led to dramatic change regarding cultural perception of death and increased acceptance of cremation. A general loss of faith in the afterlife,²⁵⁷ which would only increase in following years, caused the cultural importance of faith, body and soul to diminish. In some cases, this loss led to the formation of spiritualistic and scientific cults as people searched for the least possibility of some form of afterlife.²⁵⁸ Comforting images of angels and scenes of an idyllic afterlife followed and multiplied.²⁵⁹

For those rejecting such notions as sentimental, cremation became a vehicle for social change.²⁶⁰ Those who held no belief in an afterlife or resurrection could have a ceremony devoid of religious elements.²⁶¹ Parks packed with funerary monuments led to more utilitarian notions of burial.²⁶² Cremation was seen by utilitarians simply as a modern, efficient and useful way to die.²⁶³ Even among some groups of devout believers, cremation was seen as desirable or, at least, compatible with Christian doctrine. Non-conformist believers wishing to distance themselves from the Church viewed cremation as a means of defiance.²⁶⁴ For some, cremation was a means to demonstrate Christian humility in death as well as life.

²⁵⁵ Ibid., 148.

²⁵⁶ Ibid., 148-149.

²⁵⁷ Curl, *The Victorian Celebration of Death*, 258-261; James A. Hijiya, "American Gravestones and Attitudes Toward Death: A Brief History," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 127, no. 5 (Oct, 1983), 357.

²⁵⁸ Curl, *The Victorian Celebration of Death*, 264.

²⁵⁹ Ibid., 264-265.

²⁶⁰ Davies, Kent & Keizer, introduction to *Encyclopedia of Cremation*, xx.

²⁶¹ Curl, *The Victorian Celebration of Death*, 181, 190.

²⁶² Ibid., 177.

²⁶³ Mary Roach, *Stiff* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 2003), 259-260.

²⁶⁴ Curl, *The Victorian Celebration of Death*, 181.

The Catholic Church finally permitted cremation to its followers in 1963, allowing the option of cremation to populations remaining under the influence of the Catholic Church.²⁶⁵ With separation from body and soul now commonly accepted among theologians, cremation was no longer seen to affect the soul or interfere with God's resurrection of the body and was therefore no longer discounted as an evil act.²⁶⁶ However, the spreading of ashes remains strongly discouraged within the Catholic Church where some form of interment of the ashes is expected.²⁶⁷ What was once the most dominant opposition to cremation accepted its practice in the latter half of the 20th century.

A process of secularization begun in the 19th century flourished in the 20th century allowing the rise of cremation as a funerary rite. Gradually, interest in cremation expanded and increased as the Victorian era drew to a close and the 20th century began. The science, technology, theology, politics, and economics of the Industrial era utterly transformed perspectives of both life and death, preparing the way for cremation's reintroduction to society and the cemetery landscape's second dramatic transformation.

POLITICIZATION

CREMATION

It could be said that those who control the dead control the living. In many European nations, secular rites such as cremation became a tool of political defiance for those seeking to break the Church's political power by decreasing its monopoly over death. Non-Conformists and Freemasons seeking to separate themselves from the Catholic church began to either advocate or take a softer line on cremation,²⁶⁸ leading to much higher rates of cremation in northern Lutheran or Anglican nations such as Great Britain, Denmark, Sweden and the Netherlands compared with countries that have greater Catholic influence.²⁶⁹ Eventually this political act was taken a step further and cremation became one

²⁶⁵ John Newton, "Catholic Church," *Encyclopedia of Cremation*, edited by Douglas J. Davies and Lewis H. Mates. (Burlington: Ashgate Publishing, 2005), 109.

²⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 109.

²⁶⁷ Roach, *Stiff*, 275; John Newton, 109.

²⁶⁸ Curl, *The Victorian Celebration of Death*, 181.

²⁶⁹ Davies, Kent & Keizer, introduction to *Encyclopedia of Cremation*, xxi.

of the major vehicles of secularist ideology to oppose religion entirely.²⁷⁰ In Communist nations, cremation was used by the State to wrest control of the dead and the beliefs of the population out of the hands of the Church.²⁷¹ Cremation as anti-establishment practice became the rite of choice for fledgling revolutionary societies.

PRIVATIZATION

In nations where a more delicate balance was struck between Church and State, such as in Atlantic Europe and North America, forms of control were subtler, falling under the guise of commercial and medical enterprise. However, such medical and economic controls over death are clearly co-relational to political control. Traditionally, religion determined how and where a person died and was buried. The medicalization of death allowed power over life and death to become less distinct. The direct control of sovereign powers, governments and heads of state, over death was replaced by the scientific management of life, allowing the dispersion of control to other figures such as doctors, patients, family, advocates, bureaucracies, clerics, philosophers and lawyers.²⁷²

With the adoption of commercial ventures of garden cemeteries located safely outside communities in 19th century France and Britain, churches and the living were separated from the dead.²⁷³ This “redefined the provision of space for interment as a civic rather than spiritual responsibility.”²⁷⁴ As civic standards for private cemeteries became necessary, due to the prevalence of private cemetery enterprises, the regulation and maintenance of cemeteries also became increasingly controlled by civic powers.²⁷⁵

Following World War II, there was an increasing number of deaths occurring in hospitals and civil control of the corpse was less resisted.²⁷⁶ Death in hospital became normalized,

²⁷⁰ Douglas J. Davies, “Secularization and Secularism,” in *Encyclopedia of Cremation*, edited by Douglas J. Davies with Lewis H. Mates. (Burlington: Ashgate Publishing, 2005), 373.

²⁷¹ Davies, Kent & Keizer, introduction to *Encyclopedia of Cremation*, xxiii-xxiv.

²⁷² Benjamin Noys, *The Culture of Death*. (New York: Berg, 2005), 53-54.

²⁷³ Curl, *The Victorian Celebration of Death*, 34-35.

²⁷⁴ Julie Rugg, “Lawn Cemeteries: The Emergence of a New Landscape of Death,” *Urban History* 33, no. 2 (2006), 215.

²⁷⁵ Curl, *The Victorian Celebration of Death*, 140-141.

²⁷⁶ Julie Rugg, 230.

eventually falling under the complete regulation and control of professionals.²⁷⁷ Death became “medicalized”, no longer considered natural, but rather a failure to be warded off and then concealed by doctors, funeral directors, and civil servants.²⁷⁸ Once death was removed from the home it fell under the control of medical professionals. Once cemeteries were removed from the vicinity of the church they were also removed from the power and condemnation of the clergy, allowing new powers to determine modes of burial.

MEDICALIZATION

MEDICALIZATION OF DEATH AND DYING

In the early 19th century, death still played a role in the lives of the larger social group as mourning was observed and condolences paid until life eventually returned to normal.²⁷⁹ However, the second half of the 19th century saw a growing disconnect between the dying, the dead, the bereaved and society. Cultural divisions begun in the 19th century between the living and the dead, the dying and their loved ones, would open the window for a growing cultural ignorance of the places of death in the 20th century; a phenomenon that Ariès would term the ‘Invisible Death’ of the Modern era. Though there were many advantages to the transference of the cemetery grounds outside of the community, the change was not without ramifications. Separation between Church and cemetery also meant further separation between the living and the dead.²⁸⁰ Death was familiar and present, but became psychologically removed from the daily life of the community.²⁸¹

What is more, as health sciences and hospitals advanced, the sick and dying were also separated from their community. In a culture preoccupied with sanitation, deterioration was seen as disgusting and inconvenient, leading to a phenomenon of hidden death behind hospital doors.²⁸² Death had lost its romanticized façade and became “medicalized”, where the hospital was considered the normal setting for death, a death no longer considered

²⁷⁷ Ariès, *The Hour of Our Death*, 584-586; Davies, Kent & Keizer, introduction to *Encyclopedia of Cremation*, xxii.

²⁷⁸ Ariès, *The Hour of Our Death*, 584-586; Rugg, “Lawn Cemeteries,” 227.

²⁷⁹ Ariès, *The Hour of Our Death*, 559-60.

²⁸⁰ Curl, *The Victorian Celebration of Death*, 34-35.

²⁸¹ Ariès, *The Hour of Our Death*, 555.

²⁸² *Ibid.*, 567.

natural, but a failure to be warded off.²⁸³ The traditional farewells, death and preparation moved from the bedroom to the hospital room, surrounded by more machines than human beings. Medical concerns began to outweigh those of religion.²⁸⁴ Concern for the feelings of others made the duty of informing the dying of their plight in advance an odious task, limiting opportunities for farewells²⁸⁵ and ultimately denying the dying of a traditional 'good death'.²⁸⁶ No longer poetically personified or spiritually considered, death was reduced to a multitude of germs and diseases to be conquered or fought until the very end.

MEDICALIZATION OF BEREAVEMENT

As death became a medical issue, bereavement also became something to be remedied. The Victorian era saw several stately Royal funerals.²⁸⁷ However in 1849, the death of Queen Adelaide, wife of British King George IV, began a new tradition with the deceased's request for a quiet, private funeral.²⁸⁸ The funeral of Queen Victoria's mother was similarly peaceful though Queen Victoria's mourning was violent.²⁸⁹ Prince Albert's death in 1861 sent the Queen into long seclusion and mourning that was so extreme it was seen as unhealthy.²⁹⁰ By the 1880s, there was almost uniform rejection of ostentatious mourning.²⁹¹ Reserved for close family and friends, mourning and memorial were removed from societal consciousness.²⁹²

Following the wars of the first half of the 20th century, long periods of mourning became impractical as women of all classes had to enter the workforce and provide for their families in spite of their grief.²⁹³ Without public ritual, individual deaths in the 20th century went unmarked and grief became stigmatized by the larger community.²⁹⁴ Private mourning became an expression of modesty as the public was spared the inconvenience of interacting

²⁸³ Ibid., 584-586; Tony Walter, *The revival of death* (New York: Routledge, 1994), 12.

²⁸⁴ Tony Walter, *On Bereavement: The culture of grief* (Philadelphia: Open University Press, 1999), 85.

²⁸⁵ Ariès, *The Hour of Our Death*, 563.

²⁸⁶ Ibid., 567.

²⁸⁷ Curl, *The Victorian Celebration of Death*, 222.

²⁸⁸ Ibid., 225.

²⁸⁹ Ibid., 226.

²⁹⁰ Ibid., 229-230.

²⁹¹ Ibid., 230.

²⁹² Ariès, *The Hour of Our Death*, 575.

²⁹³ Walter, *On Bereavement*, 37.

²⁹⁴ Ariès, *The Hour of Our Death*, 576.

with the grieving without guidance from traditional ritual.²⁹⁵ Mourning was viewed as a morbid malady and conflict with the bereaved to be avoided.²⁹⁶

Death and mourning of the early 20th century became systematized through institutions and technology,²⁹⁷ creating some semblance of control over the increasingly unwieldy realities of death. The dead were to be left behind as the bereaved ‘moved on’ and ‘faced reality’. The cult of memorial became a cult of personal memory.²⁹⁸ Vestiges of the moral and sentimental Victorian celebration of death remain today, but overall attitudes toward death have utterly altered.²⁹⁹ Death is now less public with no uplifting funerary presence and little dignity for the dead and dying.³⁰⁰ The realms of death, life, public and private became separate worlds that the dying and the bereaved danced between.

The late 19th and early 20th century view of grief as illness translated into a mid-20th century obsession with its analysis, classification and, the oft’ used word, resolution. Control of death through medical understanding gradually shifted in cultural emphasis to control of grief through psychological understanding, what sociologist Tony Walter terms *late modern revival*,³⁰¹ the beginning of renewed interest in death, but through a clinical lens. Attention to the psychological phenomenon and ramifications of grief sparked a renewed interest in death and mourning, although only in clinical discourse. In an age where whatever could be classified could be controlled, such discourse was used to give practitioners and mourners a sense of control over grief.³⁰²

Various grief theories, attempting to find and explain causes, and models, describing and categorizing behavior, were developed regarding the nature(s) of grief and mourning.³⁰³ Critic of Modern bereavement, Colin Murray Parkes identified three main models and four

²⁹⁵ Ibid., 578-579.

²⁹⁶ Ibid., 580-581.

²⁹⁷ Ibid., 595.

²⁹⁸ Ibid., 577.

²⁹⁹ Curl, *The Victorian Celebration of Death*, 265-266.

³⁰⁰ Ibid., 266.

³⁰¹ Walter, *The revival of death*, 39-40

³⁰² Ibid., 39-40.

³⁰³ Walter, *On Bereavement*, 103.

prominent theories of grief that arose from this study and, though none is beyond criticism, these categories aid in assessment of cultural perception of grief and mourning. The models identified by Parkes are:

1. The phase model, classifying grief processes
2. The medical model, noting similarities between grief and illness
3. The grief work model, asserting painful effort is required to come to terms with loss.³⁰⁴

The major theories attempting to explain why we grieve are:

1. The stress and crisis theory, which understands grief as a stress response that has evolved with the human race
2. Freudian and Psychoanalytic theories, which suggest mental/emotional pain is repressed and must be brought into consciousness
3. Attachment theory, which asserts that childhood attachment and reliance on the parent is now rooted in human nature
4. Psychosocial theories, which describe bereavement in terms of roles and the need for new definitions of roles after a death.³⁰⁵

All three models place the bereaved on a trajectory from sentiment and pain to realism and resolution, perpetuating the ideal of the “stiff upper lip.” All four theories are similarly not without their faults. One of the most compelling and concise examples of discrepancy between theory and reality can be found in Freud’s own personal life. The most influential article for many psycho-analysts to follow was Freud’s ‘Mourning and Melancholia’ (1917), where he described grief as something to be arduously worked through over time until reality can be accepted and the dead left behind.³⁰⁶ After the deaths of his daughter and grandson, he found himself unable to form new attachments, yet he failed to include this reality into his writing.³⁰⁷ Such “anomalies” of lingering attachments mounted until they were too numerous to be ignored.

³⁰⁴ Ibid., 103.

³⁰⁵ Ibid., 103-104.

³⁰⁶ Ibid., 104.

³⁰⁷ Ibid., 105.

CHANGING PERCEPTIONS OF BEREAVEMENT

The late 1980s saw a growing emphasis on variations within models and theories of grief.³⁰⁸ Thus began what Walter terms *post-modern revival*, where systematic and universal stages of grief are deemed arrogant and concepts of personalized and unpredictable grief are embraced.³⁰⁹ Researchers increasingly discovered evidence of integration of the memory of the deceased into the life of the bereaved rather than detachment and began altering their theories and models accordingly.³¹⁰ Three of the most prevalent theories used by care workers: Kubler-Ross's five stages in her work *On Death and Dying*, Colin Murray Parks's three stages in *Bereavement*, and William Worden's four tasks in *Grief Counseling and Grief Therapy*, among others, emphasized that their stages were not necessarily experienced systematically, although they continued to use the term "resolution."

Following a literature review of clinical lore in 1989, Wortman and Silver indicated the existence of three patterns of coping with loss rather than one: moving gradually from high to low distress, never exhibiting extreme distress, and remaining in elevated distress for years.³¹¹ Resolution does not necessarily entail leaving the dead behind. It must be made clear that just as separation from the dead is no longer considered a necessity for resolution, integration will not be realistic for all people. There are many cultures and sub-cultures both now and historically that view separation from the dead or even banning the dead as a desirable outcome.³¹² Clinical lore now emphasizes diversity of and within the models and theories of grief. However, the convenient and efficient perception of grief as a journey towards detachment remains embedded in most corners of mainstream culture and care giving, perpetuating feelings of shame and isolation for those who continue to cherish the memory and even presence of the deceased.

³⁰⁸ Walter, *The revival of death*, 80.

³⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 40-41.

³¹⁰ Walter, *On Bereavement*, 105.

³¹¹ Walter, *The revival of death*, 81.

³¹² Walter, *On Bereavement*, 26-27.

PRIVATIZATION

COMMERCE

By the mid 20th century, the death industry³¹³ controlled the dead as the medical sciences controlled the sick and dying with power lying “in the hands of whoever is in possession of the dying or dead body.”³¹⁴ A growing personalized perception of death and grief descended from 19th century Romanticism, but, in the 20th century, they became a matter of commerce rather than one of culture and community.³¹⁵ Profit from death related services can be traced back to the publishing of *artes moriendi*, illustrated treatise on how to die well, of the 15th century. However, it was the Victorian celebration of death that would elevate the care of the dead to a profession of itself.

During that time, a large population of rising middle class sought to demonstrate its new wealth in death as much as life by imitating or surpassing the gentry in the lavish displays and expense of funerals.³¹⁶ A huge demand for the trappings of mourning; clothes, accessories, crepe shrouds, stationary, mementoes and memorials for the mourners and, for the funeral procession, porters, heralds, pall-bearers, mutes, pages, coffins, carriages and horses all adorned with palls and plums,³¹⁷ began, providing commercial opportunities for undertakers, tailors, coachmen, attendants, jewelers, florists, sculptors, publishers and cemetery directors. By the 1870s and 80s the funeral trade had toned elaborate funeral processions down under criticism of exploitation until the war of 1914-18 led to dramatic simplification of funerals due to shortages of men and horses and sheer number of dead.³¹⁸ Though the culture surrounding death had changed dramatically with the onset of the 20th century, the profession of the funeral director remained though more understated than in previous decades.

³¹³ A blanket term used in this document to signify the numerous services and merchandise related to the business of death, funerals, interment and memorial.

³¹⁴ Walter, *The revival of death*, 17.

³¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 41.

³¹⁶ Curl, *The Victorian Celebration of Death*, 194-195.

³¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 195-209 .

³¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 209-210.

This pattern was paralleled on the other side of the Atlantic. In the last half of the 19th century the role of the American funeral director expanded to include the untraditional service of embalming and to take over the traditional familial tasks of transportation, presentation and handling of the body. These services responded to the changing demands of death in a changing culture; embalming the body became popular after the American Civil War where delivering fallen soldiers home made such measures necessary; transporting the body was complicated by increasing the distance between the home and the cemetery; presenting the body in the home was often made difficult as crowded urban life and residences did not allow space for traditional viewings and wakes; and handling of the dead was complicated as civic and cultural regulation increased.³¹⁹

Although rural pockets of America resisted the professionalization of death through the first half of the 20th century,³²⁰ control of the dead gradually shifted to the new handlers of the deceased, the funeral director. After the 1950s, even memorial was institutionalized with funeral directors taking on what had been the role of the clergy in the 19th century, becoming doctors of grief.³²¹ By the mid 20th century the profession dominated all aspects of what was once a diversified range of caregivers and services.

By the mid to late 20th century, death became the specialized domain of the funeral director. With methods of preservation and presentation of the body scientifically understood and elevated to a sort of art form, the body became a sideline of a booming business. Reduced to its meanest form, death became an opportunity for sale of product³²² in a brutally competitive business environment.³²³ Conventional items such as caskets, urns, grave markers and burial plots or niches became mass produced for sale, but also the additional accoutrements of solid grave liners to protect the casket and body from the elements, personalized funeral programs and mementos such as throw blankets to cover the casket for the ceremony and then take home.

³¹⁹ Sloane, *The Last Great Necessity*, 120.

³²⁰ *Ibid.*, 120.

³²¹ Ariès, *The Hour of Our Death*, 599.

³²² Neil Bardal (funeral home director), interviewed by Erin Sawatzky, April 13, 2008, transcript.

³²³ Tom Jokinen (journalist), interviewed by Erin Sawatzky, April 8, 2008, transcript.

The death industry of the late 20th, early 21st century began aggressively marketing “pre-need properties” as a way for the dying to prepare for their death and alleviate the stress of their survivors regarding what the deceased would have desired done. This strategic move transformed the industry from a service, waiting for the demand to come to the professional, to a business, bringing the product to the customer. Making such contracts while the ‘customer’ is alive, healthy and economically solvent was deemed far more desirable than dealing with bereaved executors in the throws of grief and with potentially less available resources to spend.³²⁴ Although providing these trappings of death can aid some ‘customers’ in their grief, knowing that they did all they could, the sense of the industry’s profiting from another’s tragedy and self-serving motives, has led to a general distrust of the industry.³²⁵ The funeral is now seen by many as something to be got through financially and emotionally rather than a ritual to aid the grieving process.³²⁶

Regarding some aspects of funeral and memorial such skepticism is warranted. Journalist Tom Jokinen identifies an “interesting tension between running a business and the idea of ceremony and ritual. Which comes first and which matters most? It’s business, but it is rarely talked about as a business. It’s framed as something with honor and dignity and aesthetically pleasing, when in fact it really is about efficiency”³²⁷ and economics. It is often difficult to distinguish between where the influence culture ends and the constraints of commerce begin in current death ritual. This blurring of influences has led to questions regarding the perpetuation of rituals that that may be more beneficial to the death industry than the dead, dying, bereaved or society.

For instance, the promotion of elaborately personalized memorials and funerals may have more economic than therapeutic aims. As the popularity of simple, informal, and meaningful disposition where very little is marketable increases, the industry has responded

³²⁴ Ibid.

³²⁵ Mary Bradbury, “Forget me not: memorialization in cemeteries and crematoria,” in *Grief, Mourning and Death Ritual*, edited by Jenny Hockey, Jeanne Katz and Neil Small (Philadelphia: Open University Press, 2001) 218-225; Bardal, (interview) April 13, 2008.

³²⁶ Bardal, (interview) April 13, 2008.

³²⁷ Jokinen (interview), April 8, 2008..

by increasingly marketing “personalized” services and memorials.³²⁸ However, the avenues available for expression of the deceased’s individuality are guided less by the wishes of the population than commercial enterprise. What can be bought is determined by the largest part of the bell curve like any other viable business. Options are reduced to a few models that could suit the largest ‘wedge of the pie.’ If he golfed or if she liked flowers, there are options; if he was an avid xylophone player, you are out of luck.³²⁹ The trappings and vestments of death may appear personalized, but such personalization remains firmly within the structure and control of the business model.

CREMATION

In the early decades of the 20th century cremation became inexorably intertwined with the economics of the funerary business and the cemetery. Most problems related to disposal of the dead were resolved by this time, yet it was recognized that new cemeteries would eventually be filled as previous ones were.³³⁰ Several full cemeteries were demolished and converted to parks, while alternative modes of disposal began to be discussed.³³¹ Though gradual, cremation was experiencing increased interest in Britain by the 1870s with the Cremation Society of England established in 1874 and the belated legalization of the practice in the 1902 Cremation Act.³³² At the turn of the century, cremation was available in the majority of western European nations.³³³

Simultaneously interest was growing across the Atlantic. By 1901, private crematories were opening throughout the United States, with America’s first municipal crematory and mausoleum established in 1924 in Cleveland.³³⁴ Cremation was promoted as a modern and civilized solution to overcrowded cemeteries. The problem was that there were no rites for cremation, leading to tacked-on elements from ecclesiastical practice³³⁵ and a sense of

³²⁸ Ibid.

³²⁹ Ibid.

³³⁰ Curl, *The Victorian Celebration of Death*, 176.

³³¹ Ibid., 177-178.

³³² Rugg, “Lawn Cemeteries,” 215.

³³³ Sloane, *The Last Great Necessity*, 152.

³³⁴ Ibid., 151.

³³⁵ Curl, *The Victorian Celebration of Death*, 119.

unreality with no closure.³³⁶ Cremation was largely accepted by scientific and literary intelligentsia by the late 19th century, but remained abhorrent to the primarily Christian working class.³³⁷

It was the horror of mass death during the wars between 1914 and 1945 that eventually weakened opposition to cremation, which was previously looked upon as the equivalent of body snatching.³³⁸ During the interwar period, cremation societies invested heavily in propaganda contrasting cremation with burial, touting cremation as more hygienic, modern and economical in land-use and fees.³³⁹ Not only was there the possibility of contaminants infiltrating the air and ground water due to burial, the expansion of cemeteries was considered a waste of resources and a landscape out of keeping with the modern ideals of efficiency and economy.

The campaign of cremationists has changed little in over a century. Cremationist societies continue to build cremation as a global funerary rite and commercial enterprise. The mandates of the International Cremation Federation (ICF) are eightfold. The ICF seeks to:

- i) Educate the public of cremation's hygienic, ethical, economic, and aesthetic superiority to burial
- ii) Remove Customs hindrances to transport of remains,
- iii) Share good cremation practice
- iv) Create international agreements to ameliorate difficulties of deaths abroad
- v) Assist all members with advice and information
- vi) To publish literature on cremation
- vii) Organize international congresses, publishing reports, and maintaining a secretariat
- viii) Fostering the wider spread of cremation worldwide.³⁴⁰

In keying on past and present advantages, cremationists are able to continue to promote cremation as the 'sensible' choice of funerary ritual. No longer the pagan funerary pyre, cremation is to be considered clean and efficient and, therefore, both respectable and modern.

³³⁶ Ibid., 193.

³³⁷ Ibid., 184.

³³⁸ Ibid., 186.

³³⁹ Rugg, "Lawn Cemeteries," 215-216; Sloane, *The Last Great Necessity*, 148-151.

³⁴⁰ Davies, Kent & Keizer, introduction to *Encyclopedia of Cremation*, xxvi.

Modern cremation in Canada has a relatively young history and is therefore related more to commercial concerns than the sanitation issues that plagued Europe in the 19th century. Canadian cremation had its beginnings in Montreal's Mount Royal Cemetery Company in 1901, but did not see major advances until the late 1960s and 70s.³⁴¹ Pre-manufactured cremation units initially aided in cremation's growth as smaller operators could now afford to install cremators.³⁴² However, major growth following the 1960s has been attributed to the 1963 Catholic Church's lifting of the cremation ban. Though resistance still remained among leadership, an increasing number of Catholics were being cremated.³⁴³ It is this Christian ambivalence toward cremation that cremationists feel may:

*prove valuable for the crematorium itself during the twenty-first century. Given the mixed background of cremation prompted by freethinkers, medical reformists and town-planners as well as its mixed reception by Christianity, it is not duty-bound to any particular constituency. It is likely that cremation will maintain the dominance it has achieved in many societies while expanding in areas currently focused on burial.*³⁴⁴

Interestingly, though cremation was increasingly marketed as a universal, adaptable and modern treatment of the body, interment of the cremains did not change significantly from traditional modes. In 1981, earth burial of cremains in a cemetery was the most common form of disposal with the alternative of niches provided in columbaria or mausoleums.³⁴⁵ Though cremation was 'slow to take' in Canada in comparison to the United States, Canadian cremation rates are now nearly double those of their southern neighbors.³⁴⁶ There are many reasons for this, but the primary contributors are seen to be a declining sense of Christian faith that has only grown over the decades³⁴⁷ and the success of cremationist publications in Canada, where the promotion of cremation as sanitary and efficient was well-received.

³⁴¹ Lewis H. Mates, "Canada," in *Encyclopedia of Cremation*, edited by Douglas J. Davies and Lewis H. Mates. (Burlington: Ashgate Publishing, 2005), 103, 105.

³⁴² *Ibid.*, 105.

³⁴³ *Ibid.*, 105.

³⁴⁴ Douglas J. Davies, "Fire," in *Encyclopedia of Cremation*, edited by Douglas J. Davies with Lewis H. Mates. (Burlington: Ashgate Publishing, 2005), 195.

³⁴⁵ Mates, "Canada," 106.

³⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 106.

³⁴⁷ Stewart Windrum and Jody Nicholson, "Correlation and study in the decline of Christianity and Increase in Cremation," *Western School of Mortuary Practice Manitoba* (1995), 16.

It is clear that cremation is becoming increasingly prevalent in 21st century North America. The Cremation Association of North America (CANA) has projected the cremation rate for 2025 in the United States to be 48%,³⁴⁸ while in Canada the 2004 total cremation rate was already 56%.³⁴⁹ The reasons for the rising popularity of cremation in 21st century North America are as diverse, dynamic and numerous as the individuals currently choosing cremation.

In a 2005 study conducted by Wirthlin Worldwide for the Funeral and Memorial Information Council (FAMIC), of which the CANA is a member, American attitudes toward ritualization and memorialization were assessed. The survey results regarding the participant's reasons for choosing cremation over burial were as follows:

- it saves money (30%)
- it saves land (13%), with saving money leading by a relatively large margin.
- it was simpler (8%)
- the body was not in the earth (6%)
- personal preference (6%)
- there is no reason to save the body (5%)
- the ashes could be strewn (3%)
- it is less emotional (3%)
- the remains could go somewhere more meaningful (3%)
- 'bugs' would not consume the body (3%)
- it was convenient (2%)
- a personal history of claustrophobia (2%).³⁵⁰

Other reasons representing 1% or less cited an unburdened soul, religion, not wanting visitation, organ donation or family tradition as reasons for cremation and 7% did not know why they would choose cremation.³⁵¹

³⁴⁸ Wirthlin Worldwide, "2005 Wirthlin Report, A Study of American Attitudes Toward Ritualization and Memorialization," *Cremation Association of North America*, 2005, <http://www.cremationassociation.org/html/statistics.html> (Aug 12th, 2007), 1.

³⁴⁹ Cremation Association of North America, "Canadian Cremation Figures," *Cremation Association of North America*, n.d., <http://www.cremationassociation.org/html/statistics.html> (Aug 12th, 2007), 1.

³⁵⁰ Wirthlin Worldwide, "2005 Wirthlin Report, A Study of American Attitudes Toward Ritualization and Memorialization," 3.

³⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 3.

It is clear that monetary and land resource economics are the primary reasons for cremation in North America. Even the secondary considerations demonstrate the triumph of secular utilitarianism and economics. The acceptance of cremation in the 21st century stems from manifold changes in Western science, theology, politics and economics in the 20th century. The funerary industry of Europe and North America can be credited with much of the commercial success of cremation over the past few decades.

Cremation may now be studied by sociologists, historians, anthropologists and marketing analysts as a cultural phenomenon as much as a commercial enterprise. It is currently difficult to distinguish contemporary trends from commercial rhetoric as most information is from projection studies either funded or conducted by the funerary industry. The CANA is now North America's primary source for cremation statistics, facts, and articles for the public and professionals.³⁵² There are disadvantages in researching a phenomenon that is as much a commercial enterprise as a cultural phenomenon. Bias can be the result, but another unfortunate consequence is that matters not directly pertaining to commercial ventures are ignored or underestimated.

None of the CANA's research appears to address the sociological effects of cremation on the bereaved or on society as a whole. Rather, cultural factors are only researched as to their effect on the marketability of cremation or other funerary services. The present and near future use of cremation can be described statistically, but there is little 'hard data' on its emotional and cultural impact. The same reasons for selecting cremation today could potentially become equally weighty arguments against its practice tomorrow as cremation's emotional impact and environmental sustainability are increasingly scrutinized.

PASTORALIZATION

The shift in control of the dead from public institutions to private business held direct implications for the cemetery landscape. No longer the domain of clergy or civil servants,

³⁵² Jack M. Springer, "CANA," in *Encyclopedia of Cremation*, edited by Douglas J. Davies and Lewis H. Mates. (Burlington: Ashgate Publishing, 2005), 103.

commerce became the determining factor in the design and maintenance of cemeteries of the 20th century. Aging and expanding Victorian cemeteries were increasingly difficult to maintain both physically and psychologically. Care of 19th century garden cemeteries was very labor intensive with their clipped lawns, pruned trees and hedges and lush undergrowth. The complex landscape form of unstable and uneven soils and irregular monuments, where burial in perpetuity necessitated constant expansion, could not be sustained. Highly frequented areas were maintained to a reasonable level, but general standards were quite poor.³⁵³ As concerns for sanitation were addressed they were replaced with those of maintenance.

The increasing number of mausolea and monuments and their decreasing quality began to obscure the landscaped park aesthetic.³⁵⁴ As cemeteries filled, cemetery ‘suburbs’ were developed and the basic grid layouts of these additions, though maximizing land use, further compromised the rural aesthetic.³⁵⁵ Shortages in manpower and increased demand for cemetery services following World War I & II only highlighted the problems that had existed from the conception of the garden cemetery.³⁵⁶ In Britain during the 1920s and 30s, the National Association of Cemetery Superintendents began to consider the possibility of cemetery management becoming a profession, offering a specific range of services and skills.³⁵⁷ Two technologies of the modern era would prove useful in resolving these issues and would dramatically alter the funerary landscape: the cremation chamber and the lawn mower.

CREMATION

Cemetery managers recognized the implications of cremation on the cemetery at the earliest stages. Many noted concerns that many of those cremated were not buried or memorialized in stone in the cemetery.³⁵⁸ However, they generally did not oppose cremation. Rather, private American crematories and cemeteries integrated their functions with ornate

³⁵³ Rugg, “Lawn Cemeteries,” 218.

³⁵⁴ Curl, *The Victorian Celebration of Death*, 177; Sloane, *The Last Great Necessity*, 97.

³⁵⁵ Rugg, “Lawn Cemeteries,” 218.

³⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 222.

³⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 222.

³⁵⁸ Sloane, *The Last Great Necessity*, 151-152.

crematories being opened on cemetery land.³⁵⁹ In Britain an alliance was struck between the associations with the British Federation of Cremation Authorities changing its name in 1933 to include Cemetery and Crematorium Superintendents.³⁶⁰ In the first half of the 20th century, crematoriums were built within existing cemetery grounds to mitigate financial risk and provide a ‘strange’ new process with some degree of familiarity.³⁶¹ Cremationists did not view these integrated functions as contradictory, as the cremated dead would still require memorialization.³⁶² What was envisioned was a memorial park, where cremated remains were interred with minimal and/or communal monuments commemorating the deceased, free of demands of expansion and rumors of contamination.

This vision of the memorial park had its beginnings in the 19th century. Walker and Loudon had already projected that the ancient and cross-cultural rite of cremation would eventually supplant burial.³⁶³ William Robinson’s 1880 work *God’s Acre Beautiful or The Cemeteries of the Future* made him the most influential writer of the cremation movement.³⁶⁴ His work advocated an uncluttered picturesque landscape using urn burial with only a few general monuments³⁶⁵ that could serve the dual purpose of memorializing the dead and housing urns.³⁶⁶

On the other side of the Atlantic, American landscape gardener Adolph Strauch recognized the pitfalls of 19th century cemetery design and revolutionized the cemeteries of North America. In 1855, Strauch began the conversion of Cincinnati’s Spring Grove cemetery from a picturesque to a pastoral cemetery.³⁶⁷ Seeking to create a landscape of unity, simplicity and beauty, Strauch limited opportunities for the intrusion of individual and outlandish markers, rationalized the locations of substantial monuments, removed the outer wall of the cemetery and provided gardening services, for a fee, after restricting private

³⁵⁹ Ibid., 152.

³⁶⁰ Rugg, “Lawn Cemeteries,” 216-217.

³⁶¹ Ibid., 217.

³⁶² Sloane, *The Last Great Necessity*, 152.

³⁶³ Curl, *The Victorian Celebration of Death*, 179-181.

³⁶⁴ Ibid., 186-187.

³⁶⁵ Ibid., 187.

³⁶⁶ Ibid., 189.

³⁶⁷ Sloane, *The Last Great Necessity*, 97-105

gardening.³⁶⁸ Though opposed by angered traditionalists, Strauch was heralded as the founder of the modern cemetery by Ossian Cole Simonds, America's most influential 20th century cemetery designer, and was admired by Fredrick Law Olmsted, the famous landscape architect.³⁶⁹ Many cemeteries began to adopt Strauch's concept of the lawn-park cemetery. Lawns were expanded, groves were thinned, monuments were standardized and the landscape featured.³⁷⁰

Although Strauch and Robinson envisioned a simplified funerary landscape in the latter years of the 19th century, it would not be until the post war era that cremation and a simplified landscape would become more widely accepted. Labour shortages, particularly following World War II, motivated the Imperial War Graves Commission (IWGC) of the United Kingdom to consider economy regarding maintenance in the design of war cemeteries.³⁷¹ Following discussions after World War I, the IWGC decided on a uniform, egalitarian design for its cemeteries with identical gravestones placed in rows with minimal plantings and no family embellishment permitted; such a landscape could be economically maintained but would also hold no distinction of rank or status as all lost their lives for a common cause.³⁷² The regimented war graves and pastoral landscapes of Robinson and Strauch would inspire a new mode of cemetery design, maintenance and economics.

THE LAWN MOWER

First death, then interment and finally memorialization became defined more by the business of death than cultural tradition. The cemetery was made more cost efficient and loved ones were granted increasingly less input into the memorialization of the deceased. Previously, an army of men with scythes and brooms had painstakingly maintained lawns that wound between intricate monuments and haphazard mounds.³⁷³ The invention of the

³⁶⁸ Ibid., 103-105.

³⁶⁹ Ibid., 107-108.

³⁷⁰ Ibid., 107.

³⁷¹ Rugg, "Lawn Cemeteries," 221.

³⁷² Ibid., 220.

³⁷³ Ibid., 218; Sloane, *The Last Great Necessity*, 110.

lawn mower in 1830 allowed one man to accomplish the work of eight and without marring monuments with clumsy scythe blades.³⁷⁴

Over decades the landscape became increasingly efficient, markers were further standardized and mounds, erected in Victorian cemeteries when a marker was not affordable, were flattened.³⁷⁵ In 1938, a private company, Greenlawn Memorial Park in Chelsham, Surrey, became one of the first cemeteries to restrict the grave marker to a single small plaque set into the ground (*Figure 39*).³⁷⁶ By the late 1940s, the lawn-park cemetery became more landscape than cemetery, with monuments barely visible to the passerby. The flat marker of the lawn cemetery was the beginning of a tradition better suited to running a business³⁷⁷ than the individualized monuments of the romantic cemetery. By reducing the memorial to a flat bronze or stone marker at grade, extensive landscape maintenance regimes could be reduced to an untrained laborer on a ride-on lawn mower.

THE MEMORIAL PARK

In 1913 the most influential cemetery landscape in America since Mount Auburn was opened in Glendale California.³⁷⁸ Hubert Eaton designed Forest Lawn cemetery as a fully pastoral landscape devoid of traditional allusions to death. No family monuments were allowed, with financial incentives for those agreeing to bronze markers placed flush with the ground and the popular ritual of placing artificial flowers, plantings or ‘knick-knacks’ at the grave was prohibited.³⁷⁹ Though ornamental and shade trees were placed around some themed gardens, Eaton insisted on the use of evergreen trees and shrubs as falling leaves were reminiscent of death.³⁸⁰ Eaton, a Protestant American, believed that though the body perished the soul was eternal and, therefore, somber trappings of death of the Victorian era were rejected in favor of more joyous and peaceful allusions to heaven and renewal.³⁸¹ The memorial park (*Figure 40*) was to be a sacred place for burial but also a recreation and

³⁷⁴ Ibid., 110.

³⁷⁵ Rugg, “Lawn Cemeteries,” 224.

³⁷⁶ Ibid., 224.

³⁷⁷ Jokinen (interview), April 8, 2008.

³⁷⁸ Sloane, *The Last Great Necessity*, 159.

³⁷⁹ Ibid., 159, 167.

³⁸⁰ Ibid., 170.

³⁸¹ Ibid., 164-165.

educational space for visitors; though picnics, visiting hours, smoking and bicycling were not allowed, a museum and other sights were erected to attract visitors.³⁸²

Portions of the Romantic cemetery remained in Forest Lawn. Well-maintained serpentine roads meandered through the grounds, ending at the summit of the cemetery and a view of the trimmed lawns and interspersed shrubs and trees of Forest Lawn and the skyline of Glendale. The memorial lawn landscape was highlighted by ornate buildings such as the Great Mausoleum built in the 1920s and fine statuary such as copies of Michelangelo's *The Pietà* and *David*.³⁸³ Those owning family lots were encouraged to select and purchase statuary, most depicting religious figures in classical white marble, from Forest Lawn's collection to place in the plot.³⁸⁴ Thematic gardens were designed around pieces of art, allowing the individual to be memorialized through the grandeur of the site.³⁸⁵ Lot-holders would be buried with others of common interests as opposed to the arrangement of the rural cemetery that served the entire community.³⁸⁶ The dead were still individually memorialized, but in more humility and uniformity than seen in preceding centuries largely due to the privatization of the cemetery.

As cemetery real estate was more aggressively marketed, Forest Lawn became as exemplary in its business model as it was in its landscape design. More than a landscape, Forest Lawn was a privately owned and profit generating business. Eaton expanded the services offered to its clients to include every possible need from the time of death to final interment: preparation of the body, making the coffin, funeral supervision, grave digging, flowers, monuments and grounds maintenance, duties previously accomplished by a team of nurses, carpenters, funeral directors or clergy, grave digger, florist, sculptor and grounds keeper respectively.³⁸⁷ Along with other lawn-park cemeteries of the time, Forest Lawn advertised aggressively, proactively bringing the cemetery to the buyer whereas the reverse

³⁸² Ibid., 168.

³⁸³ Ibid., 168-169.

³⁸⁴ Ibid., 169.

³⁸⁵ Ibid., 170.

³⁸⁶ Ibid., 186.

³⁸⁷ Ibid., 176.

had always occurred traditionally.³⁸⁸ The Midwestern concept of the *preneed*, selling lots prior to a death often ‘site’ unseen, was adopted as it was a sales tactic that saw great success particularly for funeral homes with less established reputations.³⁸⁹

Forest Lawn maintained its non-profit and therefore tax free status and continued to profit by dividing its organizations into two companies: Forest Lawn Memorial-Park Association (FLMPA), the non-profit lot holders’ association responsible for Forest Lawn’s daily operation and Forest Lawn Company (FLC), the private stock company in ownership of the land and Great Mausoleum.³⁹⁰ The division ensured that the FLMPA would remain non-profit and the FLC would have few maintenance costs limiting earnings. Eaton eventually expanded his business into life insurance and mortuaries and opened three other memorial parks following World War II.³⁹¹ No longer a sacred space, the cemetery was a business, with the trappings of spirituality and compassion sold as a well-marketed and well-organized package.

The Forest Lawn model of business and landscape was implemented in cemeteries throughout Canada and the United States to varying degrees of success in the latter half of the 20th century. Despite emphasis on personalization, memorialization remained firmly and visibly within the gridiron structure of the business of death. Once the funeral bills have all been paid, the visitor’s role is left largely undefined and the cemetery becomes an inhospitable landscape of uncertainty. Flat faced columbaria and grids of burial plots became efficient filing systems for the dead, easily maintained and marketed.

A lack of control over death was replaced with complete control over the funerary landscape. Strict guidelines were provided to the visitors regarding proper conduct at the gravesite: flowers may only be left for so long, markers may only be such and such a size, you may only stay as long as you can stand in an empty open field. Solid liners (Figure 41) that encase the casket or urn are marketed as providing the best possible interment for a

³⁸⁸ Ibid., 177.

³⁸⁹ Ibid., 176, 178.

³⁹⁰ Ibid., 178.

³⁹¹ Ibid., 179.

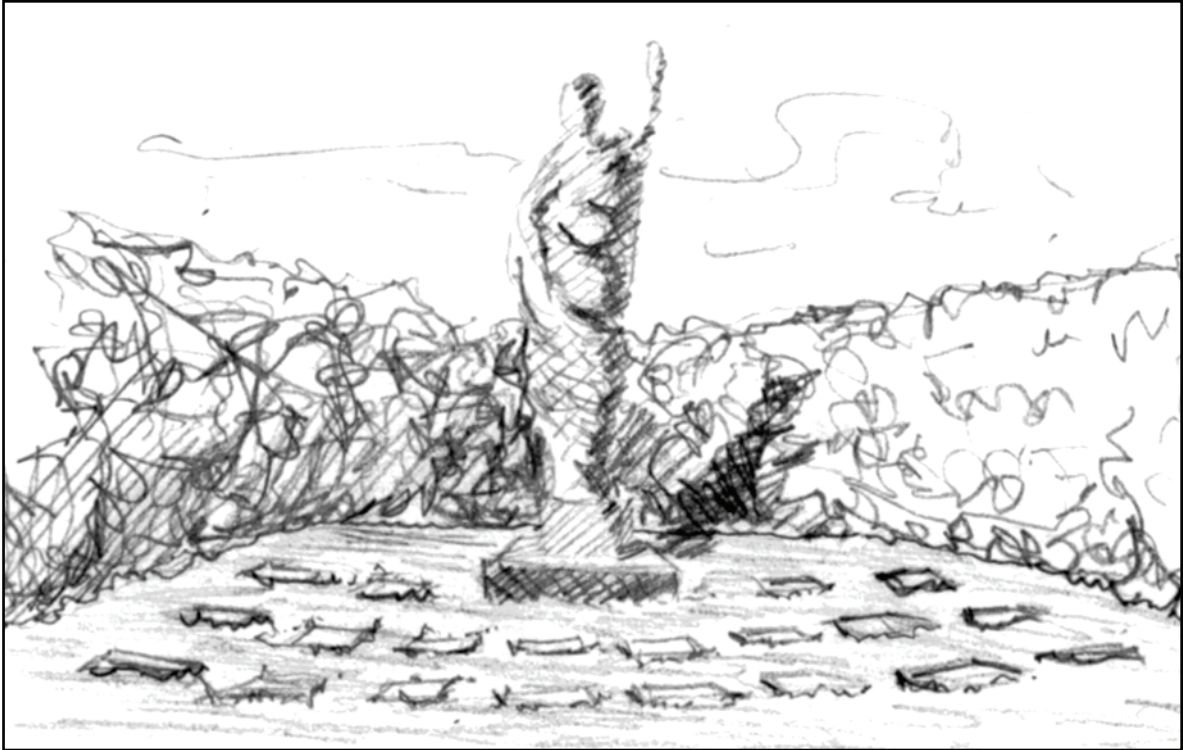


Figure 40: The memorial lawn. (A)



Figure 39: The flat marker dramatically altered the 20th century cemetery. St Vital Cemetery, Winnipeg, Canada. (A)

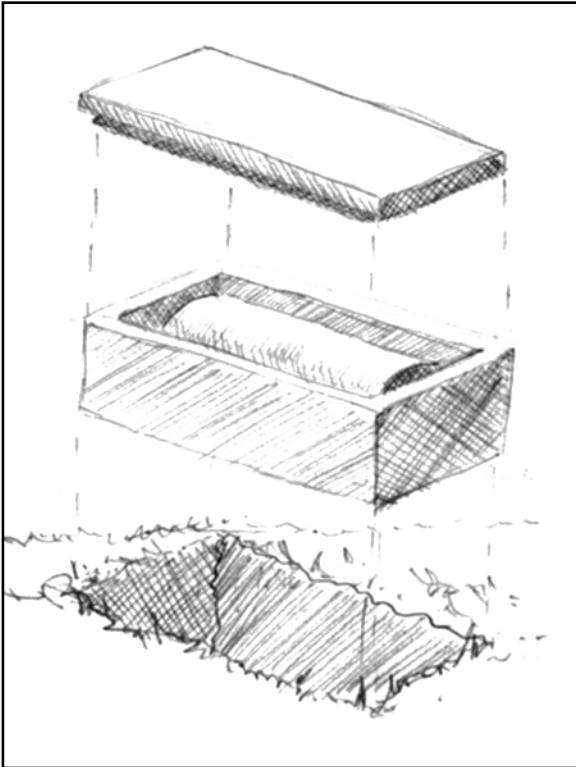


Figure 41: The grave liner, promoted as a means to better preserve the body, but has the added benefit of keeping lawn cemeteries flat for easy maintenance. (A)

loved one, sealed off from the elements and more rapid decay. However, “the reality of the cemeteries is that when you bury a casket, it will eventually and pretty quickly collapse. And so your ground looks like that [a square plot of uneven ground]. It’s hard to maintain. It’s hard to run a mower over that too. So the liner which is framed as something to protect the body in the casket is really a way to protect the integrity of the ground”.³⁹² The cemetery landscape can now be completely engineered for efficient and consistent maintenance.

In the later half of the 20th century, cemeteries became the domain of those who maintain them rather than those who mourn. Now, at the beginning of the 21st century, it is difficult to discern which elements of the cemetery are cultural or commercial. The landscape of death is one of bureaucracy.³⁹³ The Lawn Cemetery and Memorial Garden models have become more products than landscapes; places for the dead and those that maintain them with little space for the memories or tears of the bereaved and their community.

CRITICISM

Though pervasive and popular in the latter half of the 20th century, the memorial garden and lawn cemetery were not without their critics. In the late 1940s, the increasingly commercial business of death began to attract negative attention. New York State Attorney General Nathaniel Goldstein began a campaign for “profiteering from sorrow” to cease, producing evidence of instances of high-pressure sales tactics, neglect of maintenance and lack of compassion, demanding regulation of the industry.³⁹⁴ Goldstein’s campaign was symptomatic of general societal suspicion of an industry that profited from the loss of others. Evelyn Waugh’s 1948 novel *The Loved One* satirized a thinly disguised Forest Lawn, criticizing the commercial and euphemistic managerial tactics used by the funerary industry.³⁹⁵ An uneasy relationship developed between Americans and the funeral director, whose services were needed but not trusted.

³⁹² Jokinen (interview), April 8, 2008..

³⁹³ Ragon, *The Space of Death*, 295.

³⁹⁴ Sloane, *The Last Great Necessity*, 193-195.

³⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 179.

For many, the highly controlled and commercial cemetery landscapes were embodiments of deeper societal ills. The mixture of private memorials, flush markers and locked vaults, and public features, dominant statuary and monuments, of Forest Lawn and its progeny indicated a growing separation of public and private in the 20th century.³⁹⁶ In the post war period, the communal context of the cemetery and engagement with the body diminished with the grave becoming “an increasingly private and domestic entity”³⁹⁷ and cremation rates increasing.³⁹⁸ What is more, the exclusionary practices of funerary institutions distanced traditional caregivers, the family, from the deceased, placing the body firmly in the care of trained professionals.

In a 1955 essay “The Pornography of Death,” Geoffrey Gorer noted that taboos surrounding death in 20th century British culture paralleled taboos surrounding sex in the 19th century.³⁹⁹ His following major work *Death, Grief and Mourning in Contemporary Britain* (1963) further investigated this phenomenon. Gorer observed that death had been distanced from society, with loved ones often buffered from the realities of the deathbed and burial, and death was largely hidden from children, with well-meaning adults euphemizing or concealing death.⁴⁰⁰

Also noted was diminishing belief in an afterlife, particularly of hell, and the role of the clergy, but Gorer’s most influential observation in the realm of bereavement research was a perceived decline in mourning and honouring of the deceased.⁴⁰¹ A cycle of indifference was perceived where, as death became more private, traditional codes of mourning became increasingly less applicable, until society “refuses to participate in the emotion of the bereaved.”⁴⁰² This phenomenon Ariès termed ‘the denial of death’, which occurs when tears become as distasteful as decay and are banished from society as an infectious disease.

³⁹⁶ Ibid., 170.

³⁹⁷ Rugg, “Lawn Cemeteries,” 225.

³⁹⁸ Ibid., 225.

³⁹⁹ Ariès, *The Hour of Our Death*, 575.

⁴⁰⁰ Ibid., 575-576.

⁴⁰¹ Ibid., 576-577.

⁴⁰² Ibid., 579-580.

In America, the culture of death was far more conspicuous as cemeteries used increasingly aggressive advertising and sales tactics. England's contrasting rationalization and simplification of funeral and burial, which Gorer and Ariès equated to denial, appealed to those repulsed by the commercial enterprise of the funeral industry.⁴⁰³ Two American social commentators of the 1960s questioned the cultural value of the cemetery and the funeral. Jessica Mitford's *The American Way of Death* and Ruth Mulvey Harmer's *The High Cost of Dying* attacked the commercialism of American places of burial, particularly expensive mausoleums that were gaining popularity, in favor of the less expensive rite of cremation and the formation of memorial societies offering inexpensive funerals.⁴⁰⁴

Although the memorial park was designed to exude the ideals of democracy and equality, distinctions between race and class persisted and the memorial park became a funerary landscape exclusive to the Christian White Middleclass.⁴⁰⁵ Funerals remained expensive and costs were only rising, making what was seen by many as a painful public spectacle all the more tortuous.⁴⁰⁶ It was felt that the family should retain control of the funeral,⁴⁰⁷ thus avoiding the commercialism of the funeral and allowing the bereaved greater choice and involvement.

The final decades of the 20th century brought less dismal analysis of the death industry and memorial gardens / lawn cemetery. The rising popularity of cremation, the isolation of cemeteries, less predictable family dynamics and societal distancing from death began to erode the cultural importance of the grave.⁴⁰⁸ Sociologists, such as Ariès and Gorer, related societal separation from death with cultural denial of death in both Europe and America. However, diminishing communal ritual could be considered more reflective of changes in ritual behavior surrounding death rather than its disappearance altogether. For instance, though the funeral and procession may be private, public recognition of philanthropic

⁴⁰³ Sloane, *The Last Great Necessity*, 231.

⁴⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 230-231.

⁴⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 187-190.

⁴⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 198.

⁴⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 231.

⁴⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 215.

donations made in the name of the deceased brings the presence of the dead into the community. As the nature of community changes, so too will the nature of communal ritual.

Both writers failed to recognize that, in spite of managerial efforts to prohibit personal ritual activity, the emotional significance of the grave largely remains and friends and family continually resist professional prohibitions.⁴⁰⁹ The desire to erect a memorial endures as well as the ritual of visiting and placing or planting flowers at the grave (*Figure 42, 44, 45 & 46*).⁴¹⁰ Julie Rugg cites such ritual practices as new expressions of continued reverence for the deceased, which Gorer misunderstood as devalued ritual behavior, deserving of further study.⁴¹¹

Other analysts do not refute the lawn cemetery as a landscape of denial but indicate that it is more descriptive as to the nature of the industry than the culture it exists within. Jokinen asserts that “death denial isn’t so much a social thing as it is an industrial thing, that there’s more death denial in the industry than there is in most normal people. Most people just go along with whatever the industry wants them to do because their main goal is to get it [the funeral] over with, get away from it and move on.”⁴¹² With the dissolution of traditional practices of interment, memorial and mourning, death has become less regulated and understood socially, allowing outdated practices to persist as defaults for mourners in a period of duress. Death remains as present as ever in the 21st century; modern populations continue to die and mourn. However, as society changes so must the expression of mourning and memorial to meet the needs of the contemporary bereaved.

SUMMARY

As death became more of a subject of scientific study than spiritual contemplation, doctors and scientists replaced the clergy as authorities of death. Solutions to fears of premature burial, resurrection men and overcrowded cemeteries were increasingly sought in scientific study and innovation rather than tradition and ritual. Cremation began to be promoted as a

⁴⁰⁹ Rugg, “Lawn Cemeteries,” 225.

⁴¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 231-232.

⁴¹¹ *Ibid.*, 231.

⁴¹² Jokinen (interview), April 8, 2008.

scientific solution to the growing fears of death. Secular beliefs spread through 19th century Western society, altering perceptions of life and death and preparing the way for cremation's growing acceptance in the 20th. In some cases, the rite of cremation was accepted as a political tool signifying a breach in the power of the Church. As perceptions of life and death shifted with the processes of death, dying and grieving increasingly controlled or moderated by professionals, the distance between the living and the dead, the healthy and the sick, the family and the body increased.

The hospital rather than the home became the setting for the sick and dying. Even bereavement became medicalized as psychologists broke grief into concise stages leading toward acceptance. Like an illness, grief was to be cured and, like the sick and dying, the bereaved became isolated from society in their private grief. However, as bereavement research progressed, the number of discovered anomalies increased until clinical discourse began to shift away from strict patterns of grief and mourning towards theories of personalization and diversity. As sickness, dying and grief became the specialty of medical and psychological professionals, care of the dead was increasingly specialized. By the mid 20th century, care of the dead fell under the domain of professionals rather than the family. Though this shift of control from the family to the professional has fallen under suspicion in many respects, the business of death has become so much a part of Western culture that it is difficult to differentiate between cultural and industrial considerations in current cemetery design and funerary ritual.



Figure 42: The continued desire to publicly express grief and care in some way for the deceased can be seen in the mementos left behind. St Vital Cemetery, Winnipeg, Canada. (A)



Figure 43: Fresh flowers left at the grave, though a maintenance issue, add dimension and colour to an otherwise planer landscape. St. Vital Cemetery, Winnipeg, Canada. (A)



Figure 44: Unique tokens placed by relatively generic plaques individualize the gravesite. Photograph by Karen Wilson-Baptist.



Figure 45: Some mementos poignantly record the number of visits to the grave. Altona Cemetery, Altona Manitoba, Canada. (A)



Figure 46: Even in instances of cremation, a practice some sociologists believe is related to invisible death, graveside bouquets signify that the deceased are not forgotten. St Vital Cemetery, Winnipeg, Canada. (A)

CONCLUSION TO PART I

It is these past peoples and cultures that have profoundly influenced death in Western society of the 21st century. Much can be discerned in the shifts of ritual and memorial surrounding death, likely more than can be presented in a single document. Of the many themes to be found in the history of death in Western civilization, the continuums of diversity and uniformity, humility and grandeur, landscape and architecture and journey and dwelling are themes most relevant to the intended scope of this thesis/practicum.

It appears that diversity of death rituals and bodily interment is more normative historically than cultural uniformity. Prior to the medieval era, cremation and burial were often observed to be equally acceptable rites, even among the early Christians who followed the customs of their non-Christian ancestors. Forms of memorial were equally, if not more, diverse with tombs, mounds, sarcophagi, caves, columbaria and catacombs used to house the dead depending on the resources and beliefs of the time. As death was perceived as more of a personal and than communal fate during the medieval era, ritual and interment became more prominent and unified, establishing a sense of community through common rituals and enduring memorials. Despite religious and political pressures over centuries towards uniformity in death rituals and burial, diversity remained in the death cultures of the Western World. It is only with the comparatively recent professionalization of death and the cemetery that wide spread uniformity has been achieved. Current demand for personalization and naturalization of ritual, interment and bereavement is likely not a passing fade, but an inevitable progression to diversity.

Through its history, Western culture's perception of death seems to oscillate between wild malevolence and tame benevolence. It appears that death, continually beyond the control of humanity, is always wild, but more successfully 'tamed' through the ritual and memorial at certain periods, somewhat similar to the 'taming' of a grizzly bear. In those periods where death was perceived most wild and fearsome, the architecture of death increased in prominence and elaboration, compensating for lack of certainty or community in the afterlife with an enduring presence among the living after death. Periods where

communities are buried in simple community country graves and jumbled ecclesiastical ossuaries, suggest a humble acceptance of death's inevitability and universality. It is arguable that death never truly ceases to be wild, but has been more successfully tamed through ritual at certain periods of time. This pattern was altered in the 20th century where control of death shifted from the family and the clergy to professionals. Death and bereavement became privatized as the care of the dying, the dead and the bereaved moved out of the public realm and behind closed doors. Rather than becoming tamed by technological advances and scientific analysis, death appears to have remained wild, but hidden from societal consciousness.

In previous centuries, death and memorial were public as exemplified in the design and location of the traditional cemetery landscape. The sites and architecture of interment were conspicuous components of a community landscape. As death became increasingly private, the landscape of death became increasingly simplified and innocuous. The blank landscape of the lawn cemetery became a physical representation of hidden death in Western culture. However, Western sociologists, terminal caregivers and bereavement psychologists are increasingly documenting the detrimental effects that hidden death and strict sequential processes have on the quality of life of the dying and the bereaved. Increasingly, researchers are identifying the need for diversity and personalization in the care of the dying and bereaved; traits that are conspicuously lacking in the modern lawn cemetery.

It is possible that changes in the ways the dying and bereaved are cared for will begin to influence the ways in which the dead are interred and memorialized in Western society. In turn, as those planning their interment and the bereaved seek and are granted greater diversity and personalization of ritual and memorialization, the landscapes of death will change as well. This survey of past perceptions of death and funerary landscapes demonstrates that the Western culture of death is dynamic, though change appears more rapid in some eras over others. In this dynamic culture, where the perception of the dying and bereaved is already changing, the current funerary landscape cannot be expected to remain unaltered.

PART II: PROJECTION

EARLY 21ST CENTURY TRAJECTORIES OF DEATH IN THE WEST

Cultures are dynamic. The meaning and manner of all aspects of Western culture have and will inevitably shift over time. This evolution can be observed in Western society's culture of death. In the inaugural years of the 21st century some aspects of Western culture surrounding death are experiencing perceivable changes. Research in terminal medicine and bereavement psychology is increasingly advocating diversity in the support provided for the dying and bereaved. Rather than universal processes, a personalized and individualized process is seen to be more 'natural' and, therefore, beneficial to the individual. Simultaneously, the funerary industry is expanding services to include more personalized and environmentally sustainable funeral ritual and merchandise. Despite these changes, the Western cemetery landscape has remained largely unaltered throughout the 20th century. However, such developments in the medical fields and the death industry hold profound implications and opportunities for the cemetery. The following chapters will examine these changes and their potential impacts on the funerary landscape in the 21st century.

6. NATURALIZATION OF DYING AND BEREAVEMENT

Tony Walter is one of few sociologists to have written extensively on the contemporary culture of death in the United Kingdom and Western culture. In his work he notes the rising prevalence of groups and individuals working towards what he describes as “revival of death” in the late 20th century. Walter is not implying that more people are dying in the latter half of the 20th and early 21st century. Nor is he implying a rejection of modern medicine and health care. Rather, as a critical response to modern death where private and public experience of death and grief became contradictory, revivalists desire to abolish such dichotomy and have dying, memorial and bereavement personalized and normalized within society.⁴¹³

A major promoter of this revival of personalization and choice was the hospice movement, popularized throughout the United Kingdom and North America in the 1980s though discussed in the 1960s and 70s, where care of the dying is conducted holistically, considering the patient’s psychological, social, spiritual and physical requirements.⁴¹⁴ What was fundamental was communication between caregivers and between patients and caregivers, the needs of the patients were to be heard and the activity of the caregivers understood. Dying has become more naturalized than death in recent years due to reforms in the health care environment.⁴¹⁵ No longer necessarily an isolating, dehumanizing experience, the hospice movement has demonstrated that dying in modern society can be personal and humane.

Revolutions in perceptions of the true nature of human grief and mourning and the associated rituals are less visible than innovations in care giving, but they are of no less import. As mentioned previously regarding the medicalization of death and grief, there is an

⁴¹³ Walter, *The revival of death*, 24.

⁴¹⁴ Ibid. 88.

⁴¹⁵ There are also reactionary measures being taken in childcare, which may translate to aspects of death care. Childbirth was another natural process medicalized in the 20th century. However, the benefits of natural birth and rearing (i.e. breast feeding) are now commonly accepted, with the presence of a midwife becoming normative and desired. Similarly, groups supporting ‘dying with dignity’ aim to make the passage of the dying more comfortable whether it occurs in a medical setting or in the home. Instances of home childbirth and dying with dignity could very well be manifestations of post-modernity, as society’s focus turns from technological efficiency to human narrative.

increasing shift in clinical lore away from emphasizing strict patterns, pushing the bereaved to disconnect themselves from the dead, toward emphasizing individualized processes, allowing the bereaved to integrate the memory and experience into their life on their own terms. However, these alterations are only gradually beginning to permeate current cultural consciousness.

Through writing about integration of rather than disconnection from a death Tony Walter has found that the concept of integration is not new but has existed for many years in many cultures and sub-cultures.⁴¹⁶ However, many grieving people and caregivers are surprised and relieved to discover that to hold on instead of let go is legitimate. The concept of grief as process rather than illness changes grief from a state one recovers from to a journey through which one is irrevocably changed.⁴¹⁷ Grief and mourning are gradually becoming perceived as natural parts of life once again.

There are several possible explanations for this increased interest in the naturalization mourning ritual. Previously, continuing or appearing to continue relationships with the dead was avoided as it was seen as irrational and un-Christian in a culture emphasizing efficiency and reason and preceded by four centuries of Protestantism.⁴¹⁸ Increasing secularization has led popular culture to lift former Protestant bans on continuing relations with the dead and rather to reference past and foreign cultures,⁴¹⁹ many of which allow or advocate continuing relationships with the dead, to influence patterns of behavior. Emerging environmental awareness in the post-modern era has instilled a degree of skepticism regarding western science and technology, leaving society more open to the irrational and sentimental and allowing those who maintain bonds with the dead to maintain their respectability.⁴²⁰

Also, increased diversity of the gender and cultural context of those conducting bereavement research, which was previously dominated by white males of western society,

⁴¹⁶ Walter, *On Bereavement*, 106-107.

⁴¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 107.

⁴¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 112.

⁴¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 112-113.

⁴²⁰ *Ibid.*, 112.

has achieved greater range of discussion of bonding versus autonomy in death and in life.⁴²¹ No matter the actual cause, the effect of these changes can be seen in the growing emphasis on diversity in bereavement literature, which has begun to undermine the meta-narratives that supported only one way to grieve for almost a century. After decades of study, grief remains as unwieldy as ever for the individual, but the bereaved are culturally and clinically permitted more freedom to mourn in their own way.

SUMMARY

In recent decades, a trend of normalization or “naturalization” of death and dying in Western society can be seen in both the medical and psychological fields. The hospice movement shows an increasing desire for the removal of dying from the medical setting to a more homelike and “natural” environment. Rather than promoting previous grief theories of resolution, some clinical bereavement psychologists are now advocating theories of integration, incorporating the memory of the deceased into daily life, and individualization, beneficial grieving must be determined on an individual basis. No longer illnesses to be remedied, medical and psychological researchers are now identifying death and grief as natural parts of life. Both of these shifts indicate growing medical and psychological research supporting the diversification and personalization of death and dying as natural and beneficial.

⁴²¹ Ibid., 113.

7. PERSONALIZATION OF BEREAVEMENT

As death and grief are increasingly seen as natural and personal, mourning and memorial become increasingly personalized. While many people use the terms grief and mourning synonymously, the two are fundamentally different. Western textbooks distinguish the two by defining grief as the emotions experienced by the bereaved and mourning as the expected behavior following bereavement.⁴²² In the past, it was often assumed that culture only influenced mourning and not grieving.⁴²³ As discussed above, cultural change has had a dramatic, though somewhat indirect, influence on what is considered to be acceptable and 'natural' grief. The influence of culture on mourning is far more direct. Socially imposed and policed, cultural rules of public mourning both regulate natural emotions and impose obligatory duties of mourning, generating emotional scripts for the bereaved to follow.⁴²⁴ Contrary to the beliefs of some bereavement caregivers; such scripts can be as harmful as they are helpful.

Much of contemporary bereavement literature bemoans the loss of traditional mourning rituals. Since the rise of invisible death, death has become more obscure in 21st century society than ever before, with many analysts calling for a return to rites of expressive mourning and public memorial. Curl and Ariès, among others, appear to agree that some form of ritual is necessary to instill a sense of security and closure and is lacking in current funerary practices. However, there were very valid reasons for relinquishing traditional rituals in favour of more individualized mourning.⁴²⁵

*Traditional funeral rituals and mourning practices regulate, channel and elicit the emotions of mourners, often it has to be said, in ways not to their taste. Though it is sometimes imagined that in non-industrial societies, traditional rituals enable people to express their grief freely and naturally, the evidence is to the contrary: the expression of grief by mourners in such societies is often more, not less, subject to socially accepted rules than is the case in Anglo-American society.*⁴²⁶

⁴²² Ibid., xv.

⁴²³ Ibid., xv.

⁴²⁴ Ibid., 119-121.

⁴²⁵ Ibid., 121-122.

⁴²⁶ Ibid., 119.

Traditional mourning and grief were not necessarily better, only different.⁴²⁷ Traditional rituals may work for some and they may not.

This leads to questions as to whether the call for a return to public ritual identified by Walter is merely nostalgia or necessity, a historical anomaly or human need. In many traditional societies where mourning is strongly policed, the bereaved are forced to mourn, as culturally determined, regardless of their level of grief. The best known would be Victorian mourning, where women were required to dress, interact and emote in very specific ways for a specific time period regardless of their social and economic status or emotional state. According to Walter, the Victorian trappings of mourning were gradually disregarded by the middle classes as excessive by the late 1920s and, though continued into the mid 20th century in upper and lower classes, prescriptive mourning was increasingly rejected in favor of private grief and personalized mourning.⁴²⁸

Today, as the bereaved seek guidance as to the proper way to mourn, they risk being embroiled in bereavement literature's contradictory emphasis of nostalgia for traditional ritual and "natural," unpoliced grief.⁴²⁹ Mourners are tossed between not knowing how to act in some instances and not feeling equal to expected behavior at other times. The result is a confusing cultural minefield for the bereaved where some aspects of mourning are overpoliced while others are neglected.⁴³⁰ Both the under and over regulation of mourning has contributed to increasing development and use of bereavement support groups and agencies.⁴³¹ In cases of over regulation, the bereaved may seek solace in sharing experience with people who understand what they are going through while, in cases of under regulation, the bereaved are left to find role models for mourning in manuals, counseling, case studies, bereavement groups and media sources.⁴³² It appears that in attempting to better understand grief and mourning, researchers may have rendered bereavement and public mourning more confusing than ever.

⁴²⁷ Ibid., 23.

⁴²⁸ Ibid., 130-131.

⁴²⁹ Ibid., 122.

⁴³⁰ Ibid., 122-124.

⁴³¹ Ibid., 124.

⁴³² Ibid., 125-126.

The result is that mourning is now more likely to occur privately, in the therapist's chair or group therapy meeting, than the larger community. Such mourning remains very personal and isolated from the larger community and perpetuates the isolating dichotomy of hidden death, explored by Ariès and Gorer, for the bereaved. Increasingly, the clinical community and grieving individuals are embracing an integrated and personalized process of grief and mourning as healthy. However, Western culture has yet to adopt a more natural and personal perception of bereavement.

SUMMARY

As ostentatious public demonstrations of grief and mourning diminished in the early to mid 20th century, Western society experienced a decline in identifiable rituals for the bereaved to follow. Bereavement researchers are now identifying benefits of grief and mourning rituals, which are now, in the early 21st century, apparently lacking in mainstream culture. However, as much as there may be too few available norms of ritual, there can also be too many for the bereaved to follow. Either too much or too little ritual surrounding death can complicate rather than ease the process of living on after the death of a loved one. A personalized approach to grief and mourning is now deemed by researchers to be more appropriate than previous blanket theories and rituals.

The two current solutions to this complex and individualized process of personalizing one's mourning ritual and understanding one's unique grieving pattern are the therapist's chair and support groups. Though these miniature communities of grief and mourning do meet many needs of the bereaved, these solutions allow the experience of bereavement to remain isolated from the rest of Western society. Yet to develop in contemporary Western society is a balanced cultural response to grief and mourning where the bereaved are no longer pulled between the two different worlds of private and public life. Though increasingly recognized as beneficial by clinical researchers and incorporated by pockets within Western culture, the personalization and naturalization of death and bereavement has yet to be fully adopted by mainstream Western society.

8. NATURALIZATION OF INTERMENT

The naturalization and personalization of dying and bereavement are gradually increasing in documentation and acceptance within medical and psychological communities of Western culture. Industries related to death such as funeral homes, casket makers and memorial manufacturers are similarly responding to cultural shifts in technology and bereavement by incorporating concepts of personalization and naturalization into the options offered to the public. Though traditional perceptions regarding death and bereavement shift gradually, Western culture has seen dramatic change regarding technological innovation and environmental awareness. Currently, some portions of the death industry are offering more technologically advanced and environmentally sustainable alternatives to traditional funeral, memorial and burial.

The sustainability of traditional Western burial has fallen under scrutiny as concerns of environmental responsibility increase in prevalence. As urban populations increase, coffins and coffin liners extend the preservation of the corpse and as standards of living rise, making long-term burial plots widely affordable, it becomes more apparent that “the dead are becoming once more a nightmare for town planners.”⁴³³ In affluent areas of dense population, such as much of Western Europe and Japan, demand for precious land resources has led to more ready adoption of unconventional practices than in North America where populations are more widely dispersed. Emphasis on memorialization has spawned an obsession with permanence, particularly in North America, which is problematic both conceptually and environmentally. Despite increasing interest in naturalization of grief, mourning, death and dying, the typical North American memorial landscape remains controlled and contrived.

Interestingly, until recent decades, the perception of death and development of the cemetery in Western culture closely paralleled the perception of Nature from a tangible fear of the unknown wild, to love of domesticated nature and, finally, to mastery over nature. However, as cultural perception shifts to view wild nature as serene and beautiful, the

⁴³³ Ragon, *The Space of Death*, 299.



Figure 47: After a century, plantings envelope the marker. Brookside Cemetery, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada. (A)

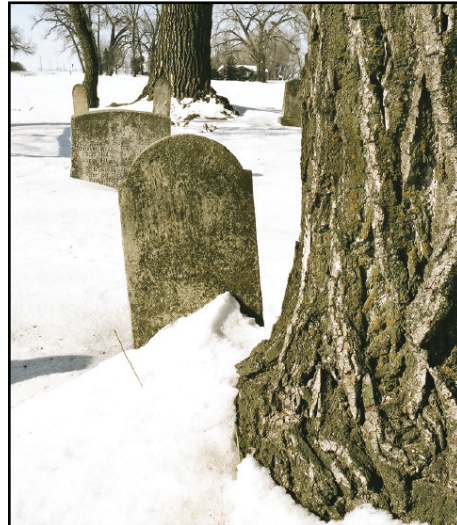


Figure 48: Graveside plantings begin to rival the gravestones for space. The New Berghal Cemetery, New Berghal, Manitoba. (A)



Figure 49: More porous stone such as limestone weathers dramatically overtime, rendering the inscriptions on this marker nearly intelligible. St. Boniface Cathedral Cemetery, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada. (A)



Figure 50: Within half a century, signs of decay can even be found. St. Vital Cemetery, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada. (A)

perception of death and the landscape of cemeteries have not followed. Individual graves, solid casket liners, stone or bronze grave markers and burial “in perpetuity” are major components of the memorialization market. However, “Nature” and, this writer would add, post-modern society does not support the concept of forever (*Figure 47, 48, 49 & 50*).

Although properties in contemporary cemeteries are marketed as permanent memorials the illusory nature of such claims is revealed in the cemeteries themselves. The care and maintenance of most monuments have an average lifespan of 30 years.⁴³⁴ As columbaria are filled and the economic incentives for their upkeep decrease, what was a new and ‘permanent’ monument 30 years ago becomes a moldering monument to decay and more aesthetically pleasing and marketable mausolea are advertised instead.⁴³⁵ Productive land and non-renewable resources continue to be consumed in a futile quest for permanent memorial and product marketing.

GREEN BURIAL

Due to these recognized failings of traditional interment and memorial, the early 21st century has seen increasing interest in the naturalization of the rites and rituals centered on death. Most apparent is the development of new modes of interment that carry lower environmental impacts than traditional modes. The most prominent of these is the rite of natural or green burial (*Figure 51*). The first natural burial ground of the 20th century opened in 1993 in Carlisle, Cumbria as an extension to an existing Victorian cemetery.⁴³⁶ Today, natural burial co-operatives and societies are being formed in Canada and the United States to provide spaces for natural burial in much the same spirit as cremationist societies in the 19th century. Though there are only proposed Canadian sites at this time, the United States has established green burial grounds in several States.⁴³⁷ The United Kingdom

⁴³⁴ Jokinen (interview), April 8, 2008..

⁴³⁵ Ibid.

⁴³⁶ Andrew Clayden and Katie Dixon, “Woodland burial: Memorial arboretum versus natural native woodland?” *Mortality* 12, no. 3 (Aug, 2007): 240.

⁴³⁷ Forest of Memories, “Find a Green Cemetery in Your Area,” *Forest of Memories*, n.d., <http://www.foresofmemories.org/cemeteries/index.htm> (Aug 20, 2007); Jokinen (interview), April 8, 2008.

has seen even greater interest in green burial with over 200 open or proposed burial sites,⁴³⁸ whereas mainland Europe appears less receptive by its silence.

The concept of ‘Earth-to-Earth’ coffins, coffins that easily biodegrade once buried, is not new. During the rise of cremation in the late 19th century, Sir Francis Seymour Haden advocated the use of perishable containers for burial so that cemeteries would have a 25-year pattern of reuse.⁴³⁹ Though respected at the time, this method was not accepted probably to a great extent due to the casket and accoutrement dependent funerary industry, an influential cremation lobby and mere prejudice.⁴⁴⁰ Similarly, late 20th century and early 21st century advocates of green burial promote the use of biodegradable burial products with no chemical preservation of the body.⁴⁴¹ Like cremation, natural burial is hardly a new concept, but is one that is gaining attention in the 21st century.



Figure 51: Depiction of a forest green burial in a wicker casket, one of the many options that are now available for a green burial. (A)

⁴³⁸ Michael Jarvis, “The Association of Natural Burial Grounds: An Introduction,” *The Association of Natural Burial Grounds*, December 2005, <http://www.anbg.co.uk> (Aug 20, 2007).

⁴³⁹ Liza Kazmier, “Haden, Sir Francis Seymour,” in *Encyclopedia of Cremation*, edited by Douglas J. Davies and Lewis H. Mates. (Burlington: Ashgate Publishing, 2005), 229; Curl, *The Victorian Celebration of Death*, 146-147.

⁴⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 147.

⁴⁴¹ Forest of Memories, “What Are Natural Burial Grounds?”

The definition of what a green cemetery implies regarding interment and landscape can be seen as a continuum, ranging from a simplified funeral and burial to a carbon neutral funeral and burial. “No single model governs their ownership, location, design or management, and therefore the experience which the users have may vary considerably between natural burial grounds.”⁴⁴² The Green Burial Council (GBC), an independent, American, non-profit organization working to encourage “ethical and environmentally sustainable death care practices, and to use the burial process as a means of facilitating the acquisition, restoration and stewardship of natural areas,”⁴⁴³ seeks to remedy this lack of standardization through developing certification programs, building an international network and joining the purposes of conservation groups with those of the funerary industry.⁴⁴⁴ However, change comes slowly as the majority of the industry regards this new cemetery form as a fringe subculture and those that are interested developing a “green” component are developing green cemeteries as mere additions to existing traditional cemeteries.⁴⁴⁵

Forever Fernwood of Mill Valley California near San Francisco has developed such an appendage. The cemetery is adjacent to California’s Golden Gate National Recreation Area near Mount Tamalpais State Park and drains into a salt-water marsh of the Tennessee Valley.⁴⁴⁶ The cemetery extols the virtues of ecological renewal and environmental sustainability. However, the old model of cemetery business remains with green burial as another product to sell and maintain. Burial on this grassy knoll remains expensive, with the traditional accessories of the funeral assuming a greener garb.⁴⁴⁷ Non-toxic embalming fluids and a biodegradable casket or shroud are used.⁴⁴⁸ The site for natural burial consists of a roughly mown, grassy hillside that has been cleared of surrounding forest and brush

⁴⁴² Andrew Clayden and Katie Dixon, 244.

⁴⁴³ Natural Burial Co-operative, “Natural Burial in the USA,” *Natural Burial Co-operative*, n.d., <http://naturalburial.coop/USA/green-burial-council> (Feb 9, 2009).

⁴⁴⁴ Green Burial Council, “Welcome to the Green Burial Council,” *Green Burial Council*, 2008, <http://www.greenburialcouncil.com> (Feb 9, 2009).

⁴⁴⁵ Jokinen (interview), April 8, 2008..

⁴⁴⁶ Fernwood Funeral Home, Crematory and Cemetery, “The Land,” *Fernwood*, n.d., http://www.foreverfernwood.com/ecology/the_land.html (Feb 9, 2009).

⁴⁴⁷ Jokinen (interview), April 8, 2008..

⁴⁴⁸ Fernwood Funeral Home, Crematory and Cemetery, “Natural Burial,” *Fernwood*, n.d., http://www.foreverfernwood.com/ecology/natural_burial.html (Feb 9, 2009).

with the graves simply marked by trees, wildflowers, shrubs and natural rocks and located via Global Positioning System (GPS) co-ordinates.⁴⁴⁹ Rather than a revolutionary shift in death culture, green burial can and has been subsumed by the industry to sell as one more option available to customers for purchase.

There are those who see the revolutionary potential of green burial. The Centre for Natural Burial (CNB), which serves as a resource for those considering natural burial and advocates the formation of Natural Burial Co-operatives worldwide,⁴⁵⁰ is interested in using green burial to conserve undeveloped and unprotected lands.⁴⁵¹ As burials take place the site is rendered unavailable for development. The GBC gives these conservation burial grounds its highest rating, Level 3, and involves the greatest degree of environmental requirements, as they must meet all the requirements for natural burial, Level 2, as well as additional requirements regarding land conservation.⁴⁵² The CNB envisions green burial as “an environmentally sustainable alternative to existing funeral practices where the body is returned to the earth to decompose naturally and be recycled into new life,”⁴⁵³ with the body prepared without chemical preservatives, buried in a biodegradable shroud or casket, of local wood, wicker or recycled paper, and memorialized with unobtrusive, natural markers, of flat local stone, a central memorial or shrubs and trees, with meticulous records made of the grave location, often through GIS technology.⁴⁵⁴

The CNB and GBC’s definition of green burial diverges from more commercial enterprises regarding the landscape. The use of pesticides, herbicides and irrigation is prohibited and native plants are used to restore, enhance and preserve the ecology of the site.⁴⁵⁵ Memorial Ecosystems Inc. opened the first green cemetery of this sort, the Ramsey Creek Preserve,

⁴⁴⁹ Fernwood Funeral Home, Crematory and Cemetery, “Natural Burial,”; Jokinen (interview), April 8, 2008.

⁴⁵⁰ The Centre for Natural Burial, “Giving Life Back to the Earth,” Jan 25, 2009, <http://naturalburial.coop> (Feb 9, 2009).

⁴⁵¹ Jokinen (interview), April 8, 2008.; The Centre for Natural Burial, “Giving Life Back to the Earth,” Jan 25, 2009, <http://naturalburial.coop> (Feb 9, 2009).

⁴⁵² Green Burial Council, “Standards,” *Green Burial Council*, 2008, <http://www.greenburialcouncil.com/standards.php> (Feb 9, 2009).

⁴⁵³ The Centre for Natural Burial “Natural Burial: Simple and Meaningful,” n.d. <http://www.naturalburial.coop/about-natural-burial/> (Feb 9, 2009).

⁴⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵⁵ Ibid.

near Westminster, South Carolina in 1998.⁴⁵⁶ This 33-acre conservational burial ground protects a quarter mile of Ramsey Creek and boasts a diverse landscape of streams, rocky crags, vascular plants and native fauna.⁴⁵⁷ Besides sporadic interments in zones earmarked for burial or scattering of cremains, the site remains relatively undisturbed with inconspicuous paths and pavilions nestled into the landscape reminiscent Mount Auburn's earlier layout. Such conservation burial grounds translate the memorial garden cemetery into a landscape that conforms to 21st century ideals of sustainability and activism.

GREEN BODIES?

Beyond burial innovations, revolutionary methods for efficient and sanitary reduction of the corpse are being explored. Ironically, scientists and historians, those who first advocated the rite of cremation, rather than theologians, are now questioning the viability of cremation as an alternative to burial. The environmental and emotional implications of cremation are currently falling under increasing scrutiny. Previous concerns of sanitation that supported cremation have transferred to ecological concerns, encouraging 'green' burial over cremation.⁴⁵⁸

Scholars, if not the cremation industry, realize that "the increased attention to issues of chemical pollution associated with cremation, along with a growing awareness of ecological ethics and ecologically-related lifestyles cremation may begin to lose its attraction."⁴⁵⁹ Approximately 80 gallons of fossil fuels are used for a single cremation and the emissions from the process, including heavy metals and gases such as nitrogen oxides, carbon monoxide, sulphur dioxide, mercury vapour, hydrogen fluoride and hydrogen chloride, are released into the air.⁴⁶⁰ The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recognizes that crematoriums are a source of pollution, though they are not currently its

⁴⁵⁶ Memorial Ecosystems Inc. "Home," n.d. <http://www.memorialecosystems.com> (Feb 9, 2009).

⁴⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁵⁸ Johnny P. Stowe Jr., Elise Vernon Schmidt and Deborah Green, "Toxic Burials: The Final Insult," *Conservation Biology* 15, no. 6 (Dec, 2001), 1817; Davies, Kent & Keizer, introduction to *Encyclopedia of Cremation*, xxi.

⁴⁵⁹ Douglas J. Davies, "Identity," in *Encyclopedia of Cremation*, edited by Douglas J. Davies and Lewis H. Mates. (Burlington: Ashgate Publishing, 2005), 259.

⁴⁶⁰ The Centre for Natural Burial, "Incineration: Is cremation the way to go?" *The Centre for Natural Burial*, n.d., <http://www.naturalburial.coop/about-natural-burial/incineration-cremation> (Feb 9, 2009); Jokinen (interview), April 8, 2008.

primary focus.⁴⁶¹ In a study jointly funded by the CANA and the EPA, it was found that lower burning temperatures rather than additional pollution reducing equipment could reduce emissions.⁴⁶² However, low-emissions are still greater than no-emissions, making a future decline of interest in cremation possible if not immediately foreseeable. It is possible that the innovative sentiment of the Industrial Revolution that supported cremation may translate into the acceptance of even more radical environmentally responsible and sustainable treatments of the body in an era of increased environmental awareness.

In her book *Stiff* Mary Roach observes that with “the majority of cremation now done out of view of the mourners, the memorial has begun to be separated from the process of disposal [and asks] does this free us to explore new possibilities?”⁴⁶³ Kevin McCabe of Farmington Hills, Michigan is working on marketing “water reduction” as an alternative to cremation.⁴⁶⁴ The process was invented by retired professors Bruce Weber and Gordon Kaye, whereby a corpse’s tissues are dissolved in a solution of water and lye that becomes inert after the process and safe to flush down the drain.⁴⁶⁵ The body is reduced to approximately 2% of its weight and, in the end, all that remains are the bones, which will crumble easily, and sterile brown fluid.⁴⁶⁶ This process does not pollute, destroys pathogens and prions, and is approximately 10 times cheaper than cremation to buy and operate.⁴⁶⁷

Proposals have also been made for the creation of human compost. In the late 19th century, chemist Dr. George Hay of Pittsburgh advocated pulverizing corpses to produce a fertilizer.⁴⁶⁸ However, this method did not appeal to the American public at large. In Sweden, biologist Susan Wiigh-Masak has founded Promessa, a company dedicated to providing composting as a dignified means of human burial.⁴⁶⁹ To remove the water from

⁴⁶¹ Cremation Association of North America, “Emissions Tests Provide Positive Results for Cremation Industry,” n.d. <http://www.cremationassociation.org/html/environment.html> (Aug 12, 2007).

⁴⁶² Cremation Association of North America, “Environmental Protection Agency on Human and Animal Crematories,” n.d. <http://www.cremationassociation.org/html/environment.html> (Aug 12, 2007).

⁴⁶³ Roach, *Stiff*, 251-252.

⁴⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 252.

⁴⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 252-253.

⁴⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 252-253.

⁴⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 253.

⁴⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 260.

⁴⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 261.

the remains and therefore the stench of decomposition, the body is first freeze-dried in a vat of liquid nitrogen.⁴⁷⁰ Once frozen, the body is broken into small, easily compostable pieces by either mechanical vibration or ultrasound.⁴⁷¹ Once dry, the dust is purified of toxic metals and placed in a biodegradable casket, which is buried in the loam layer.⁴⁷² Within a year the remains and casket are absorbed into the earth, contributing to the earth and completing the natural cycle of life and death.⁴⁷³

Opposition to these alternatives carries echoes of a century ago in reference to cremation. No matter how euphemized and mechanized, death and its requirements remain abhorrent in the 21st century though for different reasons than in previous centuries. What is considered paramount is the dignity of the human body, which is seen to be currently lacking in alternative funerary rites; however, “there is no dignified way to go, be it decomposition, incineration, dissection, tissue digestion, or composting.”⁴⁷⁴ With time and better design, the perceived lack of dignity in these alternatives may diminish. As with cremation, alternative preparations of the body may see greater acceptance as they respond to and are incorporated into the funerary rites and rituals of contemporary culture.

SUMMARY

Although dying and bereavement have yet to become naturalized in current Western culture, one area where death is becoming increasingly natural is in interment. As environmental awareness and responsibility infiltrates Western society, interest in green burial increases. Traditional forms of burial that emphasize permanence are prevalent in mainstream Western culture, but are being questioned for their long-term sustainability. This increasing interest in the environment contrasts with a traditional cultural obsession with permanence, particularly prevalent in North America. The result is a gradually increasing range of options for more sustainable forms of interment and memorial.

⁴⁷⁰ Ibid., 261, 273.

⁴⁷¹ Ibid., 262.

⁴⁷² Promessa Foundation, “Ecological Burial,” English PDF, *Promessa Foundation*, 2007, <http://www.promessafoundation.org/index.php?ID=46> (Aug 20, 2007), 3.

⁴⁷³ Ibid., 2-3.

⁴⁷⁴ Roach, *Stiff*, 275.

This interest in environmentally sustainable burial has also extended to the preparation of the body. As the environmental sustainability of cremation, long promoted as more sustainable than burial, is questioned, new processes such as water reduction and composting are being explored. Currently, such processes are only in their infancy, but may eventually meet with greater acceptance as pressure for greener modes of interment increases.

9. PERSONALIZATION OF RITUAL AND MEMORIAL

Though the death industry is increasingly allowing for more natural and personal interment options, there seems to be little room for nature or personalization of death, bereavement and memorial in the traditional funerary landscape. Interestingly, cemeteries of the highly ritualized and programmed Victorian era were landscapes that permitted personalization of mourning. Unlike most current North American cemeteries, the Victorian cemetery allowed for more spontaneous expressions of mourning allbethey limited.⁴⁷⁵ Until the 1870s and 80s when public displays of grief began to wane in the upper classes, cemetery sculpture became more elaborate,⁴⁷⁶ expressing the grief of the bereaved very publicly as an intermediary (*Figure 52*). Such monuments allowed physical demonstrations of grief and mourning in an increasingly private society. Niches for placing flowers or offerings, ledges to rest upon, space for eloquent eulogies and individual plots to tend allowed the bereaved to mourn in a more personal fashion. The garden cemetery was a city of the dead, but also a place of reflection for the living, where visitors could contemplate life, death and nature.⁴⁷⁷

In contrast, the lawn cemetery, which developed in the era of growing individualism, has very strict requirements as to the monument type and size allowing far fewer opportunities for artistic or poetic expression of grief (*Figure 53*). The resulting flat, open plane of grass lends itself to walking and standing, diminishing options of displaying grief physically (*Figure 54*). There are few cues to allow the bereaved to feel they are in a place to commune with or remember the dead. A bench on the edge of a field, far from a loved one's grave does not allow for personal communion. The cemetery is no longer a space to grieve, but to visit and leave.

With such a vacuous landscape, the duty of celebrating the individual falls to the funeral. In Britain and North America in particular is significant evidence of increasing interest in the personalization of the funeral.⁴⁷⁸ Many expressivists desire that the funeral to be a setting

⁴⁷⁵ Walter, *On Bereavement*, 132.

⁴⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 132.

⁴⁷⁷ Curl, *The Victorian Celebration of Death*, 121.

⁴⁷⁸ Walter, *On Bereavement*, 150.



Figure 52: The expressive potential of the Victorian tombstone was far greater than that of the flat marker. St Boniface Cathedral Cemetery, Winnipeg, Manitoba. (A)



Figure 53: Bureaucratic control would seek to remove all expression from the cemetery. Photograph by Karen Wilson-Baptist.



Figure 54: The lawn cemetery offers few amenities to encourage visitors to do more than periodically come and go. St Vital Cemetery, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada. (A)

for emotionally cathartic scenes of grief.⁴⁷⁹ Such beliefs are reminiscent of rural Greek laments and the Victorian cult of mourning in their performative emphasis and, as previously discussed, not necessarily helpful for all. Rather, the funeral is held to “affirm the mourners’ cultural values in order to stabilize their fragile grasp on reality.”⁴⁸⁰ Unlike Victorian mourning and funerals that were highly prescriptive yet emotive, funerals are now expected to evoke a sense of the deceased’s character, but maintain strict emotional equilibrium. According to Winnipeg funeral director Neil Bardal, the 21st century funeral is supposed to ease the loss of a loved one.⁴⁸¹ Celebrating who the deceased was gives a sense of familiarity and stability to the bereaved. The demand for personalization can be seen in the plethora of options becoming available within the funerary industry.

Now in the 21st century, the concepts introduced by Mitford and Mulvey regarding options and involvement for the bereaved with less commercial interest have influenced some professionals in the funerary industry. Bardal is attempting to alter what he feels is an emphasis on product rather than the person, professing that “We’ve [the industry] made a mockery out of all this. We really have as a profession.”⁴⁸² As can be seen by the slow rate of change in funerary practices through history, change comes slowly regarding the trappings of death.

The backbone of the funerary industry remains pre-need sales of interment sites and memorial paraphernalia. Says Bardal, “There’s a few of us [those wishing to change to a more service oriented model], but it’s a hard changeover because the product provides so much money, I mean an obscene amount of money and people [the general public] are conditioned to it, anesthetized to it.”⁴⁸³ However, the number of options available for the peroration, commemoration and memorialization of the deceased are multiplying. Opportunities for personally caring for the body of the deceased are available to the bereaved such as preparation of the body and/or viewing of the cremation. Such extreme

⁴⁷⁹ Ibid., 150.

⁴⁸⁰ Ibid., 150.

⁴⁸¹ Bardal, (interview) April 13, 2008.

⁴⁸² Bardal, (interview) April 13, 2008.

⁴⁸³ Bardal, (interview) April 13, 2008.

acts of involvement are still not palatable to the general public and other opportunities for agency and involvement in the funeral and memorial are becoming available.

Cardboard caskets for cremation or eco-burial create a canvas for mourners to express their grief by writing or drawing on the casket.⁴⁸⁴ Custom caskets or urns can be ordered or made by or for the bereaved to fill particular specifications whether they are environmentally friendly materials or a unique motif.⁴⁸⁵ Photomontages, significant music arrangements and personalized programs are highly desired and even expected.⁴⁸⁶ However, the majority of funerals remain standardized beneath the guise of personalization. Theme funerals are available in packages, typically sports for men and knitting or flowers for women, complete with casket, urn, program, flowers and headstone all adorned in the desired motif.⁴⁸⁷ Such materialistic expressions of individuality are a result of increased privatization and commercialization of the funerary industry, but they are evidence of a growing cultural demand for personalization in memorial.

The primacy of the funerary industry over death, memorial and mourning must lead and has led to questions. The Victorian era gives glimmerings of solutions as to how the funerary monopoly can be subverted but still regulated. Small private cemeteries specializing in particular, though legal, forms of burial may allow for more diversification such as the process of cremation and private burial and memorial. In an age where individuality and temporality is normative, diversified modes of burial and memorial may not be so far off. Some groups are seeking to ameliorate the stigmatism of death by placing control of the dead back with those who mourn them.

Crusader Lisa Carlson of Hinesburg, Vermont wrote the book *Caring for your Own Dead* in 1987, in which she lays out how people can legally and sanitarily skirt the funeral director and take on a more active role in the interment of a loved one.⁴⁸⁸ The book covers

⁴⁸⁴ Tom Jokinen, Bardal Funeral Home tour, April 8, 2008.

⁴⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸⁸ Xavier A. Cronin, *Grave Exodus: Tending to Our Dead in the 21st Century* (New York: Barricade Books, 1996), 195.

proper permits and procedures, cleaning and laying out the body, transporting the body, digging a grave and more.⁴⁸⁹ States and provinces have differing policies, but it is interesting to note that in Manitoba it is not mandatory to use the services of a funeral director as long as all policies are complied with and all applicable permits are obtained.⁴⁹⁰ Personalized agency and empowerment are not so far out of reach as is commonly felt and cremation is seen by many to be part of that equation.

Cremationists have not been idle while under scrutiny. Cremationists and the funerary industry recognize that remembering loved ones and being remembered by loved ones has become a contemporary preoccupation. In Western civilization, belief in an afterlife is decreasing while personal identity and ecology increases.⁴⁹¹ Without the comfort of an afterlife, life becomes more poignant. Celebration of the life of an individual has become one of contemporary cremationists advertising themes as in the CANA's promotion of cremation as preparation for memorialization. The versatility of cremation within varying beliefs makes it applicable to a vast and varied segment of society.

The bond between cremation and established religion is less strong than in other funerary rites, allowing for the creation of new rites around the ashes.⁴⁹² Cremains are "a convenient, portable, form of the dead,"⁴⁹³ thus permitting increasingly individualized funerary rites in increasingly individualistic societies. Cremation also has its place in increasingly pluralistic societies, as cremation rites are now acceptable to most religious and non-religious societies.⁴⁹⁴ The process of cremation can be framed by a vast variety of interpretations allowing for commercial globalization without infringing on individualism,⁴⁹⁵ which has been highlighted by cremation organizations and their advertising.⁴⁹⁶ The versatility of

⁴⁸⁹ Ibid., 195.

⁴⁹⁰ Government of Manitoba Public Utilities Board, "General Information – Funeral/Cemetery Planning" *Government of Manitoba*, n.d., www.pub.gov.mb.ca/pdf/notice/gen_info_funerals.pdf (Aug 20, 2007), 4.

⁴⁹¹ Davies, "Identity," 259.

⁴⁹² Davies, Kent & Keizer, introduction to *Encyclopedia of Cremation*, xxii-xxiv.

⁴⁹³ Ibid., xxii.

⁴⁹⁴ Ibid., xxii-xxiii.

⁴⁹⁵ Ibid., xxv.

⁴⁹⁶ Ana Ludovico, "Advertising," in *Encyclopedia of Cremation*, edited by Douglas J. Davies and Lewis H. Mates. (Burlington: Ashgate Publishing, 2005), 3.

cremation for personalization and its promotion as such by the cremation industry is likely to make it a popular choice for years to come.

Memorialization of life, now separate from the disposal of the body, becomes all the more important as the decomposition of the body in death becomes abhorred and ignored by society. The same Wirthlin study that analyzed the reasons for choosing cremation also found that the desire for memorialization was steadily increasing. Currently 89% of Americans desire some form of memorialization.⁴⁹⁷ Even for alternatives to cremation such as composting, it is recognized that some form of ritualization and memorial is needed to address the soul or spirit.⁴⁹⁸

The CANA's slogan is "cremation is preparation for Memorialization,"⁴⁹⁹ suggesting that cremation provides greater opportunities for memorializing the individual. However, until recent decades, the act of modern cremation has been devoid of meaning with few vestiges of pagan funerary pyre beliefs remaining in Western society. With no clear contemporary rites for cremation, elements from ecclesiastical practice are either tacked-on or avoided,⁵⁰⁰ creating a sense of unreality with little closure.⁵⁰¹ In recent history, cremation has been associated with utilitarian notions of disposal. In a society where death is to be feared and life valued all the more, survivors no longer prepare the loved one for a journey into the afterlife. There is little significance left regarding the placement of the body.

Cemeteries are no longer sanctified spaces protecting and commemorating the soul but filing systems of human remains discretely hiding mortality from society. Cemeteries of the 21st century are places where

keepers of the graveyards... found ways to conceal the sting of death. They flattened the traditional grave mound, thus removing one distinctive reminder of mortality. They shrank or leveled gravestones and minimized their decoration and

⁴⁹⁷ Wirthlin Worldwide, "2005 Wirthlin Report, A Study of American Attitudes Toward Ritualization and Memorialization", 1.

⁴⁹⁸ Roach, *Stiff*, 268.

⁴⁹⁹ Jack M. Springer, 103.

⁵⁰⁰ Curl, *The Victorian Celebration of Death*, 191.

⁵⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 193.

*inscription... In the twentieth century, burial grounds are supposed to direct our attention away from the dead.*⁵⁰²

Memorial plaques themselves have become dramatically humble and unassuming due to resignation to death, possible decline of grief, moral value of humility, and/or an attitude of ignorance.⁵⁰³ It appears western society is returning to a fear of the dead experienced over two millennia ago, many without a hope for an afterlife, memorialization is all the more important. We fear the dead but cannot forget them.

Cremation and other more experimental methods of rapidly reducing the body to dust provide diverse opportunities for personalization of interment, ritual and memorial. Ashes can bring memorial to the domestic setting, displayed on the mantle in an urn or buried in the garden. Vials of a loved one's cremains can be prepared and worn as a charm or keepsake. The cremains can be rendered into a gem and worn as a keepsake or mixed into the ink of a memorial tattoo. Cremated remains can become part of the restoration of a coral reef, shot into space or preserve a natural resource from development. Ashes can be scattered to the air, water or earth from balloon, airplane, mountain summit, forest glen, or flowing stream.

The majority of these methods, even methods as unconventional as shooting cremains into space, that are allowed by speedily reducing remains to dust can find precedents in nature or ancient history although their trappings and/or scope may have changed (i.e. sending remains into space rather than down river). However, such methods of interment do not lend themselves to traditional memorialization. These memorials are as temporal as they are personal, lasting only as long as those who remember. Clearly cremation is opening up new options in interment and memorial. However, the long-term societal implications of cremation remain in question.

The sanitization of death or Ariès' denial of death, in which cremation plays a major historical role, has been assessed by historians and sociologists for its emotional and

⁵⁰² James A. Hijiya, "American Gravestones and Attitudes Toward Death: A Brief History," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 127, no. 5 (Oct, 1983), 360.

⁵⁰³ *Ibid.*, 359-360.

societal implications. Statistics indicating that the body not being in the earth and subject to decay is desirable to the public reinforce the scholarly belief that “the natural processes of corruption and decay have become disgusting”⁵⁰⁴ to contemporary society. To compound this repugnance, without belief in an afterlife, death becomes terrifying⁵⁰⁵ and “ignorance... our only salvation.”⁵⁰⁶ For this reason, funeral professionals and unassuming cemetery monuments separate mourners from death, creating a culture of death denial.⁵⁰⁷

These processes of physical and psychological sanitization of death that were deemed civilized and modern in the early to mid 20th century began to be criticized in the 1960s and 70s. It has been stated “Fear of death, failure to grasp the realities of death and disposal, and cowardice in facing the last rites given to a friend or member of a family are among the true obscenities of our time.”⁵⁰⁸ The professionalization, medicalization, and technicalization of death is seen by some to alienate the dying and bereaved from the rest of society.⁵⁰⁹ Some analysts would decree that

*the increase of interest in cremation is a symptom of something far deeper than economics, sanitation, burial space or mere convenience... observations of human response to the death experience, seem to indicate to this writer that secularized society, dehumanized death, recessive respect for human life and the use of cremation are two sides of the same coin.*⁵¹⁰

The cremation committal in particular has fallen under attack. In antiquity the funeral service met its climax with the lighting of the funerary pyre, while in burial the graveside ceremony and interment marked the end of a life. In both forms of interment, the bereaved had a definitive moment to come to terms with death. However, modernized cremation did not permit such catharsis as the coffin disappeared behind a remote controlled door or curtain to be cremated later out of sight.⁵¹¹

⁵⁰⁴ Geoffrey Gorer, *Death, Grief and Mourning* (New York: Arno Press, 1977), 196.

⁵⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 196-197.

⁵⁰⁶ Hijjiya, “American Gravestones and Attitudes Toward Death: A Brief History,” 360.

⁵⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 359-360.

⁵⁰⁸ Curl, *The Victorian Celebration of Death*, 193.

⁵⁰⁹ Davies, Kent & Keiser, introduction to *Encyclopedia of Cremation*, xxii.

⁵¹⁰ Stewart Windrum and Jody Nicholson, “Correlation and study in the decline of Christianity and Increase in Cremation,” *Western School of Mortuary Practice Manitoba* (1995), 19.

⁵¹¹ Curl, *The Victorian Celebration of Death*, 192.

Removing any sense of human agency was seen to exacerbate “a sense of unreality, lack of care or dignity, and a distressing utilitarianism.”⁵¹² Cremation alters how others view the deceased, with cremains more easily forgotten than a body that still retains the identity of a loved one.⁵¹³ Crematoriums often have a backlog of cremains waiting to be claimed by the next of kin for burial, with the crematorium eventually saddled with the responsibility of respectfully interring the remains.⁵¹⁴ Though cremation is advertised within the industry as an avenue for increased personalization of the funeral ceremony and memorial, some research suggests that the opposite is true. Cremation may be both symptom and disease in a culture where human life and death are losing value.

SUMMARY

Unlike the Victorian landscapes of memorial, the lawn cemetery was designed to be a landscape devoid of personalized ritual and memorial. Personalization is largely relegated to the funeral and committal, with marketed options largely simplified to superficial expressions of individuality. Attempts to subvert such commercially driven forms of personalization and memorialization have multiplied in recent years. Options such as burial in a small private cemetery, personally preparing the body for burial, cremation of the body and temporal memorials, such as shooting remains into space, are gaining notoriety in Western society though not all are gaining popularity. Currently, the most popular avenue of personalization is cremation, which allows for a variety of options for interment. However, the temporal nature of many alternative interment modes and memorials are being questioned for possible detrimental impacts on Western culture.

⁵¹² Ibid., 192.

⁵¹³ Davies, “Identity,” 260.

⁵¹⁴ Tom Jokinen, Bardal Funeral Home tour, April 8, 2008.

10. SCATTERING: BEYOND THE BOX AND CEMETERY

Most interesting to this writer and vexing to funeral directors is the historically unprecedented act of scattering (*Figure 55*). In many cultures, particularly in the Middle East,⁵¹⁵ spreading one's remains jeopardized one's experience of the afterlife and was a desecration, the final and greatest insult committed to an individual. However, in 21st century Western society the dead are no longer necessarily buried in the cemetery. There is a rising trend of scattering remains away from traditional funerary establishments. Such undocumented and random depositing of remains has been identified by funerary professionals as problematic for memorial and, therefore, problematic for traditional cemeteries and mortuary institutions that profit from traditional memorialization.

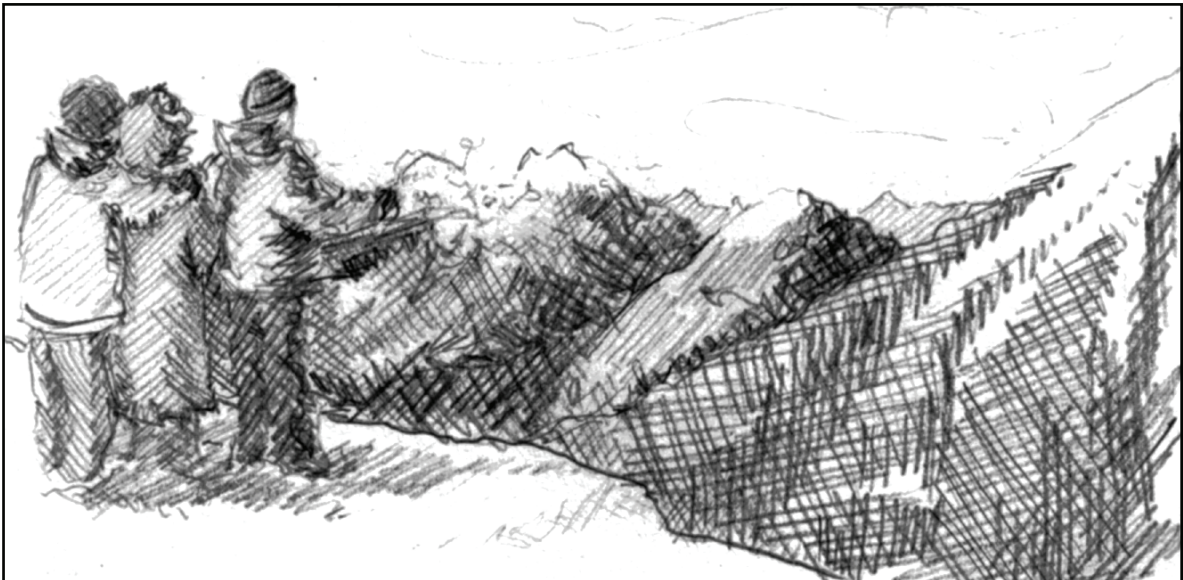


Figure 55: The act of scattering allows greater flexibility of memorial service, but poses a problem for permanent memorialization. (A)

⁵¹⁵ Davies, "Gilgamesh," 220.

However, the industry poses the problem from a historical, environmental and psychological perspective rather than one of economic and bureaucratic interest. For example, if grandpa's remains are scattered in the middle of a forest, is the location easily found and accessed by anyone wishing to visit his final resting place? Is that information available for future generations that may desire to retrace their ancestry? Those wishing to visit the gravesite on a regular basis or "pay their respects" years later would be at a loss. Echoing the majority of mortuary professionals, Jane Saxby, Winnipeg municipal funeral director, emphasizes the historical and environmental impacts of scattering as detrimental: "at the moment people are scattering and they're scattering outside of cemeteries which is something we don't encourage again because of the history being lost but too because cremated remains are damaging to the soil."⁵¹⁶

Another popular objection to scattering stems from the belief widespread within the industry that traditional memorialization is psychologically necessary to the grief healing process. The funerary industry has many reasons to prohibit scattering. However, the industry's lack of interest most likely stems from the less fashionable interests of economic gain and bureaucratic control. The popularity of scattering may mark the waning control of funerary institutions over relationships between the living and the dead.

Claims regarding the historical, environmental and psychological impacts of scattering have yet to be thoroughly studied, confirmed or denied by an objective source. Currently, each claim can be contradicted. Although it has almost limitless potential for personalization, scattering offers the least amount of choice in memorialization as it has been largely rejected and repressed by the funerary industry.

Firstly, the claim that traditional memorialization is necessary to the healing process is a gross generalization at best. Previously discussed studies regarding grief and mourning indicate that the grief process is not uniform and, therefore, it can not be assumed that permanent memorialization is necessary to the healing process of all. Also, a historical

⁵¹⁶ Jane Saxby (City of Winnipeg Administrator of Cemeteries), interview with Erin Sawatzky, May 27, 2008, transcript.

overview indicates that widespread individual burial and memorialization is the anomaly in Western history.

Secondly, the environmental impact of scattering is a double-edged blade. Detrimental environmental impacts of scattering can be seen in areas of frequent scattering and sensitive ecosystems, such as at the peak of Scotland's Ben Nevis where frequent scattering of cremains has led to the site's degradation.⁵¹⁷ It is believed that frequent scatterings in this traditionally isolated and arid location are altering the ecology of the site as soil nutrient levels are raised, permitting infiltration of foreign species. However, the definition of 'degradation' appears more circumstantial than universal, depending upon the unique context of the site. Other studies indicate that the calcium and phosphorous rich cremains can enrich the soil and enhance rejuvenation.⁵¹⁸ If this is the case, 'degradation' is no more detrimental to areas than excessive fertilization of a residential lawn. Soil 'degradation' could potentially be avoided through careful planning and monitoring of soil nutrient levels or burial of cremains.

Finally, the declining use of traditional historical documentation, such as the tombstone or cemetery records, can be observed, but new forms of memorialization are developing.⁵¹⁹ Though the media has changed, the desire for memorial persists. Scattering may be more detrimental for the funeral industry than for society as a whole.

Historical instances of cultures that scattered a loved one's remains are rare and not as absolute as the scattering of cremains, but they do exist: "contrary to what most historians

⁵¹⁷ Saxby (interview), May 27, 2008.

⁵¹⁸ BBCE NEWS, "Mountaineers seek halt on ashes." Jan 25, 2006, http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/hi/uk_news/scotland/4645896.stm (Feb. 10, 2009); Bardal, (interview) April 13, 2008.

⁵¹⁹ Technology is now used to record our stories. Blogs, Facebook®, websites, film, pod casts, music and television pervade our lives and tell our stories. The Internet is full of profiles and journals, documentary and biographical film rises in popularity while a whole genre of television shows, reality TV., is dedicated to chronicling the lives of both ordinary and famous people. One digital social network, Myspace, has now branched out from connecting the living to allowing connection between the living and the dead with its new server Deathspace, where people are memorialized online. Many cemeteries also have websites allowing people to access records and eulogies online. The official website for Pere Lachaise provides online visitors with a virtual tour through the cemetery grounds. Non-traditional memorial media is not only technological. People have long recorded their triumphs and tragedies of life on their body through the art of tattoo. Memorialization through tattoo art provides a constant and personal memorial that is imprinted on the survivor's body. The person becomes the memorial.

of death have believed, not all peoples have venerated their dead, and some, for quite long periods in history, have quite simply abandoned their corpses.”⁵²⁰ Some North American Aboriginal cultures, such as the Ojibwa on occasion exposed the body to the elements. The body was loosely sewn into a burial garb of hides and placed on an elevated platform in a tree to allow the spirit to travel to his or her afterlife in the “other village.”⁵²¹ The Persians left their dead to the vultures in ‘towers of silence’ with the bones collected and placed in an ossuary after a year in the tower.⁵²² Similar to the Persians of the Middle East, Persians of India erected towers outside of their towns, called dokhmans, where the dead were placed and their bones picked clean by vultures so as not to pollute the ground.⁵²³ Once a dokhman was full of bones, it was sealed and another erected.⁵²⁴ In these instances the bones remained as their own marker; dispersion was not complete.

These cultures either did not view their actions as dissipation of remains, but release of the spirit to another very specific form or place, a form of purification of the earthly body, or these cultures were ones where the dead were to be separated from the world of the living out of fear. Within these cultures memorial was either not perceived as a necessity or individuals were memorialized in more temporal ways. Regarding ritual and landscape, two of the historically significant venues for memorial in Western culture, there are no precedents for contemporary methods of scattering. In a culture where memorialization is considered by many to be an integral part of death and bereavement, the long-term emotional and cultural implications of scattering requires further study.

Currently, it appears that cremation is a viable alternative to burial in North American society and is increasing in popularity. The versatility of cremation for personalized memorials is attractive in an increasingly individualistic society. Cremation is also more economical than most other funerary rites and, somewhat less harmful to the environment.

⁵²⁰ Ragon, *The Space of Death*, 4.

⁵²¹ Ruth Landes, *Ojibwa religion and the Midewiwin* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1968), 195-198.; David Bushnell Jr., *Native cemeteries and forms of burial east of the Mississippi* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1920), 30, 32.

⁵²² Ragon, *The Space of Death*, 76.

⁵²³ *Ibid.*, 4, 76.

⁵²⁴ *Ibid.*, 76.

Though other means of disposal are being explored, no other alternative to burial is as widely accepted or established as cremation. No other form of interment, besides natural burial has as extensive a history as cremation. Cremation has been criticized for distancing the dead from the living. However, the process of cremation is unlikely to have led to this separation. Historical examples show cremation to be equally popular to burial, if not more so, yet writers do not indicate that these peoples were isolated from death; in fact, quite the opposite.

The same cultural shifts that made cremation attractive to the Western World are responsible for the 'invisible death' identified by scholars. Loss of respect for the body, loss of value of human life, loss of faith in an afterlife, and loss of agency have led to a climate where such distance can occur. In an increasingly secular and specialized society, cremation is only one of many services that allow people to pay for what they would not or could not do themselves. Though a current desire for individual choice may cause cremation to remain only one of several future options for disposal of the dead, cremation will continue to be a prominent and viable option. Likely to vary more dramatically than modes of interment are the ways the dead are memorialized as orthodox rites and rituals are abandoned in favour of individualized memorials.

SUMMARY

More than the act of cremation, which is still largely compatible with traditional forms of funeral and memorial, the act of scattering has proved irksome to sectors of the funerary industry dependent upon sale of traditional funeral merchandise and services. Though objections to the practice abound, further long-term, objective study is required to substantiate claims regarding the societal impacts of scattering. Regardless of the positive or negative societal implications of scattering, such informal and unregulated interments are particularly threatening to the traditional perception of the cemetery landscape. As it does not appear likely that cremation and scattering are necessarily passing fads, but may be cultural manifestations of changing funerary traditions, their implications cannot be merely dismissed. Rather, rising interest in cremation and scattering should be carefully considered in the planning of funerary rituals and memorial landscapes of future generations.

CONCLUSION TO PART II

At the dawn of the 21st century, trajectories towards diversity and sustainability are discernable. Increasingly, clinical and psychological professionals are advocating personalized approaches in the care of the dying and bereaved. A growing number of researchers desire that death become a more natural part of Western life, allowing the bereaved continuity and support between the public and private realms. This growing emphasis on personalization has been acknowledged by several divisions of the funerary industry, leading to greater availability of personalized options for funeral and mourning rituals and grave memorials. As personalization is normalized within the industry, green burial, still considered a fringe fad by many of the death industry, is being offered as an additional option to the environmentally conscientious. However, these changes have yet to dramatically alter the landscapes of death in Western society.

There are aspects of sustainability that the funerary industry has deemed incongruent with its business, dismissing or disapproving of practices that seek to bypass traditional services and merchandise. As personalization of ritual and memorial is increasingly emphasized within Western culture, numerous options that do not require a traditional funeral, burial or memorial are developing. This shift in memorialization from uniformity and permanence to greater personalization and temporality may prove an even greater influence on the funerary landscape than modern cremation. Rather than the death knell for the cemetery, these changes in the perception of death may provide opportunities for contemporization. Through allowing the diversification and personalization that is increasing in cultural ritual and clinical discourse to become an integral, rather than superficial, part of the cemetery, the funerary landscape may yet become a more naturalized part of the lived landscapes of Western society in the 21st century.

PART III: ADAPTATION

DEATH, BEREAVEMENT AND LANDSCAPE IN THE 21ST CENTURY

The preceding chapters have outlined briefly the steadily changing perception of death and the cemetery in Western culture over centuries. What remains is discussion of what current changes in Western culture, particularly regarding death, means for the landscape itself. What is it as a place and what could it become as a landscape? In the introduction of this practicum, death and the cemetery are described for their historical and cultural importance. However, the cemetery is more than a historical or cultural concept. The cemetery is a *place* that exists and is experienced within space and time.

11. THE PLACE OF DEATH

In his article “How to get from space to place in a fairly short stretch of time: Phenomenological Prolegomena,” Edward Casey explores the nature of place. By his conclusions, it could be said that the contemporary cemetery landscape is more a space than a place.

Casey lists two essential traits for reaching the state of place. First, is the presence of the living, moving body, which helps to constitute a place as much as bodies are continually in a place.⁵²⁵ Second, places gather, not amassing, but holding, animate and inanimate entities, exp, the cemetery could be seen to be the very essence of place, as its function is to gather both bodies and their histories, but this is not the case. The current nature of the cemetery as a commercial landscape for interment has indeed filled it with bodies, but few of them are living or moving and those that are, are few and far between and they rarely tarry long. The cemetery indeed gathers history, entities and the memories associated with those buried there. However, few contemporary cemeteries are “full of memories and expectations, old things and new things, the familiar and the strange and much more besides... a place holds

⁵²⁵ Edward S. Casey, “How to get from space to place in a fairly short stretch of time: Phenomenological Prolegomena,” in *Senses of Place*, edited by Steven Feld and Keith H. Basso (Santa Fe, NM: School of American Research Press, 1996), 21-24.

out, beckoning to its [living] inhabitants and, assembling them, making them manifest.”⁵²⁶ The history, entities and thoughts of the modern cemetery are borrowed from other places and other times, an intermediary space with little history, presence or thought of its own making. The cemetery is a landscape largely separated from life as lived, rendering it more space than place.

PLACE OR SPACE

Separation of the dead from the living does not necessarily imply placelessness. For centuries, graveyards were placed outside the city out of fear of and reverence for the dead. However, these were places that could be returned to, where the living and the dead could meet. The ancient Greeks, wishing to hear from their ancestors, would spend the night in family crypts.⁵²⁷ The Ojibwa would leave food for the dead at the individual spirit houses built over the grave.⁵²⁸ Modern cemeteries, removed from the realm of everyday life, differ from their historical counterparts in the role such places play in society. They are no longer dwellings of the dead or the meeting place between worlds, but repositories for human remains.

The cemetery is no longer a place to dwell, to think, to experience. These landscapes are maintained rather than experienced. They are repositories and, as such, the lawn cemetery and memorial garden demand little of the designer and the visitor. The inhabitant will never complain and the visitor expects little. In fact, the modern cemetery was formed to ensure the visitor need do as little as possible. There are few amenities accommodating the visitor’s stay (*Figure 56*). Once there, there is little essence of the deceased’s character to connect with. This is fine for those desiring to move on, breaking ties with the dead, but the contemporary cemetery does not respond to those who wish to move on, but remain connected or to those who do not desire to move on at all. Currently there are few places that facilitate more extended and expressive forms of grief and mourning. There is space for interment in the lawn cemetery, but no apparent place for dwelling, meeting or healing.

⁵²⁶ Ibid., 24-25.

⁵²⁷ Ragon, *The Space of Death*, 13.

⁵²⁸ Landes, *Ojibwa religion and the Midewiwin*. 191-192.



Figure 56: The open plain of the lawn cemetery does little to create an inviting or memorable environment. Thompson “in the park” Funeral Home & Cemetery, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada. (A)

Over the centuries, the story of the cemetery landscape has been one of increasing control. Western culture has gradually moved from emotive public ritual and burial in the wild lands outside ancient communities to private mourning and memorial that is increasingly separate from the efficiently sanitized commercial landscape of present day. However, there are now cultural currents, rip tides in some areas, within Western culture that can no longer be ignored by the funerary industry and the landscapes it generates. A growing demand for diversity in interment and memorial and an increased awareness of environmental responsibility cannot continue to be ignored or superficially addressed by the mainstream funerary industry.

New diversified and naturalistic forms of interment and memorial are not “wrong”, but different, occurring outside the bureaucratic, status quo paradigm of the death trade. The traditional services of the cemetery and the funeral director, preparation, interment, ritual and memorial, remain. There is still a need to prepare the body for ritual and interment; however, new forms of interment are being introduced. There is still a cultural need for ritual; however, these rituals are becoming increasingly personal and diverse. There is still a

desire for a *place* of interment; however, the criteria for these places are dynamic. There is still a need for memorial; however, memory is becoming increasingly temporal and personal. For the funerary industry and landscape to remain culturally relevant, they need to respond to the changing cultural climates of the societies they exist within. In short, the cemetery needs to shift from being a space, an opening where entities could be, to a place, a site where existence is experienced.

The *International Encyclopedia of the Social and Behavioral Sciences* defines a sense of place as “the capacity to recognize and respond to the diverse identities of places. A place affects us directly through sight, smell, sound, and touch and sense of place is the synthetic faculty that combines these impressions with memory, imagination, and reason.”⁵²⁹ With its emphasis on experience of space and time in location, this definition of place agrees with that of Casey. Conversely, placelessness is defined as “the condition in which different places look much the same, and, more importantly, offer the same opportunities for experience. It is the erosion of geographical distinctiveness and diversity.”⁵³⁰ The encyclopedia then goes on to list some of the ‘legion’ sites of placelessness: shopping malls, apartment blocks, airport terminals and freeways. With its lack of geographical distinction and diversity, the modern cemetery could very easily be added to this list.

PLACE OR PERMANENCE

In the quest to create a permanent resting place for the centuries, the contemporary cemetery has minimized the effects and appearance of time in the landscape. It is this sense of timelessness that erodes a sense of place in the cemetery. Casey defines place as more event than thing and, as “an event is at once spatial and temporal, indeed indissolubly both: its spatial qualities and relations happen at a particular time,”⁵³¹ place is where time and space merge. Devoid of the manifestations of time, the cemetery fails to rise beyond space to place. Cultural denial of death discussed by Ariès, Gorer and Walter inadvertently translated into denial of place in landscape. In the article “Mythic Pieties of Permanence:

⁵²⁹ Edward Relph, “Place in Geography,” in *International Encyclopedia of the Social and Behavioral Sciences*, edited by Neil J. Smelser and Paul B. Baltes, (Amsterdam: Elsevier, 2001), 11449.

⁵³⁰ *Ibid.*, 11450.

⁵³¹ Casey, “How to get from space to place in a fairly short stretch of time,” 37.

Memorial Architecture and the Struggle for Meaning” Jeffrey F. Meyer observes that memorial architecture, to which can be added memorial landscape architecture, “is always subject to subversion and revision.”⁵³² Their assertion of permanence is illusory, both the meaning and, in time, the very form of such sites are changeable.

The realm of architecture is now more aware of its own mutable qualities.⁵³³ Meyer identifies ritual, performed by a community of believers, to be the source of this changeable meaning over time: “To find the meaning, one must look at what happens in the architecture – that is, to the rituals enacted in and around them. It is in the act of ritual performed by a believing community that the reality of meaning may be found. As the rites change, meaning changes.”⁵³⁴ It is the living-moving body located both in space and time that generates place. Therefore, places are not static or inert but elastic and memorable.⁵³⁵ Ironically, in seeking a landscape of permanence, the funerary industry has created the preconditions for its decreasing cultural presence.

Of all the changes in cemetery design over the centuries singled out as abhorrent or inhumane, permanence is the historic anomaly of contemporary cemeteries. Previously temporality was an accepted reality. Begun with Père Lachaise and its counterparts, was the idea that to be successful, noteworthy was to have a permanent marker to one’s greatness. Nowhere previously in Western History was this assumed. Even in the hierarchical churchyard, bodies were exhumed and placed in the charnel house or catacombs; death’s egalitarianism demonstrated by the mass of indistinctive skulls and bones. Only the very greatest were kept separate. At first this was the Saints, then Royalty, then the rich, the aspiring middle class until today when all are worthy of burial in perpetuity. The contemporary cemetery is marketed as permanent memorialization for all, but is this realistic? Is this sustainable?

⁵³² Jeffrey F. Meyer, “Mythic Pieties of Permanence: Memorial Architecture and the Struggle for Meaning,” in *American Sanctuary: Understanding Sacred Spaces*, edited by Louis P. Nelson (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006), 220.

⁵³³ *Ibid.*, 205.

⁵³⁴ *Ibid.*, 205.

⁵³⁵ Casey, “How to get from space to place in a fairly short stretch of time,” 44.

Our society no longer values permanence in life; handheld communication devices, computer systems and vehicles are outdated within moments of their purchase and information can be collected and deleted at the click of a button. Is it reasonable to expect permanence in death? How long before the plaques of the lawn cemetery are grown over? How long before the factory made columbaria crumble: a generation or half a lifetime? Tom Jokinen states confidently that it is 30 years; it takes 30 years for columbaria to mold, 30 years for the artificial flowers to cease to be placed by a graveside.⁵³⁶ Large, heated mausoleums are now sold to customers as the best way to memorialize their dead, but how long before these buildings need renovations and additions? The longevity of these spaces falls far short of perpetuity, as do all works of our hands.

Interestingly, as the design world becomes more aware of its own protean qualities, the concept of what memorial architecture is has shifted from monumental Neo-classical temples to monuments that are more landscape than architecture. Maya Lin's Vietnam Memorial, heralded as one of Washington D.C.'s most successful monuments,⁵³⁷ is a marble-lined incision in the earth, which visitors gradually descend into by way of a gravel path. The Franklin Roosevelt Memorial celebrates the eternal qualities of the American landscape in its coursing waterfalls, mountains and forests.⁵³⁸ Berlin's "Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe," commemorating the deaths of European Jews at the hands of the Nazis, was designed by Peter Eisenman and consists of a vast undulating field of large monolithic slabs, which gradually close in on visitors as they navigate through the site.⁵³⁹ The landscape's intrinsic potential for dynamism and potency is being used to form compelling and dynamic monuments. Landscape as memorial.

However, few contemporary cemeteries could be described as either dynamic or compelling. In most cases, the lawn cemetery and memorial garden have stripped away most of the architecture of preceding eras, only to leave a blank patch of land. The cemetery is an interment landscape more than a memorial landscape.

⁵³⁶ Jokinen (interview), April 8, 2008.

⁵³⁷ Meyer, "Mythic Pieties of Permanence," 204.

⁵³⁸ *Ibid.*, 205.

⁵³⁹ Peter Dave, "Field of Memory: The new memorial to European Jews who perished under the Nazis is an unnerving presence in the heart of Berlin," *The Architectural Review* 218, (July 2005): 80-83.

As with most funerary traditions, the concept of landscape as memorial is hardly new. Most intriguing are Curl's references to early projections of cremation becoming the foremost mode of interment in future years and musings as to the possible landscapes. The writings of Loudon and Robinson are tremendously insightful and foresightful when one examines current trends in burial. However, as cremation has become more prevalent, the landscape has not changed from that of the utilitarian, monument-filled cemetery, leaving a bleak green space where Loudon and Robinson envisioned a unified, peaceful and sublime landscape park.

There is now little incentive to visit cemeteries, making such "ever-present visual memorial [of] our collective past"⁵⁴⁰ somewhat less present in contemporary society. The phrase "If you build it, they will come"⁵⁴¹ rarely applies to landscape and even more rarely, if ever, to cemeteries for the simple fact that there is 'nothing to do'. Graveside contemplation is no longer normative, nor do current cemetery designs allocate space for it. What is very interesting is that in the Victorian celebration of death the style of landscape and architecture was part and parcel with the rites of death and mourning. Gothic style architecture situated in a picturesque landscape became the iconic image of the Victorian cemetery. The landscape was familiar and, to some degree, comforting to the living. If a contemporary ritual response to death and dying is to be formed, the landscape stands to be an essential part of its transformation.

REFLECTION

We are not immortal, but we are not amoebas either. We are sentient beings with memory and the landscape attests to this fact. In the very earth "it is 'written' that we have our 'place here'. Dig up fossils, unearth its graves, excavate its cities and read the scripts for yourselves. They all say: hic jacet,"⁵⁴² here they lie. In *The Dominion of the Dead* Robert

⁵⁴⁰ Curl, *The Victorian Celebration of Death*, 266.

⁵⁴¹ *Field of Dreams*, DVD, directed by Phil Alden Robinson, (1989; Universal City, CA: Universal Pictures, 1999).

⁵⁴² Robert Pogue Harrison, *The Dominion of the Dead*, (Chicago : University of Chicago Press, 2003), 34.

Pogue Harrison proposes that “to be human means above all to bury,”⁵⁴³ to translate our mortality into history and matter into meaning. It is due to this capacity for memory that

*the sight of ruins is such a reflexive and in some cases unsettling experience. Ruins in an advanced state of ruination represent, or better they literally embody, the dissolution of meaning into matter. By revealing what human building ultimately is up against – natural or geological time – ruins have a way of recalling us to the very ground of our human worlds, namely the earth, whose foundations are so solid and so reliable that they presumably will outlast any edifices that we build on them.*⁵⁴⁴

Through memory and genetics we lie somewhere between a moment and forever. Should not our landscapes of memorial demonstrate the same capacity? What is required is a landscape balancing temporality and continuity, addressing the interests of future generations and reflecting the true human condition and contemporary societal concerns. What is envisioned is a landscape that would accommodate both those wishing a simple and personalized end and those desiring permanent memorialization for the dead, a landscape that would allow differing forms of and settings for scattering and memorialization and a place of return for those who have no site to visit. What is desired is a landscape that dances somewhere between permanence and temporality.

⁵⁴³ Ibid., xi.

⁵⁴⁴ Ibid., 3.

12. DESIGN INTENT

There are many narratives associated with a single death. Death affects larger society and the individual on multiple levels and in multiple ways. Throughout time, as cultures and societies have changed so has the perception of death and the places of death. However, some common themes weave their way through history to the present. Though our culture and society have changed dramatically over the millennia, the universal constraint of death remains and, with it some fundamental requirements for the landscapes of death.

Spanning both time and culture is a need for a space for the dead and for their journey. Within the places of the dead, there is a narrative of humanity, in its temporality and dwelling, balanced with transcendence, in its continuity and dynamism. Though beliefs are increasingly diverse, whether one believes in an afterlife or not, there are allusions to transcendence, a journey beyond our experience reality. The boat over the river to the underworld, the long slumber until the resurrection to heaven, the return to the earth's nitrogen cycle and the transitional experience of grief and mourning all speak of a journey in some form or another. However, as physical beings, our deaths hold physical implications.

From the first witnessed death on earth to present day, the age-old question remains, "What do we do with the body?" There have been and are numerous solutions of funerary rites: cannibalism, interment in dolmens, caves, houses, niches, urns or earth, exposure to scavenging animals, exposure to the air in a tree or on a platform, a contracted position, water immersion and complete concealment.⁵⁴⁵ Some such as cannibalism and exposure are rarely practiced in contemporary Western society as they have long been regarded as social taboos. However, some forms of interment and inhumation were not always taboos, but waxed and waned in popularity over time. The ancient Greeks and Romans occasionally buried their dead within the houses of the living. Prior to 5th century CE when burial became the exclusive rite of Western society, cremation was as, if not more, acceptable

⁵⁴⁵ Ragon, *The Space of Death*, 5.

than burial. As the living move and require shelter for their physical beings, the remains of the dead also must dwell somewhere on the Earth.

Whether actual or allusion, a place of death must be a place of journeying and dwelling, transcendence and humanity. The funerary landscapes of prior cultures were places of communion between the living and the dead. However, the modern era brought with it a desire for separation between the living and the dead, reducing the need for such allusions. The modern cemetery is a space for interment, but not a place for reunion or sojourn. It is the intention of this practicum to expand the program of the cemetery beyond the requirements of the dead and their handlers to the desires of larger society, particularly the bereaved who have been given very little space in modern society. To accomplish this goal, growing cultural emphasis on diversity, sustainability, personality and holistic wellbeing must be incorporated into the design of the cemetery without compromising practical management and maintenance. What is desired is more than a cemetery. What is desired is a landscape, a functioning ecosystem of death.

The many possible perspectives of death and mourning are numerous and diverse. With the expansion of the cemetery's program to a wider user group, a greater number of narratives need to be balanced within a single landscape. The Cemetery Director's needs of simplicity and efficiency are currently met by the lawn cemetery and memorial garden. The goal is to maintain a high level of efficiency and marketability while incorporating the needs of other living visitors. Society's need for sustainable technologies must extend to the resource and land use of the cemetery. This implies the support of alternative modes of burial and memorial. The needs of the bereaved for a place of memorial and guidance for ritual require a place that is supportive of their physical and emotional state. This requires a memorial landscape that will accommodate those that are grieving and those that simply wish to remember. What is proposed is a diversified funerary landscape that will accommodate multiple users and multiple narratives.

Within the profession of landscape architecture and related fields there are numerous precedents of landscape from which an inclusive and holistic funerary landscape may be

derived. In order to establish a foundation from which to design, several sources are examined. First, after establishing the need for a therapeutic cemetery for the bereaved, current research regarding therapeutic landscapes is reviewed. Second, a cursory investigation as to why and which landscapes are beneficial to human wellbeing. Third, historic precedents for therapeutic landscapes and contemporary theory regarding contemplative landscapes are analyzed, with Woodland cemetery analyzed as for its embodiment of funerary, therapeutic and contemplative aspects of the landscape. Finally, a holistic cemetery concept design for the 21st century is developed within the context of Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada.

13. THE THERAPEUTIC CEMETERY

A PLACE OF MEMORIAL FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

The intent of this thesis is not to propose a better way of death, but rather develop a new landscape that responds to the multiple avenues of death and bereavement arising in modern Western society. Changes in modes of interment and memorial have already been discussed. However, there is another change in the perception of death that has great bearing on the future perception and relevance of the cemetery within Western society. The cemetery is now more for the living than for the dead.

The history of the perception of death exhibits a movement within mainstream Western culture from what Ariès identifies as focus on the other, where ritual was meant to aid the deceased to and through the afterlife, toward a current focus on the self, where ritual is meant to aid the bereaved's return to equilibrium. Contemporary death rituals focus primarily on the emotional wellbeing of the bereaved and sanitary requirements of society rather than the spiritual journey of the deceased, which was the basis of the majority of traditional death rituals.⁵⁴⁶ Cemeteries remain focused on the dead, the other, and efficiency, the owner, while society has shifted its gaze to the inner workings of the living, grieving individual. The loss of this presence has contributed to the cemetery's diminishing sense of place in contemporary society. If places are where space and time are located and experienced, the presence of the living, grieving individual in the physical funerary landscape is necessary to reinstating the cemetery as a place in the cultural landscape. Through this response, it is hoped that the funerary landscape may lose some of its stigma and become one of the paths to healing for the dying and the bereaved.

In this age of utilitarian cemeteries and introverted bereavement and therapy, the role of landscape architecture has become increasingly passive in the design and planning of the spaces of death. The primary considerations remain those of the client: ease of maintenance and interment, with very few cemetery landscapes designed with a larger user base in mind. However, if the creation of place is dependent upon the lived and experienced landscape,

⁵⁴⁶ Tony Walter, *On Bereavement*, 34.

greater consideration of the cemetery landscape as a place for the living public is necessary for the cemetery's continued relevance within contemporary society.

The experience of the bereaved who attend the places where the remains of their loved ones rest are often omitted or considered tertiary to that of the owner and/or maintainer of the cemetery. Ironically, this is the reverse order of consideration to that used in other landscapes. For example, an urban park would certainly consider on-going maintenance and practicality, but the experience and use of the general public will be of primary consideration to ensure its success. There is great opportunity for considered landscapes to play an active role in the wellbeing of the individuals that use them. More specifically, there is great opportunity in the funerary landscape, where the majority of visitors are under considerable distress, for the landscape itself to ease the process of living on after a death.

HEALING LANDSCAPES: CLINICAL DISCOURSE

As previously discussed, the modern bereaved are caught psychologically in a no-man's-land between the dead and the living. The psychological emphasis inherent in bereavement research would indicate that grief is primarily psychological, manifested and addressed within the mind. However, the bereaved exists physically within space and time. Arnold van Gennep's influential theories of rites of passage portray the bereaved and the deceased as existing in a no-man's-land somewhere between the worlds of the living and the dead.⁵⁴⁷ The recent dead are no longer animated, but very much alive in the minds of their loved ones and, though they may wish to be near the dead, the animated bereaved remains in the land of the living. Such an existence undoubtedly has psychological and spiritual ramifications, but bereavement also has a physical existence that is too often omitted from academic discourse.

The separation of the living and the dead is physical, arguably more than it is psychological. Researchers pioneering what Walter terms 'revival of death,' such as Kubler-Ross and Gorer, identify the therapeutic qualities of expressive mourning ritual,⁵⁴⁸

⁵⁴⁷ Ibid., 28.

⁵⁴⁸ Ibid., 149.

which brings psychological experience into the realm of physical space. However, as Walter points out,

*Expressivists provide no guidance as to when, how, in what manner or with which people it is appropriate to express grief. In many ways the old norm, that you grieve alone while holding yourself together in public, is much easier. For the new norm to take hold, the emphasis on tears as psychologically healthy must be complemented by guidelines as to when and where is the best place to cry.*⁵⁴⁹

There is no clear physical space for the bereaved to mourn as they navigate through a world between worlds with few guidelines to follow. Ritual has been replaced by discourse.⁵⁵⁰ Therapy occurs in the mind in the therapist's office and, as a result, society and even the funerary landscape fail to accommodate the physical needs of the bereaved, but grief and mourning of the bereaved are physical as well as psychological and, therefore, the capacity for the physical environment to provide comfort to the bereaved stands further exploration.

A therapeutic funerary environment could embody this place and allow the bereaved a place to move on from or return to as often as necessary, allow people to focus on letting go or hold on depending on their preference. Previously, the church and, more specifically, the churchyard provided a physical space for grief and mourning to be manifested, but the church no longer holds the same societal position as in ages past. Currently, discourse between the living and the dead occurs in the therapist's office, the home, and the mind, far removed from the physical realm of the dead. However, we are physical beings, we grieve in physical space and our grief has physical manifestations. Our lived landscapes must accommodate our psychological, spiritual and physical nature to remain relevant in society and none more than our cemeteries. The concept of cemeteries as therapeutic landscapes stands to support the relationship between the public and the individual, the living and the dead in very real and beneficial ways. More specifically, cemeteries as therapeutic landscapes stand to reconnect the cemetery with society.

⁵⁴⁹ Ibid., 149-150.

⁵⁵⁰ Tony Walter, *The Revival of Death*, 177.

BODY, MIND, SOUL AND LANDSCAPE

In the final years of the 20th century the study of landscapes began to extend beyond the purely aesthetic to the therapeutic. Scientists began to quantify the effects of nature on the human psyche and body. The boundaries of cultural geography expanded from the socio-ecological model of health-care environments to “an enhanced understanding of both the meaning and nature of place, with respect to health and health care.”⁵⁵¹ In the early 1990s, cultural geographer Wilbert Gesler conducted an overview of the connection of landscape and treatment of illness, within the conceptual framework of cultural geography, in order to inform health researchers about advances in cultural geography and encourage further research.⁵⁵² Since that time interest and research in the concept has proliferated. The ability of landscapes to contribute to physical and emotional healing is now well documented with ongoing research.

The majority of research regarding therapeutic landscapes has narrowed its focus to hospital and care-home environments, but at their foundations is the intricate relationship between landscape and health. In the majority of these studies, the term nature or environment is used liberally and can refer to a small water fountain or a municipal park. The concept of experience is also relative as some study participants are only able to view a landscape, while others can interact physically with their environment. Regardless of their variances, studies have shown that the experience of ‘natural elements’ promotes improved mood and decreased anxiety for those under stress.⁵⁵³ However, the ability of nature, whether viewed or experienced, to heal goes beyond the psychological to the physical being of the patient.

Numerous medical and scientific studies, regarding appropriate environmental design and health, document reduced patient pain, blood pressure and, in some cases, hospital stays,

⁵⁵¹ Allison Williams, “Therapeutic Landscapes in Holistic Medicine,” *Social Science Medicine* 46, no. 9, (1998), 1193.

⁵⁵² *Ibid.*, 1193.

⁵⁵³ Clare Cooper Marcus with Marni Barnes, “Introduction: Historical and Cultural Perspective on Healing Gardens,” in *Healing Gardens: Therapeutic benefits and design recommendations*, edited by Clare Cooper Marcus and Marni Barnes (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1999), 3-8; Roger S. Ulrich, “Effects of Gardens on Health Outcomes: Theory and Research,” in *Healing Gardens: Therapeutic benefits and design recommendations*, edited by Clare Cooper Marcus and Marni Barnes (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1999), 28.

while inappropriate physical surroundings are linked to such detrimental effects as delirium, high anxiety and blood pressure, demand for pain relief, and sleeplessness.⁵⁵⁴ Healing from nature can manifest itself in three ways: relief from physical symptoms, reduced anxiety levels and improved sense of wellbeing.⁵⁵⁵ As nature can be experienced on both physical and psychological levels, it can promote both physical and psychological healing.

One of the pivotal researchers in therapeutic landscape design Roger Ulrich, who first scientifically demonstrated that the mere view of a natural setting could improve a patient's recovery time. Ulrich identifies four foundational benefits of therapeutic landscapes for a patient's well being: perceived control, social support, physical movement and positive distractions.

Firstly, a landscape's capacity to increase a sense of control for patients and users is useful in mitigation of stress levels.⁵⁵⁶ The mere promise of escape that a landscape affords, whether actual or perceived, from work stress, interpersonal conflict or daily monotony is a major way in which naturalistic settings provide control.⁵⁵⁷ In addition, a sense of physical control can be provided by designs that allow ease of way finding and access.⁵⁵⁸ In an environment where many people do not even have control over simple things like relieving themselves, being able to wheel oneself into a more pleasing place is fulfilling in its mere accomplishment.

Secondly, the landscape also provides the possibility of social support, as therapeutic landscapes become venues for social interaction.⁵⁵⁹ A space amenable for meeting and interpersonal interactions can increase access to social support between patients, families and staff. However, a balance between a sense of public and private space is required for a versatile therapeutic environment. Studies suggest that enclosure is desirable for visiting,

⁵⁵⁴ Ibid., 28.

⁵⁵⁵ Marcus with Barnes, "Introduction: Historical and Cultural Perspective on Healing Gardens," 3.

⁵⁵⁶ Ulrich, "Effects of Gardens on Health Outcomes," 39.

⁵⁵⁷ Ibid., 40.

⁵⁵⁸ Ibid., 41; J. William Thompson, "Healing Words: Whither the design of therapeutic gardens," *Landscape Architecture* 90, no.1 (2000): 74.

⁵⁵⁹ Ulrich, "Effects of Gardens on Health Outcomes," 43.

while more spacious arrangements are required for viewing.⁵⁶⁰ Thirdly, numerous studies have found even mild physical exercise to be particularly beneficial in reducing depression and stress.

Finally, through providing distractions from stressful thoughts, such features as foliage, flowers, water and animals can significantly reduce stress and lower blood pressure.⁵⁶¹ These factors can be provided at numerous scales. Even small gardening tasks such as pruning a geranium can provide control, interaction, exercise and distraction beneficial to a patient's well being. Through providing the patient with some sense of choice and control, an opportunity for social interaction, a venue for physical exertion and a source of positive distraction, the therapeutic landscape can comfort and even heal the patient in their illness.

The concept of the therapeutic landscape is not new, but is newly rediscovered. The history of therapeutic landscapes stretches back in time to prehistoric civilizations, where certain landscape features and sites were identified with mystical and therapeutic qualities. In both North America and Europe, unique landscape features such as cliffs, caves and clearings were marked with stone and pictographs identifying that place as sacred.

Designed landscapes for healing and rejuvenation, which will be discussed in the following chapters, have precedents dating back to ancient Greece and Asia. However, through the medicalization of Western society, this connection was dismissed as more sentiment than science. If landscape was incorporated into the health care setting, it was more for adornment than therapy.⁵⁶² However, the 21st century brought with it a "growing interest in using evidence-based approaches to inform the deliberate modification of buildings for health gains."⁵⁶³ As the medical relevance of nature for healing was gradually realized, hospitals began to develop courtyards and features with the patients' well being in view.

⁵⁶⁰ Ibid., 46.

⁵⁶¹ Ibid., 49-50.

⁵⁶² Marcus with Barnes, "Introduction: Historical and Cultural Perspective on Healing Gardens," 1-2.

⁵⁶³ D. Burges Watson et al., "Flexible therapeutic landscapes of labour and the place of pain relief," *Health and Place* 13 (2007): 873.

Currently, therapeutic landscapes are used predominantly in reference to gardens designed purely for therapeutic purposes in care home and hospital settings. The form and quality of these designs varies greatly from one to the next. What is important to note is that it is not sufficient to simply supply outdoor space. As Ulrich states,

*it's imperative, if one is dealing with very stressed, emotionally upset people, to be unambiguously positive in the garden context... designers have less personal license, in the case of health care, to exercise their own personal tastes, and more of a professional obligation to empathize with the users, to be as research-informed as possible and to do everything within their professional powers to achieve therapeutic outcomes.*⁵⁶⁴

He adds, “there is nothing inherently healing about any type of setting that is called a “garden.” In fact, there is evidence that inappropriately designed gardens can hinder stress recovery and worsen other outcomes.”⁵⁶⁵ Thorough consideration of the many features that comprise a landscape experience needs to take place to ensure the design is supporting rather than hindering the patient’s progress.

Just as a well-designed landscape can promote healing, poorly designed landscapes can have detrimental effects on a patient’s health. Therefore, a therapeutic landscape must add to the qualities of good landscape design the accommodation of the physical health and emotional state of its primary users. Just as there are positive distractions, there also can be negative distractions such as urban noise, smoking, sunlight’s heat or glare and aesthetic preferences. What Ulrich terms ‘emotional congruence’, the concept that an individual focuses on those stimuli that best match their emotional state, unifying internal processes with external stimuli, is particularly important for those designing for people at some of the worst moments of their lives.⁵⁶⁶ Abstract art or hard surfaces, considered uplifting and avant-garde by the healthy, might appear ominous or menacing to someone undergoing cancer treatments or battling depression.⁵⁶⁷

⁵⁶⁴ Thompson, “Healing Words”, 55.

⁵⁶⁵ Ulrich, “Effects of Gardens on Health Outcomes,” 74.

⁵⁶⁶ Ibid., 66-71.

⁵⁶⁷ Thompson, “Healing Words”, 54-55.

In general, Ulrich's findings suggest that "gardens will tend to ameliorate stress effectively if they contain verdant foliage, flowers, non-turbulent water, park like or savanna like qualities (grassy spaces with scattered trees), congruent nature sounds (birds, breezes, water), and visible wildlife (birds, squirrels)."⁵⁶⁸ Conversely, environments that can inhibit recovery and/or aggravate stress typically exhibit a "predominance of hardscape or starkly built content (concrete, for example); appraised risk or insecurity; crowding; cigarette smoke; intrusive urban or human-made sounds (for example, traffic, air conditioning equipment, loud aircraft); and ambiguous design features or art works that can be interpreted in multiple ways."⁵⁶⁹ In order for a landscape to be considered therapeutic, the user's depleted psychological and physical state must be accommodated. However, it is possible that the therapeutic landscape need not only occur in the hospital or care home setting, there are far more people in the world in need of healing that are not hospitalized.

REFLECTIONS

The concept of a therapeutic cemetery landscape is relatively young, beginning in the 19th century with Garden cemeteries such as Père Lachaise, Mount Auburn and their progeny. Then, the focus was on health of the urban population as a whole, promoting sanitary and peaceful "resting places" for the dead to slumber and the public to visit. In Western culture, particularly North America, a sanitary and peaceful landscape is now assumed, but though the concept of scientifically proven benefits of nature to physical healing is becoming more widely recognized, the concept of the cemetery supporting the psychological and physical well being of the bereaved is relatively new. Funeral and memorial is now less about the destination of the dead and more the state of the bereaved. As of yet, recent discoveries in bereavement therapy and cultural geography have not been combined. The cemetery landscape provides an excellent opportunity to explore the benefits of the landscape for the experience and support of the grieving.

The concept of the therapeutic landscape is hardly a new one and neither is the concept of the cemetery as a place of wellbeing. However, the possibility of the cemetery as a

⁵⁶⁸ Ulrich, "Effects of Gardens on Health Outcomes," 74-75.

⁵⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 75.

therapeutic landscape is rather novel. So then what is the definition of “therapy” in relation to death and design? As discussed in previous chapters, the funerary industry, bereavement literature and medical studies all point toward diversity. Currently, funeral homes and crematoria are diversifying the products and options available to their customers in order to remain competitive in a competitive and increasingly diversified business, but there is little diversity in the patterns of mourning that are supported.

It would be a mistake to assume that all members of society grieve and mourn in one manner. Within one society exist a variety of sub-cultures based on ethnicity, gender, faith and character. There is no clear-cut pattern for either grief or mourning as psychologists increasingly emphasize diversity within models of grief and society offers few guidelines for mourning. As Tony Walter observes in *On Bereavement: The Culture of Grief*, Western society assumes that the proper progression of grief and mourning is to gradually disconnect from the dead and “move on”, but there remain those who find solace in persisting to hold on. Beyond diversity of options and expression, there is also a requirement of diversity within the physical environment. Medical studies indicate that the physical environment has therapeutic potential. However, there is great diversity in the psychological states and physical requirements of a therapeutic landscape. Therapy requires inclusivity and, therefore, diversity.

In many cases diverse or inclusive landscape design has meant no design. For example, the lawn cemetery’s vast horizontal expanses of grass make the landscape accessible for everyone, gravediggers have space to dig, mourners have space to mourn and passersby have space to view, but these spaces are habitable by no one. Not a place to be, but a space to move through or past. However, both scientific findings and aesthetic discourse indicate that within the diversity of human experience some universals are discernible. Ancient civilizations such as Greece, China and Persia held the intuitive belief that exposure to natural elements such as water and vegetation promoted human wellbeing.⁵⁷⁰ Currently, in attempting to unravel this intricate relationship, scientific investigation is revealing high

⁵⁷⁰ Ibid., 50.

levels of agreement between cultures in the therapeutic impacts of nature.⁵⁷¹ Although some scientists suggest that reverence and enjoyment of nature is encultured by society, such universal agreement suggests an evolutionary foundation.⁵⁷²

Whether nurtured through cultural influences or evolved from primitive human needs, nature's appeal to humanity appears to run deep. Scientific study is now inquiring as to what features of the landscape create this appeal and why; thereby bridging science with the artistic discourse of aesthetics. Aesthetic discourse has gone beyond scientific analysis of therapeutic landscapes to provide tools with which to create landscapes supportive of the human body and psyche. It is this marriage of science and art that stands to inform the design of the therapeutic landscape for the 21st century.

HUMAN LANDSCAPES: AESTHETIC DISCOURSE

The compelling nature of landscape has been a subject of study long before the birth of landscape architecture. The study of aesthetics, seeking to identify what elements create beauty and pleasure, dates back to the ancient Greeks.⁵⁷³ The writings of Homer demonstrate an established connection between story and landscape, while the later writings of Virgil and Horace used certain types of landscape to re-enforce a scene's mood.⁵⁷⁴ Both scientists and artists since have sought to quantify and qualify the elements of landscape, seeking to discover what it is about landscapes that draws us to them and why we are drawn, but few universal conclusions have been reached. Abstract concepts such as 'beauty' and terms such as 'harmony' and 'taste' are not quantifiable and therefore difficult to fit into one comprehensive formula.⁵⁷⁵

It was not until the 18th century that significant inroads were made in the interpretation of landscape and aesthetics by Western theorists, many of them clergymen, looked for other methodologies of understanding the land other than that of the Book of Genesis.⁵⁷⁶ These

⁵⁷¹ Ibid., 51.

⁵⁷² Ibid., 50-51.

⁵⁷³ Jay Appleton, *The Experience of Landscape*, (Toronto: John Wiley & Sons, 1975), 14-15.

⁵⁷⁴ Ibid., 1.

⁵⁷⁵ Ibid., 16-17.

⁵⁷⁶ Ibid., 25.

18th century philosophers began to contemplate the beautiful, the sublime and the picturesque but also tangible landscape elements such as trees, grass, water, light and shadow.⁵⁷⁷ By the late 18th century, “the idea of beauty being found not merely in the order of a tamed environment, but also in the wild places, was so much in tune with the onset of the Romantic Movement that it became the fashionable view.”⁵⁷⁸ The vogue of the study of nature would create a nurturing climate for the study of landscape and its allure.

Several writers took up the study of aesthetics and the landscape. One of the first was the third Earl of Shaftesbury, Anthony Ashley Cooper, who transformed the concept of sublimity from rhetoric to aesthetic through conceiving it as an experience rather than a mere style.⁵⁷⁹ This perspective of the Sublime became central to 18th century aesthetic study and was taken up by the likes of Joseph Addison and Immanuel Kant.⁵⁸⁰ Edmund Burke’s *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful*, published in 1757, is among the most strongly founded and relevant contributions to landscape architecture.⁵⁸¹

In his work, Burke classified the Beautiful and the Sublime as ‘the Passions’, which fall into two categories; ‘society’, pertaining to ‘generation’ or the sexual passions and forming the basis of the conception of what is Beautiful, or ‘self-preservation’, which is associated with Burke’s definition of the Sublime.⁵⁸² According to Burke, the attributes of the Sublime are astonishment, admiration, reverence, respect, terror, obscurity, power, privation, vastness, infinity, difficulty, magnificence, and contrast between light and dark, with astonishment considered the most potent.⁵⁸³ Beauty’s properties are considered to be smallness, smoothness, gradual variation, delicacy and certain colours.⁵⁸⁴ The later 1782 publishing of the Reverend William Gilpin’s observations of the British landscape in prose,

⁵⁷⁷ Ibid., 26.

⁵⁷⁸ Ibid., 26.

⁵⁷⁹ Ibid., 26-27; John Macarthur, *The Picturesque: Architecture, disgust and other irregularities* (New York: Routledge, 2007), 3.

⁵⁸⁰ Appleton, *The Experience of Landscape*, 27; Macarthur, *The Picturesque*, 3.

⁵⁸¹ Appleton, *The Experience of Landscape*, 27-28.

⁵⁸² Ibid., 28.

⁵⁸³ Ibid., 28.

⁵⁸⁴ Ibid., 30.

watercolor and ink wash popularized the picturesque landscape and Burke's concepts of beauty and sublimity.⁵⁸⁵ As the landscape became increasingly qualified and quantified, the picturesque landscape rose in popularity.

These concepts of aesthetics began to influence the works of professional landscape designers. Three designers in particular were pivotal in transforming the landscape from the geometric regularity inspired by André le Nôtre to more fluid and organic forms: William Kent, Lancelot (Capability) Brown and Humphry Repton.⁵⁸⁶ The designs of these men, in turn, influenced the discourse surrounding aesthetics and the landscape. Uvedale Price's *Essay on the Picturesque* agreed with Burke's theories, but added the category of 'the Picturesque' to 'the Beautiful' and 'the Sublime', believing the two dichotomies failed to encompass the whole of human experience.⁵⁸⁷ Price's contemporary, Richard Payne Knight, joined him in the study of the picturesque and criticism of the 'insipid' landscapes of Kent, Brown and Repton.⁵⁸⁸ Much banter and argumentation surrounded the discussion of beauty and sublimity in the 18th century, generating many concepts with scant agreement between them. However, many of these concepts are foundational for contemporary landscape and funerary design.

19th century Romanticism brought increased investigation of aesthetics as philosophers, artists, scholars and poets concerned themselves with exploring the position of humanity within the natural order, many of them rooted in Burke's theories of the Sublime.⁵⁸⁹ Of these thinkers, two of the most influential regarding landscape theory were John Claudius Loudon and John Ruskin. Both furthered the cause of the picturesque, but Ruskin in particular went on to expand Price, Knight and Loudon's theories to a 'Turnerian' picturesque of truth and feeling.⁵⁹⁰ Though much of the moral and theological tenor of aesthetic theory of the 19th century was rejected in the 20th, some aspects of the picturesque would influence some expressions of modern architecture and landscape. Just as aesthetics

⁵⁸⁵ Ibid., 31; Macarthur, *The Picturesque*, 4-5.

⁵⁸⁶ Appleton, *The Experience of Landscape*, 32.

⁵⁸⁷ Ibid., 35; Macarthur, *The Picturesque*, 9.

⁵⁸⁸ Appleton, *The Experience of Landscape*, 36.

⁵⁸⁹ Ibid., 39-40.

⁵⁹⁰ Ibid., 44-45; Macarthur, *The Picturesque*, 14-15.

and landscape are being brought into medical discourse in the 21st century, scientific theories were brought into aesthetic discourse in the 20th.

American pragmatist philosopher, John Dewey, broke down the dualisms of previous centuries, asserting that beauty was neither intrinsic nor perceptual, but experiential, a relationship between the individual and the environment.⁵⁹¹ This belief expanded the possibilities of aesthetic experience to encompass all Earthly environmental conditions and human behavior within them.⁵⁹² Working from the premise that primitive relationships with the landscape continue to influence humanities perception of aesthetics, Dewey ventured into a contested, but relevant string of thought in behavioral science that certain human affinities for the environment are hereditary. Darwinian and Freudian thought furthered the atavistic proposition that aesthetic satisfaction in the landscape is generated by the perception of an environment that contains the elements supportive of all basic human needs: habitat theory.⁵⁹³

Konrad Lorenz reduced the vast scope of habitat theory through his theory of prospect and refuge, the theory that human beings desire habitats that provide opportunities for viewing and concealment.⁵⁹⁴ These 20th century progressions in aesthetic thought began to merge the theories of art and science to form a more robust understanding of aesthetics and, vicariously, landscape.

PROSPECT/REFUGE THEORY

In his book *The Experience of Landscape* Jay Appleton applies these scientific concepts to the experience of landscape and develops three levels of symbolism by which to comprehend the landscape, a framework of hazard, prospect and refuge. Appleton's theories are of particular interest as they represent a continuation of the blending of aesthetics and science into a greater understanding of humanity's relationship with the landscape and the origins of our affinity for particular places. Unlike previous aesthetic

⁵⁹¹ Appleton, *The Experience of Landscape*, 48.

⁵⁹² Ibid., 48, 58.

⁵⁹³ Ibid., 68-70.

⁵⁹⁴ Ibid., 72-73.

study, *The Experience of Landscape* introduces a hypothesis where beauty is not intrinsic to an object or form, but stems from the relationship between landscape components and between landscape and participant.⁵⁹⁵

Through varying the elements, intensity, arrangement, balance and media of these symbols in an environment, an aesthetic experience is achieved and interpreted.⁵⁹⁶ Appleton explores the many ways these concepts are symbolized in the landscape, stressing that the symbolic nature of these elements, hazard, prospect or refuge, may be either actual or symbolic. What is important to the aesthetic experience is the presence of prospect or refuge in the landscape, whether real or perceived.

Prospect

The Prospect, associated with light and sight, regards the relationship between the observed landscape and observer and can be divided in terms of direct or indirect relationships between the two.⁵⁹⁷ Direct prospects, commanded from a primary vantage-point, are divided into panoramas and vistas, with panoramas classified in terms of simplicity, a full 360° view, or interruption, a view in which small obstacles intrude slightly, and vistas divided by simplicity, a view framed by a screen, horizontality, a view bounded by a horizontal plane, and discovery or ‘peephole’, where both horizontal and vertical screens bound the view.⁵⁹⁸ Indirect prospects, commanded from secondary or alternative vantage points, are divided into secondary panoramas, vistas and peepholes.⁵⁹⁹ These secondary vantage points and the potential prospects from them symbolize the expansion of potential views in the landscape and can be natural, such as mountains or trees, artificial, such as towers or clearings, or composite.⁶⁰⁰

⁵⁹⁵ Ibid., 243.

⁵⁹⁶ Ibid., 74.

⁵⁹⁷ Ibid., 85.

⁵⁹⁸ Ibid., 85-89.

⁵⁹⁹ Ibid., 89, 91.

⁶⁰⁰ Ibid., 90.

Hazard

The Hazard, whether actual or symbolic, is essential to the meaning of both prospect and refuge and, therefore, a necessary component of the landscape. There are many possible forms of hazard. Appleton divides them into three categories: incident hazards, which are external threats to a creature's well-being, impediment hazards, which are not threatening themselves but may precipitate danger, and deficiency hazards, which occur when either an element essential for survival or a lesser objective are absent.⁶⁰¹ Incident hazards are divided in turn into animate and inanimate hazards. Animate hazards, which are either human or non-human, give the person they confront the opportunity to use the prospect or refuge components of the environment, while inanimate hazards such as meteorological phenomena (climate), instability (earthquakes and volcanoes), aquatic phenomena (either calm or tempestuous water) and fire are less directly involved with the person than animate hazards, but their symbolism is equally salient.⁶⁰² Impediment hazards are divided into natural or artificial hazards. Natural impediment hazards refer to the numerous forms of natural features such as thickets, cliffs, water and ravines that may impede one's movement.⁶⁰³ Artificial impediment hazards behave in much the same way, but are humanly imposed on the landscape such as fences, walls, ditches, embankments, rails and canals.⁶⁰⁴

Refuge

Forms of 'the Refuge' Appleton differentiates by function, origin, substance, accessibility and efficacy. Refuges function as either a place to hide or a place to reside. Their origins can be natural such as caves or forests or artificial such as buildings or boats.⁶⁰⁵ The substance of a refuge can be made of the earth, caves, rocks and hollows, of vegetation, arboreal or reeds, or of nebulous material, mist or smoke.⁶⁰⁶ The accessibility of the refuge is equally important as ease of penetration symbolizes refuge just as impediments signify a hazard.⁶⁰⁷ Important to the concept of accessibility is that of the *coulisse*, a stage device of

⁶⁰¹ Ibid., 97-100.

⁶⁰² Ibid., 97-100.

⁶⁰³ Ibid., 99-100.

⁶⁰⁴ Ibid., 100.

⁶⁰⁵ Ibid., 102.

⁶⁰⁶ Ibid., 103-104.

⁶⁰⁷ Ibid., 105.

sidepieces of scenery that create a sense of three dimensionality and allow the actors to pass through. Such ‘frayed’ edges and gradients that offer gradual access and egress such as outlying trees or bushes are far more welcoming than abrupt transitions such as a stark edge of a forest.⁶⁰⁸ As the term would suggest, the efficiency of a refuge is dependent on how well that refuge performs relative to its related hazard.⁶⁰⁹ It is important to note that the respective aspects of function, origin and substance are not necessarily discrete elements, but can also be present in the landscape as composites.

Within the symbolic landscape elements of prospect, hazard and refuge there are additional variations of surface, light, hierarchies, scale and movement that comprise an overall experience. Surfaces can be distinguished by their texture, the reflection or refraction of light by a material, or configuration, the geometry of a surface.⁶¹⁰ Surfaces can be horizontal, vertical, undulating or concave etc. with some configurations suggesting particular types of symbolism such as convexity suggesting aspects of prospect while concavity suggests aspects of refuge and undulation contains aspects of both.⁶¹¹ Appleton classifies surface textures by materiality: terrestrial, aquatic and nebulous. Terrestrial surfaces can be open, carrying no vegetation to provide effective refuge, or carpeted, covered with vegetation too low to provide effective refuge, while arboreal surfaces suggest ‘refuge’ to a greater degree with variations of genera and species distinguishing one from the other and architectural surfaces are those of human construction superimposed on the landscape.⁶¹² Aquatic surfaces are particularly symbolic of prospect as they ensure clear lines of sight.⁶¹³ Nebulous surfaces such as fog or mist can symbolize aspects of refuge similar to varieties of terrestrial surfaces.⁶¹⁴

⁶⁰⁸ Ibid., 105.

⁶⁰⁹ Ibid., 102, 106.

⁶¹⁰ Ibid., 106.

⁶¹¹ Ibid., 107.

⁶¹² Ibid., 108.

⁶¹³ Ibid., 108.

⁶¹⁴ Ibid., 109.

Variations of Symbols

Variations of light and shadow are necessary to bring life to the symbolism of prospects hazards and refuges. The sun is the Earth's primary symbol of prospect, but is most often indirectly involved in the landscape, illuminating the landscape rather than forming part of the composition.⁶¹⁵ The sun becomes more 'accessible' to the human eye at sunrise and sunset;⁶¹⁶ the orb enters into the composition of the landscape, its light dimmed and world colored by the waxing or waning light. Reflective surfaces, such as the moon and water, serve as secondary light sources and, like sunrise and sunset, allow the sun's light to enter the landscape.⁶¹⁷ The antithesis of light, darkness, is to refuge what light is to prospect.⁶¹⁸ Darkness allows for concealment and, therefore, refuge while light permits the symbol of prospect.

The symbols of prospect, hazard and refuge can enter the landscape can also be hierarchical. These symbols may be manifested on multiple levels beyond their tangible presence, reflected in or imitated by alternative media.⁶¹⁹ For example, a mountain in the distance, a powerful prospect, is perceived to the eye as contrasting shapes and colors and can be emulated by other phenomena such as by a bank of clouds in the distance.⁶²⁰ The symbol can, in turn, be symbolized. Scale also plays a role in the symbolism of prospect-refuge theory. The scale of the person relative to the perceived scale of a landscape can transform a prospect into a refuge or a refuge into a hazard. For example, a grassy meadow may convey a sense of exposure and prospect to an adult human being. However, a rabbit in the same meadow would have a different, lower perspective, rendering the meadow a refuge.

Once a system of proportional relationships is established, the landscape can be understood and navigated in three-dimensional space.⁶²¹ For the human being, the human form serves

⁶¹⁵ Ibid., 110.

⁶¹⁶ Ibid., 110-111.

⁶¹⁷ Ibid., 111.

⁶¹⁸ Ibid., 112.

⁶¹⁹ Ibid., 112.

⁶²⁰ Ibid., 112.

⁶²¹ Ibid., 117.

as a modulus and establishes a framework for the perception of the world.⁶²² Freedom of movement through the landscape is also fundamental to the aesthetic enjoyment of the landscape:⁶²³ “Locomotion, either in achievement or in imagination, is an essential ingredient of participation in the experience of landscape.”⁶²⁴ It is not enough to merely view a refuge there must be some degree of indication that refuge or prospect could potentially be acquired. All of these additional factors: surface, light, hierarchies, scale and movement, serve to qualify the symbols of prospect, hazard and refuge in the landscape.

Reflections

Far from a concise classification system, Appleton’s prospect-refuge based aesthetic holds a multitude of possible relationships. Simplistic classification of landscape proves to be as elusive as an understanding of beauty itself. However, Appleton’s hypothesis, part of a long line of aesthetic theories, and its interdisciplinary perspective lends some order to a rather unwieldy topic and greater opportunity for transference to the tangible landscape. This aesthetic perspective leads us back to the previously mentioned concept of ‘place’, as Appleton states regarding the aesthetic experience: “such experience cannot be achieved except by the involvement of the observer in his [sic] habitat.”⁶²⁵ This involvement need not be practical, as it may be merely perceptual. One does not need to hide or hunt in a landscape to attain an aesthetic experience.

Western society has largely moved beyond living by the devices of prospect-refuge, but a desire remains “to get back, when the opportunity arises, to that proper environment to which our inborn behavior mechanisms are still tuned, and in it to live and move and have our being.”⁶²⁶ What remains essential to the aesthetic experience is the participant’s sequential locomotion through the landscape, whether by person or by proxy.⁶²⁷ The landscape can be experienced as one moves through a site and/or by viewing the

⁶²² Ibid., 117.

⁶²³ Ibid., 118.

⁶²⁴ Ibid., 119.

⁶²⁵ Ibid., 171.

⁶²⁶ Ibid., 177.

⁶²⁷ Ibid., 178, 190.

movements of another. What is fundamental is the insertion of person, of being, into space that generates place.

The tenants of prospect-refuge theory are exemplified in the successful landscapes and gardens of history. From the walled garden of the medieval era to the borrowed landscapes of the Picturesque, a balance between prospect, hazard and refuge was sought and, in the most successful examples, attained.⁶²⁸ This theory goes beyond individual taste or style to a more foundational understanding of landscape. How and to what degree the devices of prospect, hazard and refuge are symbolized is the generator of style. For instance, Andre Le Nôtre's garden at Versailles and Kent and Brown's garden at Stowe are very different stylistically, but both contain a unique balance between prospect and refuge. Le Nôtre's formal geometries, strong vistas, direct axis and prominent avenues emphasize prospect with the meticulously maintained plantation framing the vistas providing a sense of refuge, but to a lesser degree.⁶²⁹ This uneven balance was deliberately struck. Made to exhibit the power and majesty of the King, the gardens of Versailles reflected a prospect-dominated landscape at the foundation of its style. Conversely, the 'naturalistic' gardens of Stowe use interrupted panoramas rather than controlled vistas,⁶³⁰ creating more opportunities for both prospect and refuge throughout the gardens. The interpretations and use of prospect and refuge differ in these gardens, but prospect-refuge theory is evident in both.

The underpinnings of prospect and refuge can also be seen in the timeless and much emulated cemeteries of the world, Père Lachaise and Mount Auburn for example. Dense groves and monuments and a clear path between them promise refuge from the gaze of the other, the climate and fatigue, while a primary elevated viewpoint, such as hill crests, as well as secondary viewpoints, such as tertiary monuments, coupled with open clearings promise opportunities for prospect. In contrast, the open clearings of the lawn cemeteries and memorial gardens of modernity, bordered by minimal plantings, structure or topography, become landscapes devoid of refuge, more hazardous than habitable. The

⁶²⁸ Ibid., 192-194.

⁶²⁹ Ibid., 221-222.

⁶³⁰ Ibid., 223.

contemporary cemetery is not a place for the wounded to find security, but it once was and could be yet again.

DESIGNED LANDSCAPE TYPOLOGIES

Patrick Condon's report to the National Endowment for the Arts, *A Designed Landscape Space Typology: A Theory Based Design Tool*, builds on Appleton's prospect-refuge aesthetic, developing a system of landscape typology for the designed landscape. Condon identifies a spectrum of landscape forms existing between the diametric landscape archetypes of forest and clearing, reminiscent of Appleton's refuge and prospect. To this, he adds the dimension of human interaction with the landscape to his framework, with human-to-human and human-to-nature interactions at opposing poles. A third dimension of topography is then imposed, ranging from the theatre to the promontory. What is created is a conical framework for a landscape typology, not to be considered an exhaustive list, but a three dimensional spectrum of possibilities.⁶³¹ The landscape types Condon explores further narrow aesthetic discourse from Appleton's hypothesis of infinitely possible landscapes to a concise framework of designed landscapes.

The three dimensional spectrum (*Figure 57*) consists of fourteen components: the bosque, single tree, clearing, cloister, square, street, front yard, back yard, orchard, alee, theatre, stair, terrace and promontory.

The Bosque

Bridging the raw nature of the forest with human purposes is the bosque, where the traveler can seek refuge from the elements or, as with the sacred groves of Italy, enter a spiritual oasis within a clearing.⁶³²

⁶³¹ Patrick M. Condon, *A Designed Landscape Space Typology: A Theory Based Design Tool*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, School of Architecture and Landscape Architecture, 1988), 34.

⁶³² *Ibid.*, 39.

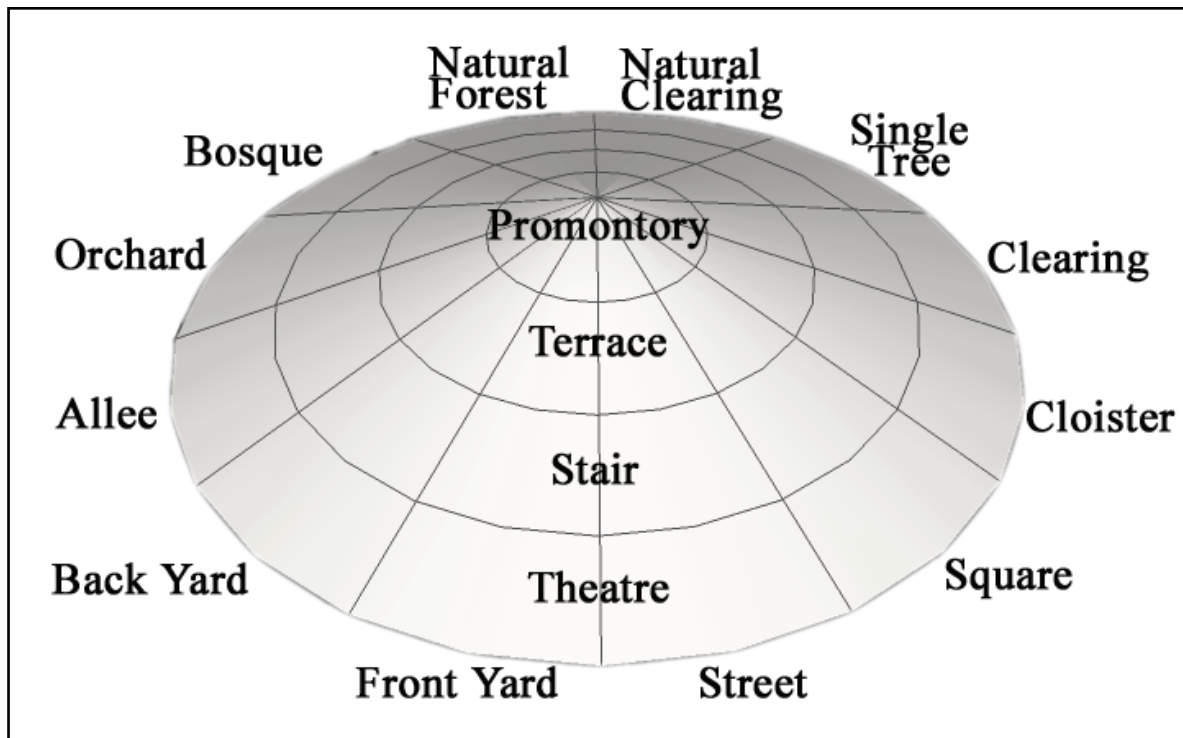


Figure 57: Condon's three dimensional framework of designed landscape typologies. (A)

The Tree

The single tree has many similarities with the bosque in its spiritual and sheltering attributes only pared down to a single column “that links the earth to the sky and redirects a profane horizontal expanse upward.”⁶³³

The Clearing

In the absence of the single tree a clearing is formed. The clearing is where the indifferent natural chaos of the forest is hewn to conform to human purposes and where aspects of spirituality persist, as it is the converse of the sacred grove.⁶³⁴

The Cloister

Completely dedicated to spiritual relationship is the cloister, as it establishes the cosmic centre of the horizontal world and opens upward towards the sky.⁶³⁵

⁶³³ Ibid., 45.

⁶³⁴ Ibid., 38.

⁶³⁵ Ibid., 44.

The Square

The square carves a space for human activity within the urban landscape as a clearing is carved in a forest; it is the “existential centre of the community,”⁶³⁶ where community life is manifested and oriented.⁶³⁷

The Street

The street, connecting the realms of private and public space as it is navigated, allows the square and the front yard to thrive, with the front yard buffering the public space of the street with the private space of the home.⁶³⁸

The Back Yard

Mitigating private home life with the spaces of nature is the back yard, where the garden aids in the transition between human control and wilderness.⁶³⁹

The Orchard

The cultivated and regimented order of the orchard continues the transition to wilderness, as it is a domesticated version of the forest grove.⁶⁴⁰

The Alee

The alee, in turn, reduces “the infinity of the forest into manageable proportions and thus make purposeful movement possible;”⁶⁴¹ a swath of human control through the wild landscape.

The Theater

In the theater, the unprogrammed activity of the square is arranged formally in the hierarchical arrangement of audience and centre for the purposes of observation.⁶⁴²

⁶³⁶ Ibid., 41.

⁶³⁷ Ibid., 41, 44.

⁶³⁸ Ibid., 42, 40.

⁶³⁹ Ibid., 40.

⁶⁴⁰ Ibid., 37.

⁶⁴¹ Ibid., 39.

⁶⁴² Ibid., 42.

The Stair

The stair can have two identities. Related to the theatre and the square, the stair in the landscape can be a space in itself, or the stair can be a connection, related to the street and alee, adapting a difficult slope to human use.⁶⁴³

The Terrace

Terracing is similar to the stair in that it orders a sloped landform for human purposes, but, unlike the stair, the terrace is not about movement but about stasis,⁶⁴⁴ a point where one may view from and stay at. The terrace comes a step closer to the natural landform of the mountain or hill, but remains human oriented in its conception.⁶⁴⁵

The Promontory

Intimately related to the natural hill or mountain is the promontory, the elevated equivalent of the clearing.⁶⁴⁶ The promontory is a point of elevated view with a floor to support human presence and walls of air, stone or trees.⁶⁴⁷

Within each of these types is tremendous free variation regarding the topography, density, geometry and boundary. Like Appleton's hypothesis, Condon's typology framework is a tool rather than a rule for designed environments.

These tools for the creation of compelling landscapes of daily life are also relevant to the cemetery landscape, particularly if the cemetery is to be considered therapeutic. Both medical and aesthetic discourse emphasizes the need for landscapes to be supportive of very human and very tangible needs for psychological benefit. What are now being proposed in both realms of thought are holistic landscapes; diversified landscapes that encompass the whole of human experience.

⁶⁴³ Ibid., 43.

⁶⁴⁴ Ibid., 43.

⁶⁴⁵ Ibid., 43.

⁶⁴⁶ Ibid., 44.

⁶⁴⁷ Ibid., 44.

Though described in different terms, both medical and aesthetic discourse touch on the same environmental requirements for a holistically supportive landscape. Ulrich's description of the patient's need for a sense of control and escape correlates with Appleton's concepts regarding prospect and refuge. The findings that unsupportive environments, those difficult to navigate and experience, complicate and can even exacerbate a depressed condition are supportive of Appleton's hypothesis of impediment and deficiency hazards. However, current medical discourse of therapeutic landscapes is largely reactive, post-analyzing behavioral responses to existing environments. Condon and Appleton's theories are proactive, useful in the creation and analysis of designed environments, and, therefore, particularly relevant to the design of therapeutic cemeteries. To ensure the continued cultural relevance of the cemetery landscape, design elements supportive of life and health must be added to their role as resting places of the dead.

THERAPEUTIC LANDSCAPES

To create a place from space requires the human experience and to create a therapeutic place requires an environment supportive of human existence. However, studies have failed to determine exactly what settings are most beneficial.⁶⁴⁸ So where then do we go from here? There are numerous landscape precedents of therapeutic landscapes, cemetery design and paradise gardens that can inform the design of the therapeutic funerary landscape. For millennia, landscapes were designed and appreciated for their capacity to promote both physical and mental rejuvenation. Four historical schools of landscape design in particular are relevant to the aesthetic development of therapeutic gardens: the labyrinth, Japanese Zen and Tea gardens, monastic cloisters and paradise gardens.⁶⁴⁹ Many of these traditions extend back beyond antiquity to rituals and symbolism connecting life, death and eternity through both action and allusion, making them particularly informative regarding a therapeutic funerary landscape.

⁶⁴⁸ Rebecca Krinke, introduction to *Contemporary Landscapes of Contemplation*, edited by Rebecca Krinke (New York: Routledge, 2005), 5.

⁶⁴⁹ Marni Barnes with Clare Cooper Marcus, "Design Philosophy," in *Healing Gardens: Therapeutic benefits and design recommendations*, edited by Clare Cooper Marcus and Marni Barnes (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1999), 93.

The garden tradition of the labyrinth or unicursal maze has a 4000-year history. Near Lake Moersis in Egypt, a labyrinthine arrangement of tombs housed the remains of kings and sacred crocodiles from approximately 2000 B.C.⁶⁵⁰ The maze as we now know it derives from Greek mythology and the quest of Theseus to kill the Minotaur that lived trapped within a maze.⁶⁵¹ The form of the labyrinth was gradually incorporated into many European rites, celebrations and gardens first in stone and then turf.⁶⁵² These labyrinths would then inspire the hedge lined garden mazes of the late 15th century, which became increasingly higher and playful.⁶⁵³ However, unlike the walled garden mazes of the middle ages that focused on suspense and play, the traditional labyrinth was a symbolic, contemplative landscape.

THE LABYRINTH

The labyrinth (*Figure 58*) serves as a tool for contemplation and a symbol of cleansing and rebirth.⁶⁵⁴ It is both avenue and threshold with the dual purpose of separation and union. Prior to setting sail, Scandinavian sailors would rid themselves of evil spirits and weather by walking to the maze's center and then quickly running out, leaving malevolent powers trapped.⁶⁵⁵ Labyrinths incorporated into cathedrals served as substitute pilgrimages to the Holy Land and spiritual union with Christ and the saints.⁶⁵⁶ The labyrinth is a landscape that blends the seen and the unseen in its microcosmic symbolism of both the spiritual and physical journey, creating a holistic landscape for cleansing and contemplation. The pace of the 'traveler' is slowed as they navigate through the intricate paths toward the centre. With their focus narrowed only to the next few steps, the mind is allowed to escape the common pressures of daily life and ascend to more elevated thoughts and pursuits.

⁶⁵⁰ Christopher Thacker, *The History of Gardens*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 115; Barnes with Marcus, "Design Philosophy," 93.

⁶⁵¹ Thacker, *The History of Gardens*, 115.

⁶⁵² *Ibid.*, 116; Barnes with Marcus, "Design Philosophy," 93.

⁶⁵³ Thacker, *The History of Gardens*, 117-119.

⁶⁵⁴ Barnes with Marcus, "Design Philosophy," 93.

⁶⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 93.

⁶⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 93-94.



Figure 58: The turf labyrinth. (A)

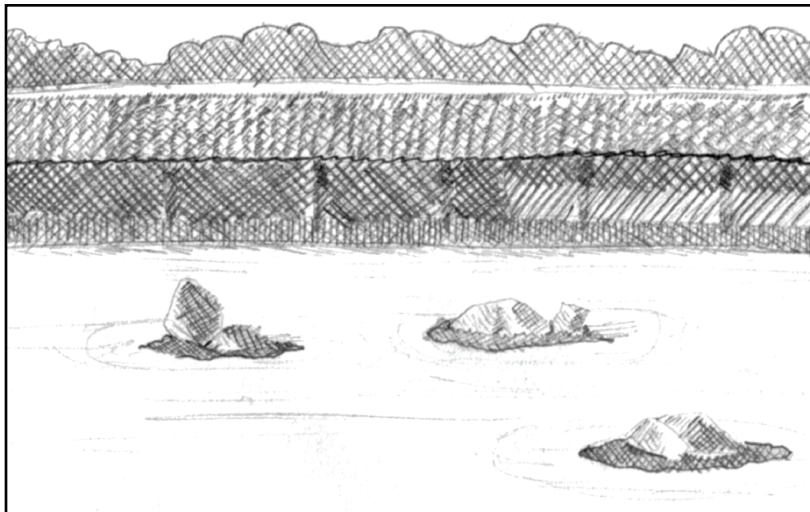


Figure 59: The Japanese Zen Garden, monastery of Ryoanji, Kyoto, Japan. (A)



Figure 60: The Japanese Tea Garden, Buschardt Gardens, Victoria, British Columbia, Canada. (A)

THE JAPANESE ZEN AND TEA GARDENS

This concept of microcosmic landscapes is also essential to the gardens of Asia, particularly the Japanese Zen Garden (*Figure 59*) and Tea Garden (*Figure 60*). Between 1185 and 1333 A.D., a well-established Japanese tradition of simplification and miniaturization of nature was translated into a garden landscape reduced to its most basic elements.⁶⁵⁷ Art forms such as ink paintings and flower arranging and miniaturized gardens such as box-gardens, tray gardens and bonsai were all established as invitations to stillness and contemplation.⁶⁵⁸

With the rise of Zen Buddhist thought the concept of the garden broadened with every part of creation, even a single stone, conveying the essence of reality.⁶⁵⁹ This expansion allowed the contraction of the temple garden to an enclosed and simplified landscape for contemplation. The iconic raked white gravel and stone arrangements of the temple garden of Ryoan-ji, simplified to the extent that it is almost entirely symbolic, allows thought to “expand infinitely outwards.”⁶⁶⁰ Other temple gardens employ this minimalist style although they are not as austere, but they remain gardens of contemplation, miniature worlds to be navigated with the mind.

It is from this rich history of contemplative gardens that the Japanese Tea Garden developed in the late 18th century. These gardens are spaces where the outside world is divided from the inner sanctum of the tea ceremony through the careful creation of sensations conducive to the ritual within.⁶⁶¹ Like the labyrinth, this symbolic journey, merges both physical and spiritual realms in focusing the concentration of the participant to the intricacies of their movement in the moment. One of the main components of the journey through the tea garden are the regular intervals of irregularities, obstacles and focal points, that cause the person to momentarily pause, gaze and contemplate,⁶⁶² separating the present from intrusive thoughts and concerns. Each feature is meant to provide the walker a

⁶⁵⁷ Ibid., 94.

⁶⁵⁸ Thacker, *The History of Gardens*, 66-67.

⁶⁵⁹ Ibid., 71.

⁶⁶⁰ Ibid., 71.

⁶⁶¹ Barnes with Marcus, “Design Philosophy,” 95.

⁶⁶² Ibid., 95.

small glimpse into eternity.⁶⁶³ While the temple gardens engage the mind, the Japanese tea gardens engage both mind and body in the act of contemplation and cleansing.

THE ISLAMIC PARADISE GARDEN

Similar to the enclosed gardens of Japan are the Islamic Paradise Garden and the Monastic Garden. Like the labyrinth, the Paradise garden has a long history. Its origins can be traced back as early as 2500 B.C., possibly from the epic of King Gilgamesh's quest for the garden of the gods where everlasting life and contentment could be found.⁶⁶⁴ Beginning in Persia at approximately 400 B.C., the gardens of Prince Cyrus, king of Persia, were designed as controlled gardens of delight and refreshment with regular rows of beautiful and sweet scented trees.⁶⁶⁵ Though none of these gardens or their depictions remain, the form of these gardens can be discerned in stylized garden patterns of Persian carpets⁶⁶⁶ (*Figure 61*) and from the design principles of Islamic gardens, which were influenced by Persian gardens. Within and enclosed border lie regularly spaced trees and flower beds. The vegetation is divided into four sections by linear channels of water and walking paths that intersect at the center, where a covered pavilion or fountain sits surrounded by the garden.

After the Arabic conquest of Persia in 637 A.D., the form of the Persian garden was married with the Islamic view of paradise and spread to every corner of the Islamic world.⁶⁶⁷ These gardens had four significant elements that support the sense of a garden oasis: water, canopy, hill and wall.⁶⁶⁸ First, the Islamic paradise is enclosed.⁶⁶⁹ It is a secure oasis amidst a hostile and arid climate. Secondly, 'unfailing' fountains flow through the garden, in many cases symbolizing four rivers of paradise similar to those within the Hebraic Garden of Eden.⁶⁷⁰ These life-giving waters flow through the garden cooling and refreshing the weary. Thirdly, positioned at the intersection of the flowing waters, is a raised platform that provides a tranquil island at the centre of the oasis from which to view

⁶⁶³ Thacker, *The History of Gardens*, 74.

⁶⁶⁴ Barnes with Marcus, "Design Philosophy," 96.

⁶⁶⁵ Thacker, *The History of Gardens*, 15-16, 27.

⁶⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 28.

⁶⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 27-28.

⁶⁶⁸ Barnes with Marcus, "Design Philosophy," 96; Thacker, *The History of Gardens*, 27.

⁶⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 28.

⁶⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 28.

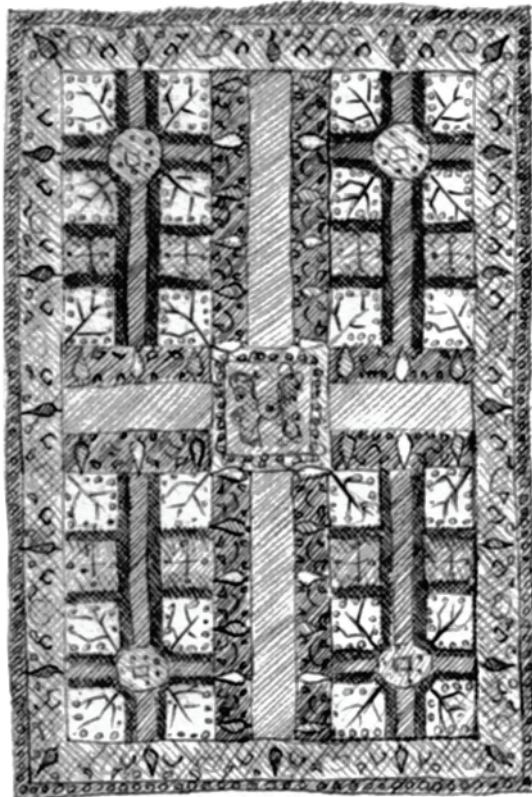


Figure 61: The Persian garden carpet motif, which are typically styled on historic Persian gardens. (A)

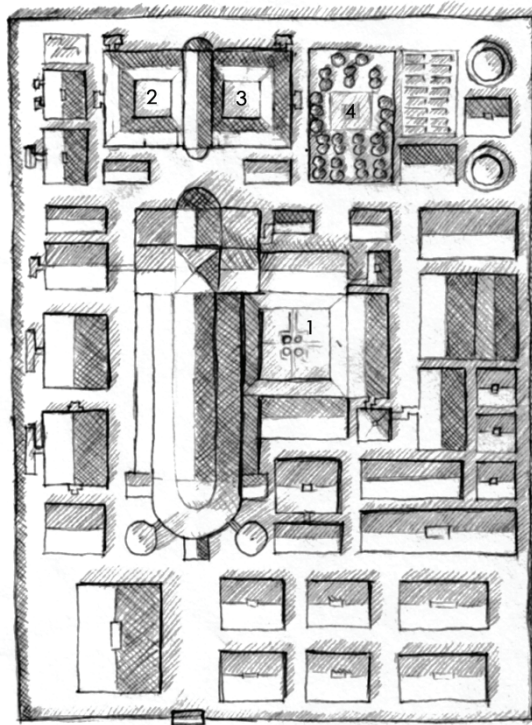


Figure 62: The monastic cloister gardens of the 8th-century St. Gall Monastery, 1) Cloister of the Monks; 2) Cloister of the Sick; 3) Cloister of the Novitiate; 4) Monastery Cemetery & Orchard. (A)

the garden. Finally, awnings erected above the platform form shaded pavilions and thick canopies of foliage provide further reprieve from the heat.⁶⁷¹

Gardens to follow in the Mughal, Turkish and Moorish empires incorporate these elements, introducing variations on the Persian garden form. However, the elements of flowing water, luxuriant and fruitful vegetation, enclosing walls, canopied pavilions and geometrical order can be found in all of these paradise gardens. The therapeutic nature of the paradise garden lies in its amenities for calming and refreshing both mind and body.

THE CLOISTER GARDEN

Interestingly, the monastic cloister garden (*Figure 62*) contains elements similar to those of the Islamic paradise garden though they come from very different cultures. There is little information available regarding Western European gardens from the time of the Roman Empire to that of Charlemagne. After the collapse of the Western Roman Empire, garden art and architecture veritably disappeared.⁶⁷² Some vestiges and glimpses remain in the written accounts of gardens of this dark era. Most descriptive is a plan, regarding the building arrangement of a monastery, preserved in the monastery of St Gall, Switzerland.

The various buildings, corrals and gardens of the cloister are arranged in a pragmatic manner by their function. The plan describes three gardens contained within the outside wall and a fourth in the center of the monastic cloister.⁶⁷³ Not much of the cloister garden's character is discernible beyond its division by three paths into equal quadrants, similar to the paradise garden arrangement, and is surrounded on all four sides by a covered arcade. There is no indication as to the plantings of the cloister garden court. Although the planting patterns of the cloister garden are difficult to determine, the element of the surrounding arcade or colonnade has remained consistent.⁶⁷⁴ Like the Persian pergola, these covered walkways allow a reprieve from the elements and a peaceful place from which to view the interior garden.

⁶⁷¹ Ibid., 29-30.

⁶⁷² Ibid., 81.

⁶⁷³ Ibid., 81.

⁶⁷⁴ Barnes with Marcus, "Design Philosophy," 97.

The three gardens on the Far East side of the monastery give greater indication as to their purpose and planting. Interestingly, the placement and purposes of these gardens indicate a relationship between health, life, cleansing and death. To the North East are buildings for the sick and dying, the infirmary, where a medicinal herb garden is located. Though there is not a clear indication of the element of water, on both sides of the infirmary are bathhouses where the residents of the monastery would have washed, indicating the nearby presence of a well or spring. In the South East corner, south of the infirmary, are the larger vegetable garden and orchard. The garden is divided into two symmetrical rows of nine beds, each for a different plant.⁶⁷⁵ The orchard contains thirteen fruiting trees interspersed with fourteen graves,⁶⁷⁶ providing for the needs of the initiates in both life and death. Though not necessarily dedicated to pleasure or contemplation, the monastic cloister gardens demonstrate a landscape dedicated to providing tranquility and sustenance to its inhabitants.

REFLECTIONS

It is in these three landscapes, paradise, Japanese and cloister that the theories regarding therapy, habitat, prospect-refuge and contemplation intersect. Though they are very different in their stylization, these landscapes are recognized for their therapeutic properties. The monastic gardens of the east and west are minimal landscapes, with the extreme of the Japanese dry garden, while the paradise garden is filled with colour and complexity. However, these landscapes share qualities deemed necessary by scientists and aestheticists for a comforting landscape. Each garden contains an element of refuge whether a central pergola or a peripheral arcade from which to receive shelter from the elements and view of the garden. In these elements, Appleton's theory of prospect can be discerned. The garden can be navigated by the mind if not by the body, creating opportunity for contemplation.

These gardens also share the concept of sustenance. Though the dry Japanese temple gardens only include allusions to nature, other temple gardens included fruiting trees

⁶⁷⁵ Thacker, *The History of Gardens*, 81.

⁶⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 81.

similar to the cloister and paradise gardens. Beyond food, these gardens also provide water whether in actuality or allusion. The dry streams or raked gravel of dry temple gardens, the four rivers of the paradise garden and the bathrooms of the cloister all provide either references or opportunities for cleansing and refreshment. Interestingly, it is the cloister garden that adds to the landscape the element of death with its orchard cemetery. All three of these examples are holistic gardens, providing for all the requirements of life and health: security, shelter, food and water. These landscapes are places in which to dwell.

Little is mentioned in analysis of these gardens as to the hazards that make provision of the prospect, sustenance and refuge of these gardens, but much can be inferred. Each of these gardens is enclosed, shutting out the world beyond. In many ancient cases the world beyond was a wild and malevolent nature, whether desert sands or dense forest. As populations grew and clustered, these gardens also shut out the urban bustle and confusion of the human world. One hazard could not be shut out in any of these gardens and so was dealt with within the garden itself: mortality. No monk or sultan could protect himself from the doom knit into their very being, like all those before and after them they would die.

Each of these gardens addresses this universal hazard through facilitating the act of contemplation. The symbolic elements within the Japanese Zen and tea gardens allude to eternity. The entire paradise garden is itself an allusion to the afterlife in paradise. The practical and minimal gardens of the monastic cloister seek heaven in humble seclusion, with the orchard cemetery a constant reminder of their ultimate fate. This facilitation for contemplation allows for the address and acceptance of death, which releases one to live more authentically.⁶⁷⁷ Though the exterior hazards of nature have been largely conquered and the urban concerns have changed with the times, the hazard of our own mortality remains. The difference is we now have few gardens, no place of prospect or refuge, in which to confront or contemplate this threat.

⁶⁷⁷ Anees A. Sheikh and Katharina S. Sheikh, "Is There Life Before Death? Healing Potential of Death Imagery," in *Healing with Death Imagery*, edited by Anees A. Sheikh and Katharina S. Sheikh (Amityville, N.Y.: Baywood Pub, 2007), 2.

CONTEMPLATIVE LANDSCAPES

For a landscape to be holistically therapeutic, the act of contemplation must be included in the provision of the elements supportive of life and wellbeing. The impacts of psychological health on one's physical wellbeing are well documented with

*ample evidence that hopelessness, loss of meaning, and an impending sense of doom are toxic to the body in many ways. Today we know they exert a depressant effect on the body's immune function and can set in motion irreversible, sometimes fatal processes in the heart and circulatory system as well. Thus it is no exaggeration to say that our attitude toward death literally can be a matter of life and death.*⁶⁷⁸

Facilitation of contemplation, particularly contemplation of mortality and eternity, plays an important role in forming a therapeutic landscape.

Numerous religions and prominent psychologists have long recognized the connections between mind and body, life and death. Zen Buddhist monks adhere to the Zen aphorism "If you die before you die, then when you die you will not die."⁶⁷⁹ Freud observes in his *Standard Edition* article "Thoughts for the times on war and death" (1957) that "if you want to endure life, prepare yourself for death (p. 299-300)."⁶⁸⁰ Writer and bereavement researcher Sandra Straub observes more positively "when you discuss death or acknowledge death, you do not invite death, but rather invite life."⁶⁸¹ It is through contemplation that the mind is able to come to terms with death and one is released to live more freely. The previous landscape precedents serve as examples for physically therapeutic landscapes and support the habitat theories of Appleton and Condon. However, part of the capacity to promote physical wellbeing includes support of psychological wellbeing. The labyrinth, paradise and cloister garden, though diverse in style and arrangement, derive much of their therapeutic qualities from their promotion of the contemplative act.

⁶⁷⁸ Larry Dossey, forward to *Healing with Death Imagery*, edited by Anees A. Sheikh and Katharina S. Sheikh, (Amityville, N.Y.: Baywood Pub, 2007), xi.

⁶⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, xi.

⁶⁸⁰ Rita T. McDonald and Carolyn J. Salyards, "Death Imagery and Death Anxiety," in *Healing with Death Imagery*, edited by Anees A. Sheikh and Katharina S. Sheikh, (Amityville, N.Y. : Baywood Pub, 2007), 182, from [Freud, S. Thoughts for the times on war and death. In *Standard Edition* 14 (1957): 299-300].

⁶⁸¹ Sheikh and Sheikh, "Is There Life Before Death?" 1.

CONTEMPLATION

Contemplation has numerous meanings within Western society. In general, it can occur on two levels; there is calming contemplation, which involves the elimination of thought, and then there is insightful contemplation, which involves deepening our engagement with the world.⁶⁸² Both forms of contemplation have proven physical and psychological benefits.⁶⁸³ However, it is the concept of insightful contemplation that has the most to offer the development of therapeutic landscapes. Rather than merely escaping the surrounding environment, the landscape of insightful contemplation fosters focused involvement with the environment. Marc Treib observes, “communing supersedes contemplation.”⁶⁸⁴ The focused interaction of mind and/or body with the landscape encourages the contemplative act.

CONTEMPLATION AND LANDSCAPE

Of those devices conducive to focusing the participant’s interaction with the landscape, promoting insightful contemplation and rejuvenation of the mind, the most foundational is contrast. The contrast between the contemplative landscape and the everyday world makes one ‘attend’ to one’s surroundings, increasing the awareness of the place at hand,⁶⁸⁵ “surprise leads to learning and then on to contemplation, contemplating what is concealed from us.”⁶⁸⁶ A shift of perspective can be induced by elements of surprise whether in form, texture or experience,⁶⁸⁷ the contrast between smooth and rough surfaces or forest and clearing focuses one’s attention. Landscapes promoting contemplation are most often places set apart from the everyday experience.⁶⁸⁸ There is an element of pilgrimage, whether actual or perceived, where the very act of walking becomes a meditative act, separating the pilgrim from their daily routine.⁶⁸⁹

⁶⁸² Krinke, introduction to *Contemporary Landscapes of Contemplation*, 1-3.

⁶⁸³ *Ibid.*, 3-5.

⁶⁸⁴ Marc Treib, “Attending,” in *Contemporary Landscapes of Contemplation*, edited by Rebecca Krinke (New York: Routledge, 2005), 17.

⁶⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 19-20.

⁶⁸⁶ Michael Singer, interviewed by Rebecca Krinke, “Map of Memory, an interview,” in *Contemporary Landscapes of Contemplation*, edited by Rebecca Krinke (New York: Routledge, 2005), 100.

⁶⁸⁷ Rebecca Krinke, “Contemplative Landscapes/Restorative Landscapes,” in *Contemporary Landscapes of Contemplation*, edited by Rebecca Krinke (New York: Routledge, 2005), 129.

⁶⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 129.

⁶⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 131.

Connected to this notion of pilgrimage are ritual and ritual-like activities such as rites of entrance and passage that distinguish a site from other places and can evoke symbolic meanings.⁶⁹⁰ Contrast with the outside world can also be achieved through the simplification or amplification of common landscape elements. The most prevalent contrast in the contemplative landscape is silence, the protection from or removal of intruding stimulus. However, the reduction of stimulus can also extend to the visual realm. The minimalism of the Zen dry garden is similar to the act of closing one's eyes in order to better concentrate on the other sensations within the environment.⁶⁹¹ On the other end of the spectrum, the awe inspired by sublime nature, as in the paintings of Caspar David Friedrich, can elevate one's mind to contemplation of the divine, the world and one's place within it.⁶⁹²

Both the simplified and the sublime landscape allow one to step "outside one's typical frames of reference of time, space and self,"⁶⁹³ daily realities are forced into the background making contemplation attainable. Through contrasting common sensual experience, people are made to pay attention with mind and body united in space and time, forming a place for contemplation and healing.

Contemplative gardens also nurture contemplation through symbolization of the relationships between the individual, the world, eternity and humanity. History provides us with a veritable toolbox of symbols providing avenues to transcend individual's finite experience of time, space and self.⁶⁹⁴ The finiteness of space can be transcended on both the human and cosmic scale. At the human scale an ever-changing experience of the environment with elements of anticipation, revelation, intimacy instills the sense that the landscape is ultimately unknowable.⁶⁹⁵ The labyrinth is a simplification of this dynamic

⁶⁹⁰ Ibid., 130.

⁶⁹¹ Treib, "Attending," 15.

⁶⁹² Ibid., 17.

⁶⁹³ Heinrich Hermann, "On the Transcendent in Landscapes of Contemplation," in *Contemporary Landscapes of Contemplation*, edited by Rebecca Krinke (New York: Routledge, 2005), 37.

⁶⁹⁴ Ibid., 70.

⁶⁹⁵ Ibid., 65.

journey with the pleasure gardens of the Renaissance and the picturesque landscapes of the 18th century creating landscapes of seemingly boundless complexity. At the cosmic scale, architectural, natural and symbolic references to the cosmos through skyward and sunward orientation create a sense of the vastness of the universe.⁶⁹⁶

Such devices have been used throughout history to the present day, from the celestial orientation of Stonehenge to the sky and light framing sculptures of James Turrell. The time frame of human life is also finite, but can be transcended through revelation of and resistance to the effects of time.⁶⁹⁷ The revelation of daily transitions of light and shadow and annual transitions of the seasons draw one into a cyclical ballet spanning time immeasurable:

*Like a complex clock or calendar, the landscape registers time on multiple scales and in the mixed media associated with our workings of and on the land. Landscape fuses time with place as it positions the oppositional. It mixes organic and inorganic media to speak in a simple yet eloquent language of temporality.*⁶⁹⁸

At the same time, elements and materials resistant to the ebb and flow of time such as stone can be benchmarks or touchstones, serving as anchors in a rapidly changing world. Finally, the finite nature of self can be transcended through triggers for empathy.⁶⁹⁹ Through interacting with a shared environment in communal ritual, whether a festival or a funeral, the individual is recognized as part of humanity, transcending the confines of an introverted perspective. Such elements that transcend or inspire transcendence are useful in focusing one's attention and creating opportunities for contemplation.

WOODLAND CEMETERY

There are numerous examples of modern landscape interventions that cause the visitor to pause and consider the world around them in greater detail. Many employ contemplative and transcendent devices such as light, time, enclosure and simplicity. A series of sky viewing chambers delved into a desert crater that collect and/or project light in James

⁶⁹⁶ Ibid., 65-66.

⁶⁹⁷ Ibid., 67.

⁶⁹⁸ Lance Necker, "Berlin: topology of contemplation," in *Contemporary Landscapes of Contemplation*, edited by Rebecca Krinke (New York: Routledge, 2005), 144.

⁶⁹⁹ Hermann, "On the Transcendent in Landscapes of Contemplation," 68.

Turell's Roden crater project mark the passage of time and frame the beauty of the cosmos. A series of thin metal columns erected to form a grid amidst vast expanse of the New Mexican desert registers the changing light through the day while emphasizing the sublime majesty of a lightning storm and the vastness of the desert landscape in Walter De Maria's Lightning Field. The veils of Spanish moss in Adriaan Geuze's Swamp Garden create a sense of enclosure editing the experience to the pattern and texture of light created by the hanging mosses. The formal rectangular pool of the Bloedel Reserve's reflection garden by Thomas Church and Richard Haag, surrounded by a dense hedge is come upon suddenly as one emerges from the forest into a clearing where the changing light above is reflected in the still pool below. These interventions are excellent examples of landscape events that provide opportunities for contemplation. However, the landscape is not dependent upon interventions alone to achieve an atmosphere of contemplation. Woodland Cemetery of Stockholm, Sweden is an excellent example of a cohesive cemetery landscape comprised of events and sequences reflective of its culture and supportive of contemplation and healing.

The landscape of Woodland cemetery (*Figure 63, 64 & 65*) utilizes natural and archetypal symbols to facilitate contemplation, but adds to these symbols the contemplative act of the journey. As mentioned previously, the journey through the landscape can be a contemplative act in itself. The sequence of experience in Woodland cemetery lends the landscape two narratives, connection to the earth and identification with Christ's death. Rather than dichotomous elements imposed on the landscape, these two narratives converge and complement each other at various points becoming part of a cohesive landscape and reflecting the cultural context of Sweden in the early 20th century.

Contemplative Elements

Like other European cities in the early 20th century, Stockholm, Sweden was outgrowing its traditional urban burial grounds surrounding its churches and began acquiring land outside the city limits to fulfill future burial requirements.⁷⁰⁰ The emerging popularity of cremation in the late 19th century also necessitated the design of a new cemetery creating a

⁷⁰⁰ Marc Treib, "Woodland cemetery: a dialogue of design and meaning," *Landscape Architecture*, (March/April, 1994): 44.

dignified setting for the culturally new funerary ritual.⁷⁰¹ For these reasons the city of Stockholm opened its first international competition in 1915 for the design of a seventy-five acre cemetery expansion on the city's periphery.⁷⁰² The proposed program called for modern cremation facilities, numerous grave and urn plots, and at least two funerary chapels on a largely forested site that was previously a gravel quarry.⁷⁰³ First prize went to Sigurd Lewerentz and Eric Gunnar Asplund for their submission, which like its title "Tallum", a combination of tal (pine) with a Latin suffix,⁷⁰⁴ infused a Nordic landscape with classical and traditional references. The sensitivity of the Swedish designers to the site's character and to changes in modern Swedish culture distinguished them from other entries.

In the final decades of the 19th century, past archetypes were questioned for their relevance to modern Swedish society. In turn, the facelessness of industrial design was criticized for its lack of vernacular meaning. For Sweden, meaning was found in the landscape with Sweden's identity taking a naturalistic or primitive form, stemming from a sense of dependence on the earth.⁷⁰⁵ Once a source of embarrassment, this primitivism, became a source of national pride in the 1880s and 90s.⁷⁰⁶ Nationalism, with its spiritual component of nature and social element of national celebrations, began to replace the culturally waning state religion of Lutheranism in the formation of a new national identity.⁷⁰⁷ A quiet secularization of religion began with the spiritualization of Nature in Swedish culture.

This sense of the primacy of Nature pervaded Asplund and Lewerentz's submission to the competition. The architects concentrated on using the existing attributes of the site, preserving the forest and maintaining existing contours, which is evident in the plans,

⁷⁰¹ Rasmus Waern, "The Woodland Cemetery: toward a spiritual landscape by Caroline Constant" (Book Review). *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 56, no.3 (1997): 364.

⁷⁰² Janne Ahlin, *Sigurd Lewerentz, architect 1885-1975* (English ed.), (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1987), 38.

⁷⁰³ Treib, "Woodland cemetery," 44.

⁷⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 44.

⁷⁰⁵ Waern, "The Woodland Cemetery", 364; Michelle Facos, "Educating a Nation of Patriots: mural paintings in turn of the century Swedish schools." in *Art, culture, and national identity in Fin-de-Siècle Europe*, edited by Michelle Facos and Sharon L. Hirsh, (New York, Cambridge University Press, 2003), 236.

⁷⁰⁶ Michelle Facos, "Educating a nation of patriots," 237.

⁷⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 242.

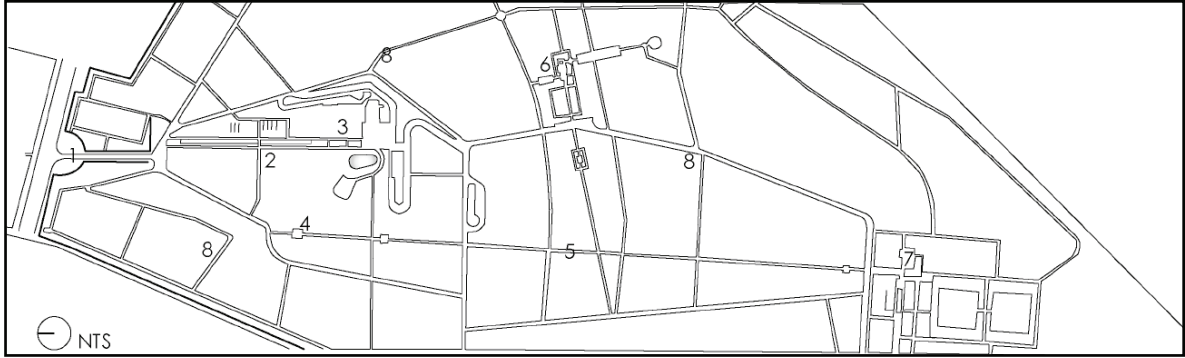


Figure 63: Plan of Woodland Cemetery circa 1940, Stockholm, Sweden. (A)

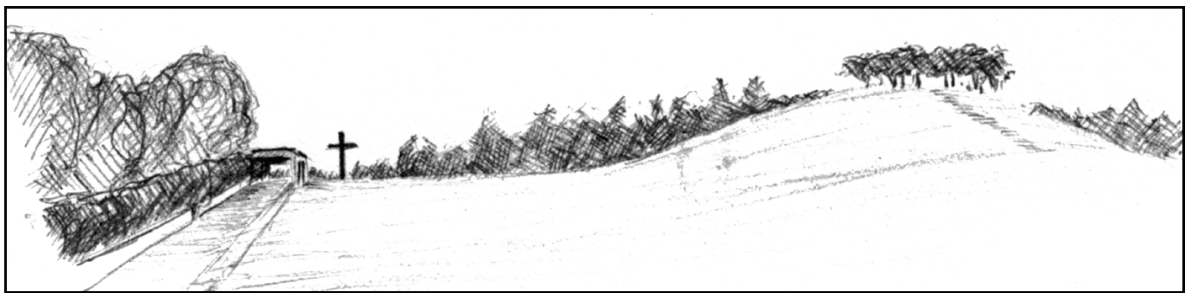


Figure 64: The entrance clearing of Woodland Cemetery, Stockholm, Sweden. (A)

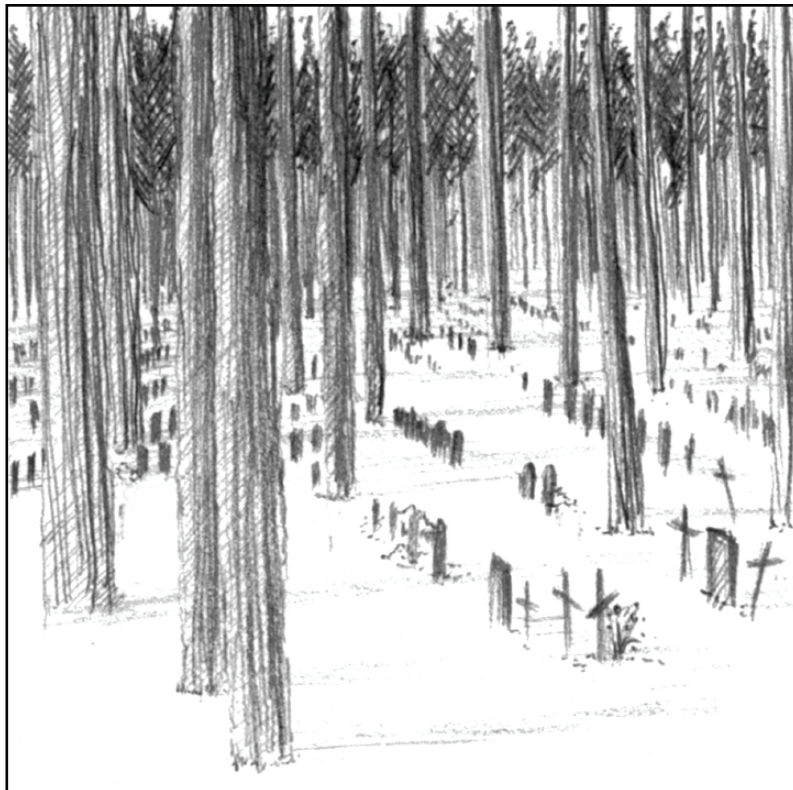


Figure 65: Forest burial ground of Woodland Cemetery, Stockholm, Sweden. (A)

sections, and sketches that comprised “Tallum”.⁷⁰⁸ Asplund and Lewerentz fused the English romantic garden tradition with a Nordic emphasis on ‘wildness’.⁷⁰⁹ The winding paths of the initial scheme are clearly influenced by the English Picturesque. However, the contextual treatment of the site and preservation of the dense coniferous forest created an atmosphere of brooding mystery and primitivism that is at the same time distinctly modern and Scandinavian.

Natural elements and cultural symbols are used throughout the cemetery to provide diverse opportunities for contemplation. Many of these elements draw from universal symbols of transcendence. The finite human experience of space and time is transcended through the dynamic nature of the cemetery landscape. Woodland cemetery is constantly changing at the human scale as trees grow, clearings open and graves are dug.

On the scale of the cosmos, the cemetery’s buildings, memorials and landscape emphasize cosmic cycles of time through their orientation to the sun and sky. The axis of sunrise and sunset are emphasized as the chapels and crematoria open to the west while the forest’s gravestones predominantly face the east.⁷¹⁰ Cosmic references also reveal the vastness of space as sunlit clearings, carved out of the forest, open to the canopy of the heavens with the reflection pond of the main clearing further emphasizing the vast scale of the cosmos above.⁷¹¹ Seasonal fluctuations registered in the deciduous plantings along the entry walk and within the forest clearings, transcend the human experience of time.

This cyclical ballet is contrasted with human linear time, made evident by the blending of constructed and natural elements. As the oldest tombs are gradually weathered and neglected, becoming archetypal symbols in themselves,⁷¹² the failing resistance against time is manifested. These graves, old and new, also create avenues for empathy and transcendence of the self, as they connect the mortality and grief of the individual with

⁷⁰⁸ Caroline Constant, *The Woodland Cemetery: Toward a Spiritual Landscape*, (Stockholm: Byggförlaget, 1994), 32.

⁷⁰⁹ Stuart Wrede, “Landscape and architecture: the work of Erik Gunnar Asplund,” *Perspecta* 20 (1983): 197.

⁷¹⁰ Hermann, “On the Transcendent in Landscapes of Contemplation,” 54, 57.

⁷¹¹ *Ibid.*, 64.

⁷¹² *Ibid.*, 57.

those of humanity. Forest, clearing, sun, sky and stone testify to a universe far beyond the human scale of time and space.

Other architectural features, besides the gravestones, provide events for contemplation. On entering the stonewalls surrounding the cemetery, a portico covers a fountain built into the wall that flows quietly and continually, suggesting eternity.⁷¹³ The principal pedestrian path to the funeral chapels, the Way of the Cross, of the cemetery's cremation complex provides a direct axis into the cemetery, enticing one forward.⁷¹⁴ As opposed to more formal landscapes, the predominant symbolic architectural feature, the large abstracted cross, is not central to the axis, but to the east of the path, creating a threshold for the cremation chapels and reinforcing the landscape's cosmic orientations. The columbaria, which parallel the east of the Way of the Cross, reinforce the strong north / south axis and cosmic orientation.

The low, tree-lined wall also creates a sense of security in the midst of a vast and stark clearing. Woodland cemetery's buildings "have a muteness of expression"⁷¹⁵ that is both intimate and solitary, allowing feeling of security without garish architectural form intruding on the pure experience of the space. Atop a hill on the western edge of the clearing is the Meditation Grove. There, landscape and architecture merge to create a secluded court; the three-foot ashlar walls are surrounded by twelve weeping elms, creating a sense of stillness and seclusion. The north and south openings of the grove, reinforce the cemetery's main axis, integrate with the other features of the site and echo the cosmic orientations found in other natural and architectural events of the cemetery.

Contemplative Sequences

Though these individual events symbolize the transcendent and provide opportunities for contemplation, it is the symbolic sequence of experience that lends the disparate elements greater potency and forms a contemplative landscape. The journey from destination to destination is symbolic in itself. Axial views and paths connecting elements of architecture and landscape choreograph the 'reading' of the cemetery. The sequence of experiences

⁷¹³ Treib, "Woodland cemetery," 46.

⁷¹⁴ Ibid., 57.

⁷¹⁵ Ibid., 64.

through the site blends Christian and primitive symbolism, reflecting changes in Swedish culture at the time. These separate symbolic narratives lead to two predominant readings of the landscape experience. In using the existing landscape as their inspiration, Lewerentz and Asplund infused the funerary landscape with a sacred quality without the overt religious connotations of prior cemetery design.⁷¹⁶

The solitary journey through untamed nature parallels the journey through life and death. Contrasts between closure and release, light and dark, nature and architecture are used extensively⁷¹⁷ to heighten the sense of progression in the landscape. The site is entered from the North through a ‘tunnel’ of trimmed trees towards the light at the end.⁷¹⁸ After turning through the semicircular exedra, the high stone walls surrounding the cemetery focus attention to the open landscape ahead with chapels on the left and a meditation grove to the right.⁷¹⁹ As this vista opens, the main road turns abruptly to the left breaking the axial progression through the site and symbolizing the disorientation and frustration that comes with death. The road straightens again, running along the forest’s edge but is still not axial. Instead of terminating at the chapels and crematorium, it passes them by. Continuing southwards, the main path slices through the forest burial grounds, intersecting the axis of Asplund’s famed Woodland Chapel that is tucked into the forest.

Historic allusions to death and life, made through the use of the ancient symbol of the mound, are also passed as one journeys through the landscape. Burial mounds within the forest draw from medieval and ancient Scandinavian models,⁷²⁰ while the large hill across from the crematorium has been compared to both ancient burial mounds and the earthen breast of Nature.⁷²¹ The rise and fall of the paths echo themes of rise and descent. This visceral narrative of basic human experience and emotion attempts to go beyond superficial and overt references to death and permits an open interpretation and experience of the

⁷¹⁶ John Crone, “The woodland cemetery, by Caroline Constant,” (review) *Landscape journal* 14, no.2 (Fall 1995): 237.

⁷¹⁷ Treib, “Woodland cemetery,” 46.

⁷¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 46.

⁷¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 46.

⁷²⁰ Wrede, “Landscape and architecture,” 197.

⁷²¹ Vaughan Hart, “Sigurd Lewerentz and the ‘Half-open Door’,” *Architectural History* 39, (1996): 184; Colin St John Wilson. “Sigurd Lewerentz and the Dilemma of the Classical.” *Perspecta*, 24 (1988): 54.

transcendent. Woodland cemetery's natural sequence creates a landscape and a journey that speak to the very heart of the visitor.

The landscape sequence can also be understood in relation to the crucifixion story and its narrative of resurrection and transcendence. Though the main roadway turns to the left at the entrance, its visual axis is to a large stone cross that stands between the crematorium and funerary knoll. The Way of the Cross, the pedestrian path to the chapels, extends through the landscape to the forest burial mounds on a path that runs directly between the crematorium and iconic cross. As in the secular reading of the site, axes run past rather than to major features, allowing the visitor to determine their course and the landscape's subsequent meaning. Perpendicular to the cross stands the steep knoll, which has strong Christian associations as Christ was crucified on a hill outside of Jerusalem.⁷²² The Meditation grove on the mound's crown may also be representative of the Garden of Gethsemane, where Jesus went to pray before his arrest.⁷²³

From the crest of this hill, the Way of the Seven Wells extends on a direct southerly axis through the forest, terminating at the Resurrection Chapel, indicating the chapel to be the climax of the journey.⁷²⁴ As progress is made through the dark forest to the chapel, Christ's interment for three days and three nights is symbolized until resurrection is reached. Another reading of this passage is the spiritual darkness the world descended into until Christ's resurrection at the chapel where the forest opens into a clearing.⁷²⁵ The procession to the Woodland Chapel also implements this similar movement from dark to light in its interior and exterior. In fact, the architecture of both chapels echoes the themes of the landscape among other natural and Christian symbols. On both levels of interpretation, the sequential landscape creates a complete landscape of contemplation that is relevant to the experience of the bereaved.

⁷²² Hart, "Sigurd Lewerentz and the 'Half-open Door'," 186.

⁷²³ *The New International Version Study Bible*, edited by Kenneth Barker (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995), Mark 14:32.

⁷²⁴ Hart, "Sigurd Lewerentz and the 'Half-open Door'," 186.

⁷²⁵ *Ibid.*, 186.

Therapeutic Aspects

The arrangement of Woodland cemetery's contemplative events and sequences also lend it therapeutic qualities. Sunlit clearings, linear axes and iconic elements allow the visitor to navigate the site with relative ease, granting a sense of control in a tempestuous time. The many linkages and transitions of the site such as the trees of the Meditation Grove and the east/west composition of the architectural elements orient the visitor within the cemetery.⁷²⁶ The landscape also holds a balance of prospect and refuge in its use of forest groves and sunlit clearings, reinforcing feelings of control and security.

The journey through the landscape is therapeutic in itself as it encourages movement and exercise, benefiting both mind and body. This movement, combined with the cemetery's walled and forested borders and numerous variations in flora, fauna, light and shadow, creates separation from the hazards of the outside world and distraction from the hazards of mortality within. The arrangements of the buildings provide opportunities for social support, but allow for separation between groups and individuals as well. As people congregate in the chapels and courtyards for public funeral rituals creating an atmosphere of human support while the cemetery's ample size also prevents multiple functions and degrees of privacy from conflicting.⁷²⁷ Natural elements of forest, clearing, prospect, refuge, vegetation, and water echo elements of a supportive habitat, providing allusions to secure dwelling and safe journey.

Though an early 20th century cemetery, Woodland cemetery is a precedent of a culturally relevant therapeutic cemetery for the 21st century. The requirements of the landscape's multiple users are met and blended seamlessly. The landscape is first and foremost a cemetery with efficiency of function a major consideration. Formal paths and thinned trees allow mechanical access to the cemetery while the site's topography is used to conceal the service access from the visitor. However, the requirements for comfort and contemplation are also considered in the design. Asplund and Lewerence's sensitivity to the cultural context of death and society in Sweden at the turn of the century, situated in the larger

⁷²⁶ Hermann, "On the Transcendent in Landscapes of Contemplation," 62.

⁷²⁷ *Ibid.*, 63.

context of human experience, ensured the cemetery's local and international appeal. Besides burial, the cemetery is a place for memory and transcendence. Woodland Cemetery's contemplative and therapeutic qualities make it a landscape supportive of physical and psychological wellbeing of its visitors. The diversity of experience that is incorporated into the landscape of Woodland Cemetery make it a cemetery relevant to the 21st century in its beauty and humanity.

CONCLUSION TO PART III

In a culture where the focus of death and rituals surrounding death concern the living more than the dead, the needs of the bereaved and larger community deserve greater consideration in cemetery design for the continued cultural relevance of the cemetery. The cemetery must become a place of diversity and dynamics, where time and space can be experienced and enjoyed. Through the merging of therapeutic and contemplative landscape attributes, a landscape of humanity and transcendence, appropriate to a cemetery in the 21st century, can be attained. The focused attention of the events and experience of a contemplative landscape creates a landscape where the constraints of the human experience of space, time and self may be transcended. Meanwhile, landscape elements and arrangements supportive of actual and perceived wellbeing such as exercise, control, distraction and social support create a landscape that is compellingly human in its scale and provision. The landscape precedents explored above demonstrate the possibility of a compelling balance of human temporality and transcendent continuity, modern echoes of the ancient narratives of dwelling and journeying. Consideration of the needs of living cemetery visitors, providing opportunities for experience and support of one's wellbeing, stands to alter the design of these landscapes of death, rendering them places rather than space

PART IV: APPLICATION

DESIGNING AN ALTERNATIVE 21ST CENTURY FUNERARY ENVIRONMENT

14. SITE SELECTION

Currently, the funerary landscape of the 21st century appears polarized between either the strictly managed grid of the traditional cemetery and the comparatively unregulated cemeteries for scattering and green burial. The aim of this practicum is not to proclaim the doom of the cemetery, but to suggest possible design alterations in light of current, seemingly anti-establishment practices. What is proposed is some middle ground: not merely a new cemetery but a funerary environment where flux and diversity are accommodated within a managed landscape. Clearly such landscape innovation would require an unconventional site for its foundation. In light of the preceding chapters investigating Western society's culture of death, an actual site in which to situate these theories was determined.

Typically on the Prairies, flat, cleared and well-drained sites are selected for new cemeteries or old cemeteries of similar topography are simply expanded. Though such sites were considered for this practicum, they were deemed incongruent with current growing emphasis on naturalization and personalization identified in preceding chapters. Rather, a site with existing naturalized features that could be preserved or enhanced was desired so that the site would potentially be both sustainable in its land use and unique due to its existing features. Such a site would support the increasing naturalization and personalization/individualization of death in Western culture. To be part of the lived experience of society, it could not be a remote location but one near enough to a community to be readily accessible. The site must also be serviceable with the standard site amenities such as water, electricity and vehicular access required in the daily function of a funeral home and cemetery. However, some degree of separation was desired to reduce contextual conflicts between daily urban life and contemplative rituals.



Figure 66: Established Cemeteries of Winnipeg, Manitoba. (A)



Figure 67: Residential development surrounding the site. (A)



Figure 68: Agricultural land. (A)



Figure 69: Marj Edey Park. (A)



Figure 69: Marj Edey Park. (A)



Figure 71: Harte trail. (A)

15. CONTEXT

The site chosen for this cemetery lies in the yet largely undeveloped South West corner of Winnipeg, Manitoba where there is currently no local cemetery (*Figure 66*). The site's surrounding context consists of low-density, single family residential to the North (*Figure 67*), agricultural use to the West and South (*Figure 68*), a recreation complex to the east (*Figure 69*) and very low-density residential beginning in the South.⁷²⁸ Low-density residential development is proposed to the South West. It is foreseeable that this part of the city will only grow further in this region. The city has future plans for residential development South of Wilkes and in the yet undeveloped Ridgewood South area that lies to the West of Marj Eddy Park. The site itself is currently zoned A (agricultural) and C (conditional), which allows a range of possible development options including the creation of a cemetery. There is also a proposed freeway that would run east and west to the north of the rail lines, improving access to the area.

Beyond the projected municipal need for a cemetery in the area, the site's urban context would allow the funerary landscape to form part of the lived experience of residents and visitors of the area. The Harte Trail, which lies to the North of the site, follows an abandoned rail line that extends from Assiniboine Park, "one of the largest urban natural parks within Canada"⁷²⁹ and a Winnipeg regional park and tourist location, to Beaudry Provincial Park, North West of Winnipeg. As part of the Trans Canada Trail, Harte Trail links the site with the rest of Canada from coast to coast. The trail is used frequently by residents for jogging, strolling and dog walking, activities that would allow people frequently to pass the site and potentially expand their activities into the scenic funerary landscape.

Currently, site is framed by Harte Trail to the North (*Figure 71*) and a busy CNR mainline (*Figure 72*) and Wilkes Avenue, a busy two-lane traffic artery from the Charleswood area

⁷²⁸ Shauna Prociuk, "Integrating Stormwater Runoff & Open Space in the Development of a Residential Neighborhood," (master's thesis, University of Manitoba, 2006), 86.

⁷²⁹ City of Winnipeg: Naturalist Services, *Ecologically Significant Lands Strategy*, City of Winnipeg, (PDF, 2007), <http://www.winnipeg.ca/publicworks/Naturalist/ns/>, 11.



Figure 72: Operational CNR Mainline. (A)



Figure 73: Bounding Roadways. (A)



Figure 74: Aspen Forest. (A)

to Winnipeg's Perimeter Highway, on the south (*Figure 73*). The site is bordered on the East and West by two frequently used gravel roads, Fairmont Road and Harstone Road respectively, which serve as gateways to Charleswood. These vehicular corridors fully surround the site with movement. Plans to develop a four-lane arterial roadway between Wilkes and the Harte Trail to reduce perimeter bound traffic on Roblin⁷³⁰ would increase vehicular access to the area. These physical linkages with the urban fabric would connect the funerary landscape with the larger urban populace, allowing the landscape of death to unobtrusively re-enter societal consciousness.

This area also fulfills the criteria of a relatively naturalized site that could meet the needs of sustainable interment and memorial. The natural features of the site and its context are well suited to supporting an unconventional funerary landscape with diversity and sustainability at its heart. The Ward of Charleswood-Tuxedo has the largest amount of natural areas in Winnipeg, approximately 1034 ha.⁷³¹ This high ratio of parkland to development is due in part to the area's conception as a rural municipality of low-density residential development scattered along gravel roads with open drainage ditches.⁷³²

The Charleswood Detailed Area Plan of 1979 designated the Ridgewood South area, within which the site lies, as suitable for additional low-density development.⁷³³ However, the area of Ridgewood South remains unrealized and the open drainage and gravel roads remain. Aspen Parkland and Prairie grassland proliferate as the site awaits development (*Figure 74*). These existing patches of forest and unique drainage conditions present opportunities for a naturalistic cemetery that connects the urban fabric with Manitoban ecosystems and memorial. Though not the typical site for a prairie cemetery, this site meets the criteria for a cemetery focused more on personalized memorial and environmental sustainability than on commercial enterprise and supposedly permanent burial.

⁷³⁰ Shauna Prociuk, "Integrating Stormwater Runoff & Open Space in the Development of a Residential Neighborhood," 87-88.

⁷³¹ *Ibid.*, 81.

⁷³² *Ibid.*, 82.

⁷³³ *Ibid.*, 82.

16. SITE ASSESSMENT

ECOLOGICAL QUALITY

Though surrounded by agriculture and residential housing, the site is populated with dense, largely native vegetation providing habitat for local wildlife such as deer, ducks, ravens, mourning doves, songbirds and rodents (*Figure 75 & 76*). The site has been assessed by the city of Winnipeg's Naturalist Services Branch and boasts a range of ecological grades from A, evidence of good quality habitat, to D, poor quality habitat. The sites North East-East corner is graded A/B and the main central forest is graded B/C, while the majority of grassland areas are graded C/D.⁷³⁴ In areas of poor quality native ecology, funerary activities could potentially work to improve these conditions.

In the more poorly graded areas plant species that have been identified as management concerns are present on the site. Agricultural activity and disturbance due to road and railway construction have allowed invasive species such as *Agropyron repens* (Quack grass), *Bromus inermis* (Smooth brome), *Cirsium arvense* (Canada thistle), *Melilotus officinalis* (Yellow sweet clover) and *Medicago sativa* (Alfalfa)⁷³⁵ to infiltrate portions of the site. However, there are some areas of the site where Winnipeg's Naturalist Services Branch found the native ecology to remain relatively intact, particularly in the forested and marshy areas where disturbance appears to have been minimal. Areas of sound native ecology should be preserved as much as possible, while areas of poor ecological quality could be repopulated with native species gradually through careful stewardship.



Figure 75: The site offers a range of habitats. (A)

⁷³⁴ Ibid., 80.

⁷³⁵ City of Winnipeg, Public Works, Naturalist Services, "Report for Habitat Site Silver Heights 26, no. 377," *City of Winnipeg iView Library*, 1998-2005 (accessed 11/14/2008). t

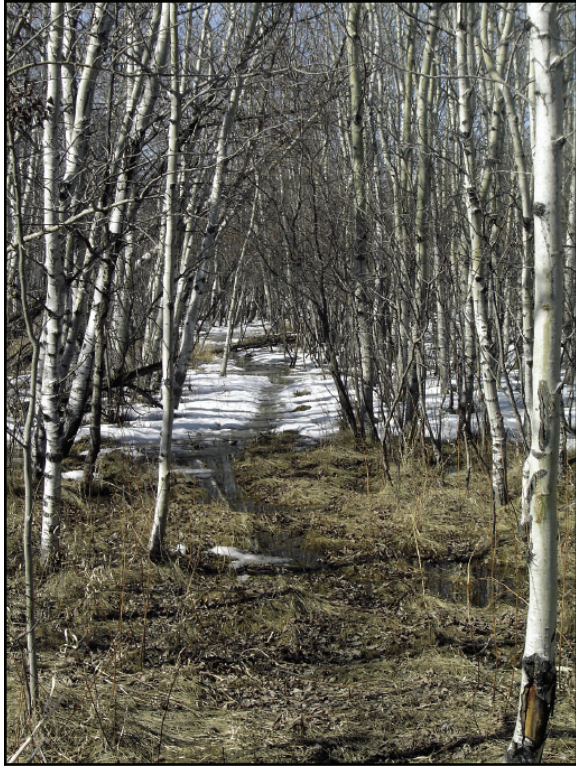


Figure 76: A hierarchical network of deer trails is evidence of the site's current use as animal habitat. (A)



Figure 78: Existing soil conditions and slopes contribute to the marsh condition. (A)



Figure 77: The site's three primary ecological zones: grassland, marshland and aspen forest. (A)
 1) Grassland; 2) Marshland; 3) Aspen forest with patches of Oak forest.

ECOLOGICAL CONDITIONS AND ACTIVITY

This site has a diversity of ecological conditions (*Figure 77*). Large stands of young Aspen forest cover much of the site with an under story of snowberry and tall grass prairie species. A large marsh area characterized by water tolerant reeds and grasses, such as *Phragmites australis* (giant reed grass), and labyrinths of *Salix arbusculoides* (shrub willow) dominate the site, receiving excess water runoff from the area in times of high precipitation and rapid spring thaw. Some sections of the Aspen forest have an emerging swamp condition as the forest infiltrates the marsh area. The City of Winnipeg's Naturalist Service Branch distinguishes between these two conditions defining marshland as wetlands "frequently or continually filled with water, with plants that are adapted to growing in wet or saturated soils"⁷³⁶ and swamps as wetlands "dominated by trees or shrubs".⁷³⁷ Smaller areas of meadow and oak groves are scattered where there is better drainage year round.

Drainage

The site and its context have significantly poor drainage (*Figure 78*) with an average slope of .11%.⁷³⁸ Much of the site consists of wetland that retains overflow water of the surrounding area, particularly from the South and West.⁷³⁹ Shallow slopes, combined with clay soils of remarkably low infiltration rates,⁷⁴⁰ contribute to the overall poor drainage of the site. However, though such poor drainage would be viewed detrimental by conventional cemetery developers, the site's hydrology holds interesting possibilities for developers of unconventional interment and memorial.

Circulation

Though there are no through roads within the site, on closer inspection an extensive and hierarchical network of deer trails cross the site at various intervals. Of these, there are two parallel arterial right of ways that cross from the South West corner and mid West side to the North East, one trail running parallel to the CNR line and one trail crossing from North

⁷³⁶ Naturalist Services, *Ecologically Significant Lands Strategy*, 29.

⁷³⁷ *Ibid.*, 29.

⁷³⁸ Prociuk, "Integrating Stormwater Runoff & Open Space in the Development of a Residential Neighborhood," 83.

⁷³⁹ *Ibid.*, 83.

⁷⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 83.

to South, joining the CNR line path. These paths are not indicative of human uses, but do indicate the most traversable portions of the site and wildlife corridors that should be considered in future development.

Climate

A therapeutic sense of refuge and habitat can be found in the woods and clearings of the site, which also provide an atmosphere of transcendence in the seasonal transformation of the landscape. Winnipeg experiences four distinct seasons annually with extremes fluctuating from cold winters with lows of -45°C to warm summers with highs of 40°C . Spring and autumn are more temperate with averages of 5°C and 4°C respectively.⁷⁴¹ The Winnipeg area experiences higher rainfall than other Prairie eco-zones further West with an average of 514mm annually. Beyond seasonal dynamics, there are annual cycles of wet and dry years,⁷⁴² allowing the site's mutable marshland condition to provide a transcendent landscape of change over time.

⁷⁴¹ "Canadian Climate Normals 1971-2000: Winnipeg Richardson International Airport, Manitoba," *Environment Canada*, Apr 30, 2009,

http://www.climate.weatheroffice.ec.gc.ca/climate_normals/results_e.html?Province=ALL&StationName=Winnipeg&SearchType=BeginsWith&LocateBy=Province&Proximity=25&ProximityFrom=City&StationNumber=&IDType=MSC&CityName=&ParkName=&LatitudeDegrees=&LatitudeMinutes=&LongitudeDegrees=&LongitudeMinutes=&NormalsClass=A&SelNormals=&StnId=3698&&autofwd=1

⁷⁴² Prociuk, "Integrating Stormwater Runoff & Open Space in the Development of a Residential Neighborhood," 85.

17. PROGRAM

It is the intention of this practicum to expand the program of the cemetery beyond the requirements of the dead and their handlers to the needs of larger society. The bereaved, who have been given little consideration in modern society and modern cemetery design, could gain the most from such a programmatic expansion. Society provides few spaces besides the therapists' chair and the funeral for memorial, ritual and bereavement therapy. However, a place that is supportive of the physical experience and emotional state of the grieving stands to aid them finding solace. A place reflecting growing cultural demand for personalized and sustainable practices could provide those making arrangements with the options to inter, commemorate and mourn the deceased in uniquely personal and environmentally sustainable ways.

What is proposed is a diversified funerary landscape that will accommodate the cemetery's multiple interest groups, providing a variety of experiences and narratives, addressing the interests of future generations and contemporary society and reflecting the reality of death amidst a landscape of transcendence. To accomplish this goal diversity, sustainability and personality must be incorporated into the design of the cemetery without compromising the landscape's practical management and maintenance. The cemetery has three primary users: the dead and dying, the bereaved and the manager. All are different in their perspectives and needs regarding death and the cemetery.

The site clearly meets the requirements for a funerary landscape of naturalized and dynamic conditions. However, though the purpose of this funerary landscape is to challenge the currently accepted norms of cemetery design, the practical implications of death and orchestration of interment must also be addressed. In addition to the conventional spaces for administration, preparation, interment, management, memorial and contemplation, the cemetery's function is expanded with the addition of a bereavement therapy centre and an archive library. The bereavement therapy centre will provide those desiring a supportive bereavement community the unique resources they may need and the archive will house permanent records of the lives and interment sites of those buried in the cemetery and those

Table 1: Program Elements & Requirements

Program Components		Number	Area	Notes
Structure	Admin. Reception	1	Minimum 2 acres with 91m minimum of frontage	Offers a picturesque view of the cemetery.
	Offices	5		3 offices and 1 consultation room that are related to reception, but more private.
	Information Centre	1		1 office that will co-ordinate with funeral home for use of chapel or consultation room space for larger group meetings and consultations.
	Preparation rooms	3 chambers	-	1 chamber that is connected to a chapel to accommodate cremation ceremonies. 2 chambers are in a shared, private preparation room with the possibility of conversion to alternative forms of bodily preparation such as composing and/or water reduction.
	Indoor Chapel(s)	2 or 3		1 small room of 100 person capacity and 1 large room which can accommodate 300 person capacity that can be divided for smaller gatherings.
	Outdoor Chapel(s)			To be easily accessed by vehicle (whether golf cart or car) and relatively sheltered from most environmental elements such as harsh sun and wind. Possibility of landscape features that could double as seating options.
	Archives	1	(Part of Admin building's 2 acres)	To be accessed by main reception and information offices, but separated largely from funeral activities. Containing information about the deceased such as eulogy, interment site, etc. that family or individual wishes to disclose in digital or printed formats. Digital records may be accessed online world wide. Will provide permanent record for interments on site and for those interred privately and/or more temporarily, but some form of record is still desired.
	Services Car Garage	3 Car		3 Car garage with funerary vehicle washing station.
	Maintenance Garage	1		For storage of maintenance vehicles and supplies. Space for skid steer and truck access, maintenance and storage. Space for equipment storage.
	Memorial Monuments	(+)	Max 1mx1mx1m	Materiality to register varying degrees of temporality.
Memorial Wall	1+	-	More permanent in choice of materials. Main wall built with the option of building onto it over time for greater memorial space. Will record names of those buried in areas of cemetery with no markers or for those buried outside the site where memorials are prohibited or not practical.	
Circulation	Maintenance Yard (and Nursery)	1	Min. 15.24m turn radius and 18.3m pkng spc.	For storage of larger trucks, maintenance vehicles and monuments. Possibility of a small nursery for memorial trees and perennials. The green version of a memorial showroom. Possible maintenance entrance separate from public access.
	Staff Parking	10 spaces	Min. 2.6mx5.6m per space	A minimum 7.3m wide aisle. Easy access to administration and maintenance areas and separate from areas of public parking.
	Public Parking	106 min.	Regular min. lot size is 2.6mx5.6m	Arrangement is to accommodate processional arrivals and departures. Minimum one space per 4 seats of capacity plus one for clergy. Minimum 5 accessible spaces required per 101-150 regular with a 7.32m wide aisle and max 6% slope. (Universal space size is 3.35mx17.5m+1.5m aisle max 2% slope.)
	Service Roads		Min 3m width	May utilize public roads.
	Main Entrance	1	Min 5.5m width	One double lane entrance for security purposes and cost effectiveness.
	Public Roads	(+)	Min 3m width	Minimum single, one way lanes. Access to majority of cemetery by vehicle for visitors and maintenance. Possible fire-break for maintenance of tall grass prairie zones. Arrangement to provide pedestrians and drivers options and choice of experience while ensuring site accessibility and way finding.
	Trails	(+)	Min 0.61m width	Access to all areas of cemetery ranging in width from 1.5 to .5 meters. Most intimate scale of access, creating sense of reflection in its labyrinthine arrangement with views creating moments of reflection.

Interment	"Green" burial		.91mx1.83mx.61m	<i>Currently not permitted in Manitoba as 3' minimum depth above casket is required.</i>
	Scattering		-	<i>*Tilling/cultivation/amendment may be required to maintain acceptable pH and nutrient levels in areas where scattering is frequent. Therefore, may be most suitable in areas of water or prairie where amendments would be less intrusive.</i>
	Cremain burial		.61x.61mx.91m+	<i>Minimum .33 meter depth. Only biodegradable containers are to be used.</i>
Landscape	Wetland	1	-	<i>One main water body with varying shore conditions. To be viewed as a feature landscape component with more intimate areas diverting from it. Water body will create as sense of prospect in views to other areas of the site and eternity in references to the sky and the horizon. Islands create dynamic views across the water, echoing themes of eternity and mystery, and their remote nature reinforces the symbolism of eternity and mortality. No individual markers.</i>
	Wilderness/Maze	1	-	<i>Occurring in areas of dense vegetation and narrow trails. Paths are to accommodate small groups of people or individuals. Reduced visibility with min 1.6m high screening (adult average eye level.TSSLA340) in the majority of areas with some points of clearings and views creating moments of reflection. An intimate space with individual markers along trails.</i>
	Meadow	1+	-	<i>Main meadows are open and vast with small, naturally occurring clearings dispersed throughout the forest areas. No individual markers beyond areas seeded with wildflowers.</i>
	Fen	1	-	<i>An ecological condition of the pool where the water merges with the forests. This area will highlight seasonal and annual fluctuations of water levels most acutely. No individual monuments.</i>
	Garden Court(s)	1 or 2	-	<i>The most cultivated landscape of the cemetery, serving as a transitional space from the built administration areas and urban context to the naturalized memorial settings of the forest, meadow and wetland area. Intimate conversational niches allow for social interaction and support. A cultivated landscape of reflection with no individual markers, but rather communal memorial monuments. Most similar in form to existing memorial garden landscapes.</i>
	Coniferous Forest Grove	1	-	<i>Dense evergreen and dark barked growth create a feeling of enclosure and stillness. Vegetation over 2M in height. Due to evergreen species, this forest is less changeable through the seasons, contrasting with the deciduous regions and providing shelter in winter months. Individual markers of compressed earth and ash or native Manitoban trees and/or perennials.</i>
	Deciduous Forest Grove	1	-	<i>Deciduous forested growth maintains experience of enclosure, but also highlights the daily and seasonal changes of light and foliage. Primarily vegetation over 2M in height with a low (.6m understory). Individual markers of compressed earth and ash or native Manitoban trees and/or perennials.</i>
	Descent/Valley	1+	Max 8% slope	<i>Main descent is to the central wetland, but paths will utilize decent in other areas to create moments of reflection. The main descent into the funerary landscape from surrounding raised roadways and Harte Trail will create an experience of seclusion, subtly setting the landscape apart from the urban fabric. No markers.</i>
	Accent/Plateau	1+	Max 8% slope	<i>Main plateau gives an overview prospect of the cemetery and its changes through the day, months, seasons and years. An anchor point in a dynamic world. Views from the cemetery to other parts of Winnipeg, particularly to downtown, juxtapose the funerary landscape with daily urban life. No markers at pinnacle, but may be permitted along path to the top.</i>

scattered privately with no other record. These additions serve to recognize the needs of the bereaved and the desire for a record of those interred in temporal modes. The programmatic functions of the design have been divided into four general categories: Structure, Interment, Access and Landscape (*Table 1*).

Structure includes all functional and architectural elements that are required, including funeral home administration, funeral chapels, service buildings and memorial monuments. Interment addresses the requirements of the two forms of interment emphasized in this cemetery: scattering and cremain or compost burial.⁷⁴³ These interment options are listed separately as they are distinct in their requirements and mode of memorialization. Access regards both vehicular and pedestrian transport to and movement through the site. Finally, the category of landscape regards the diverse outdoor spaces that will facilitate differing modes of interment, memorial and contemplation, complimenting the needs of visitors, residents and mourners.

⁷⁴³ Green burial was also assessed for its applicability, but was found to be incompatible with existing site conditions and current legislation and so was excluded largely from programmatic considerations.

18. SITE ANALYSIS

With all of these programmatic elements come unique spatial and relational requirements to ensure their optimal accessibility and functionality. Some of the most fundamental minimum or maximum spatial requirements and desired experiential relationships and characteristics are outlined in the program component chart above. The following analyses examine the main relational considerations between the program elements.

A series of matrices were developed to identify complimentary and adverse relationships between the program elements, through a program compatibility analysis. The relationships between site conditions and program elements are assessed in the suitability analysis and the compatibility of styles of bereavement and the program elements are assessed in the Bereavement Suitability Analysis. The data generated by these analyses will inform the site planning process to ensure maximum functionality and compatibility of uses and decrease opportunity for conflicts between the contrasting uses and conditions of the cemetery.

PROGRAM COMPATIBILITY ANALYSIS

Within the Program Compatibility Matrix (*Table 2*), particular compatibilities and incompatibilities are highlighted. Regarding the services of the funeral home, the office, information centre, archives and chapels are compatible, but these are somewhat compatible to incompatible with the crematorium and service buildings. This indicates that the crematorium and service buildings, which are compatible between them, will likely be concealed from those buildings that serve public functions. Memorials, both the wall and monuments, are most compatible with other more architectural landscape features, such as the forests, courts, and circulation paths.

It is clear in analysis of circulation compatibility that a distinction must be made between public and staff parking and circulation routes. There may be overlap between the public and service roads, but the maintenance yard and the road to it are incompatible with public parking and circulation. The winding trails proposed for the site are compatible with all landscape zones, memorials and public circulation.

Table 2: Program Compatibility Matrix

Design Components		Landscape								Internment			Access						Structure								
		Accent/Plateau	Descent/Valley	Light Forest Grove	Dark Forest Grove	Garden Court	Fen	Meadow	Wilderness/Maze	Pool	Cremain burial	Scattering	"Green" burial	Trails	Public Parking	Main Entrance(s)	Public Roads	Service Roads	Staff Parking	Maintenance Yard	Memorial Wall	Memorial Monuments	Service Buildings*	Archives	Outdoor Chapel(s)	Indoor Chapel(s)	Crematorium etc.
Structure	Administration^	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
	Preparation Rooms	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
	Indoor Chapel(s)	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
	Outdoor Chapel(s)	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
	Archives	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
	Service Buildings*	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
	Memorial Monuments	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
	Memorial Wall	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Access	Maintenance Yard	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	
	Staff Parking	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	
	Service Roads	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	
	Public Roads	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	
	Main Entrance(s)	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	
	Public Parking	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	
	Trails	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	
Internment	"Green" burial	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	
	Scattering	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	
	Cremain burial	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	
Landscape	Pool	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	
	Wilderness/Maze	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	
	Meadow	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	
	Fen	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	
	Garden Court	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	
	Dark Forest Grove	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	
	Light Forest Grove	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	
	Descent/Valley	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	
	Accent/Plateau	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	

Compatible
 Somewhat Compatible
 Incompatible

^Lobby/Offices/Info. Centre

*Garage/Storage/Waste/Maintenance Shed

The landscape zones of the program are particularly suited to certain compatibilities. Green burial is most compatible with the meadow and memorial, while scattering and cremain burial a compatible with the majority of landscape zones. It should be noted that the topography of Refuge (valley or depression) is compatible to somewhat compatible with the program elements while topography of Prospect (plateau or accent) is only compatible with select program elements. Most importantly, service buildings, service routes, staff and public parking and maintenance yards are incompatible with prospects or plateaus.

SUITABILITY ANALYSIS

To discern which program elements are most compatible with existing features and conditions of the site, a suitability matrix was developed (*Table 3*). Regarding topography, slopes above 9% were incompatible with all architectural forms but the memorials, which are somewhat compatible with steeper slopes, and circulation. These areas were also incompatible with fair to poor drainage. The only other program elements compatible with steep slopes are scattering, cremain burial, the meadow, the coniferous forest and elements of ascent and descent.

As the site is significantly flat, it would appear that the entire site is amenable for construction and burial. However, the site also has poor drainage in many areas, which was only compatible with scattering, the pool and the fen. Such conditions, as well as current burial legislation, would indicate that green burial is not compatible with this site without dramatic alterations to legislation and the site itself. The majority of elements are somewhat compatible with proximity to surface water. A relatively high groundwater table is incompatible with multiple elements, indicating that certain areas such as those of buildings, burial and circulation will need to be built up.

Of the existing vegetal context, the aspen and willow groves are compatible to somewhat compatible with most program elements. The meadow is compatible with almost all program elements with the exception of the labyrinth and forest groves. The forest areas are areas distinctly given to elements of refuge while the meadow and clearings are indicative of prospect and disclosure.

Table 3: Suitability Matrix

Design Components \ Design Factors	Structure						Access						Internment			Landscape											
	Administration^	Preparation Rooms	Indoor Chapel(s)	Outdoor Chapel(s)	Archives	Service Buildings*	Memorial Monuments	Memorial Wall	Maintenance Yard	Staff Parking	Service Roads	Public Roads	Main Entrance(s)	Public Parking	Trails	"Green" burial	Scattering	Cremain burial	Pool	Wilderness/Maze	Meadow	Fen	Garden Court	Dark Forest Grove	Light Forest Grove	Descent/Valley	Accent/Plateau
Slope	0-4%	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
	5-9%	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
	10-19%	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
	20% +	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Drainage	Good	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
	Fair	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
	Poor	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Surface Water Proximity	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Groundwater	0-1m (frost line)	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
	1-3m	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
	3m +	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Vegetation	Aspen	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
	Willow	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
	Oak	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
	Spruce	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
	Meadow	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Context	Residential	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
	Railway	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
	Harte Trail	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
	Marj Edey Park	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
	Agriculture	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Views	Good	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
	Fair	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
	Poor	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Noise	Low	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
	Moderate	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
	High	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Security	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█

Compatible
 Somewhat Compatible
 Incompatible

^Lobby/Offices/Info. Centre
 *Garage/Storage/Waste/Maintenance Shed

The existing context has also been duly considered. The nearby residential to the North and proposed to the West is compatible with the innocuous architecture and functions of the cemetery such as the chapels and forest. However, functions such as maintenance, burial and cremation are fully incompatible from residential use and must be buffered, suggesting a more introverted landscape. The existing railway and roads are compatible with areas where high noise levels are permissible such as with the service buildings, crematorium, maintenance yard, service access and staff parking. These areas are also ones best concealed from the public view. Low noise levels are generally preferable, requiring buffers from rail and proposed highway to ensure a contemplative atmosphere.

BEREAVEMENT SUITABILITY ANALYSIS

In order to determine the compatibility of states of bereavement with the various program elements a bereavement compatibility matrix was developed (*Table 4*). Possible relational states of the bereaved were derived from Walter's four dimensions of bereavement care: continuing the bond or letting go and containing emotion or expressing it.⁷⁴⁴ For possible emotional states of the bereaved, the culturally prevalent stages of Kubler-Ross and Parkes were used. It must be noted that these stages are regarded in this analysis and following design more as potential states that may or may not be experienced sequentially, if at all.

Immediately apparent are that staff, service and maintenance areas not compatible with the experience of the bereaved, confirming their separation from public areas of the funerary landscape. The most public areas such as the chapels and offices are most compatible with the containment of emotion and relinquishing bonds with the deceased, though this pattern may change as Western perceptions of grief and mourning change. In general, the natural landscape features were more versatile than the built elements, with some conditions potentially complementing all states of relationship and emotion. Anger and bargaining may be the most limited, requiring built elements to create a therapeutic experience. The meadow, due to its openness, is significantly incompatible with anger, depression, disorganization and despair. Denial is incompatible with the majority of programmatic

⁷⁴⁴ Walter, *On Bereavement*, 202-203.

Table 4: Bereavement Compatibility Matrix

Design Components		Structure								Access						Internment			Landscape										
		Administration [^]	Preparation Rooms	Indoor Chapel(s)	Outdoor Chapel(s)	Archives	Service Buildings*	Memorial Monuments	Memorial Wall	Maintenance Yard	Staff Parking	Service Roads	Public Roads	Main Entrance(s)	Public Parking	Trails	*Green ^o burial	Scattering	Cremain burial	Pool	Wilderness/Maze	Meadow	Fen	Garden Court	Dark Forest Grove	Light Forest Grove	Descent/Valley	Accent/Plateau	
Relational State	Integration	Contain	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	
	Regulation	Express	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	
	Continuing bond	Letting Go	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	
	Denial	Anger	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	
Emotional State	Kubler-Ross	Bargaining	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	
		Depression	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	
		Acceptance	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	
		Parkes	Pining	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
			disorganization	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
	despair		█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	
	Resolution	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█		

Compatible
 Somewhat Compatible
 Incompatible

[^]Lobby/Offices/Info. Centre
^{*}Garage/Storage/Waste/Maintenance Shed

elements aligning with the original design intent of integrating death with contemporary culture without denial.

This analysis has been conducted to identify programmatic elements with potential to parallel or support the emotional and relational states of the bereaved. This analysis could have been conducted in the reverse to assess what programmatic elements would best counter the state of the bereaved. For example, preparing a joyous, serene landscape for those experiencing feelings of anger in their grief. However, this reversal risked oversimplifying the therapeutic potential of the landscape and risk becoming a simplistic and euphemistic landscape. In providing for a wide range of states of bereavement and choice of experience, it is hoped that visitors will be empowered to choose the experience that will best complement their journey of grief.

FUNCTIONAL ANALYSIS

Spatial relationships of the programmatic components were then investigated as functional diagrams were generated from information generated from the matrices above. Though many arrangements of programmatic elements were investigated, the final diagram (*Figure 79*) was deemed the most practical and supportive of the landscape design intent.

The zones are scaled proportionally as to their spatial requirements, although landscape features are approximations. The hierarchy of public and private areas is shown by line weight with the darkest outlines indicating the most private zones. The necessary administrative and programmatic functions of the funeral home have been considered and arranged to separate public areas of ritual from the professional activities in the service and maintenance areas. The characters of the components are indicated by colour. Components of the Administration building are in grey with adjacent parking left white. Symbolic colours indicate the ecological settings, with the meadows in light green, the forests in dark green, the marshland in blue and the cultivated gardens in pink. Relationships between elements are demonstrated by proximity. Those elements that overlap are strongly integrated while areas that are spaced apart require more separation.

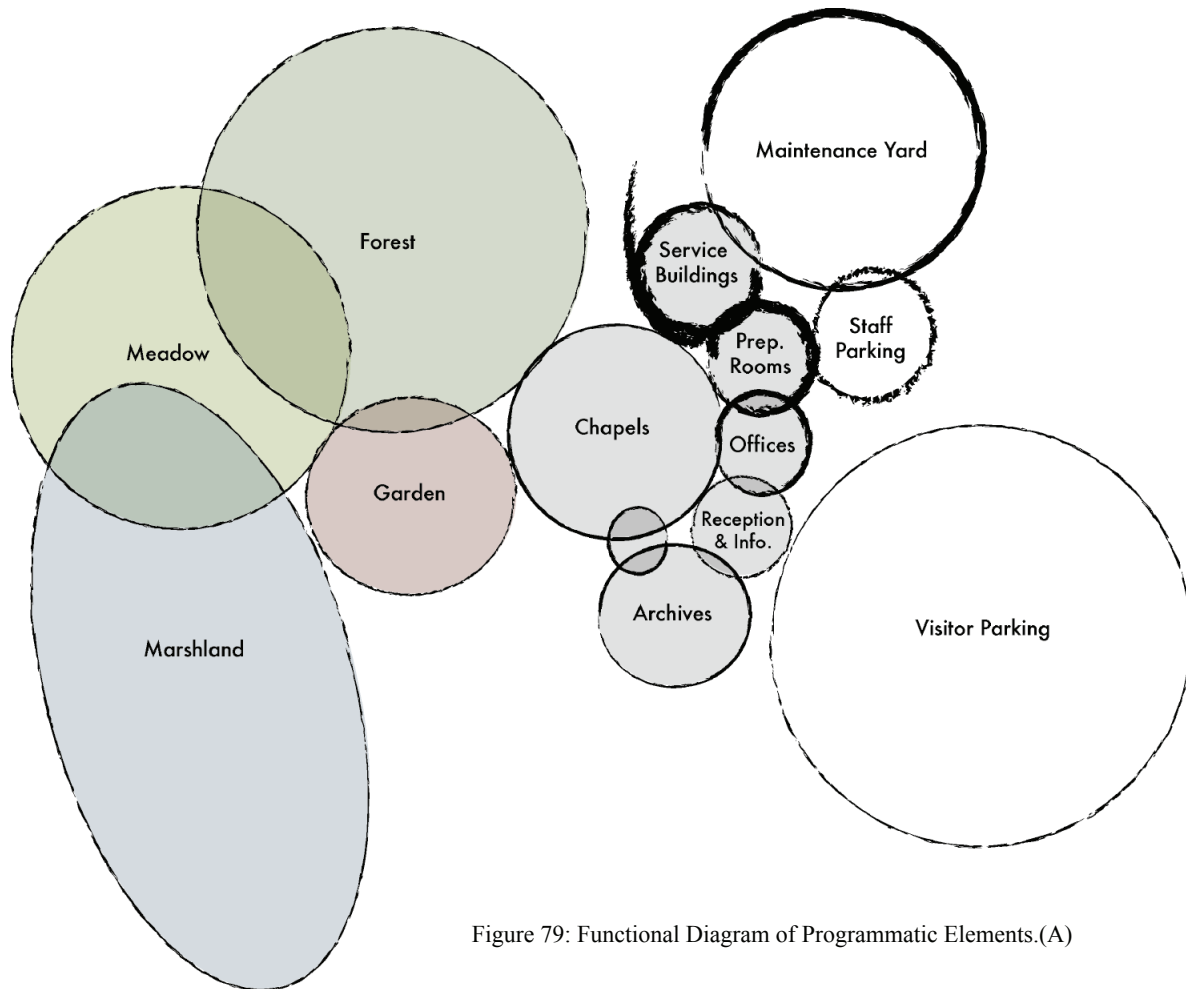


Figure 79: Functional Diagram of Programmatic Elements.(A)

For security and way-finding purposes the reception offices and information centre will serve as gateways for visitors to the funerary landscape and making preparations and, therefore, are most closely associated with public entrances and parking. The functions of the archive library and offices are separated by reception and information, avoiding conflicting uses of the facilities. Connected to the offices but separated from the public areas of the site are the preparation areas, service buildings, staff parking and maintenance yard. Though these areas must have clear access to other parts of the funeral facilities and landscape, their specialized functions were deemed least compatible with public uses and are therefore set apart from the rest of the landscape elements. The funeral chapels, whether indoor or outdoor, serve as gateways from the funeral to the funerary landscape, allowing for ceremonial continuity.

As the landscape elements are to reinforce notions of wilderness and diversity, the areas will be distinct, but transitions between them will be gradual as indicated by large overlaps between zones. The garden, the most cultivated portion of the landscape, will be most closely connected to the architectural site elements with visual connections to other parts of the landscape. Areas of meadow or grassland will primarily form the transition between the open space of the marshland and the enclosure of the forest. Though the ecological conditions are shown in the functional diagram as continuous and distinct, this is a conceptual representation of their relationships. A landscape with instances of both gradual and abrupt transitions and with combinations of conditions is felt to create a landscape of greatest diversity of experience and memorial settings.

THEORETICAL ANALYSIS

Following analyses of programmatic compatibility, site suitability, bereavement compatibility and functional relationships, the concepts of habitat theory, landscape space typologies and therapeutic landscapes were applied to the site. In addition to these theories, applicable themes revealed in the preceding historical analysis of death in Western culture were also applied to the site. Through linking these theories to the landscape, a network of meaningful sequential landscape experiences can be developed.

Habitat Theory and Landscape Space Typologies

The site already contains many of Condon's natural landscape typologies in its existing balance of forests, clearings and gradients between (*Figure 80*). Other typologies such as the alee, orchard, cloister and square may be incorporated into the landscape with some alterations and/or enhancements (*Figure 81*). Typologies of elevation, stair, promontory and theatre, would require more dramatic alterations and are therefore best located in areas of poor native ecology. When applied to the site, the habitat theory element of refuge is clearly present in the dense forest groves (*Figure 82*). There are few elements on site that offer prospects. The surrounding roadways are elevated from 2.5 to 0.5 meters above grade, but to truly create the experience of prospect more dramatic changes in grade will need to be engineered (*Figure 83*).

Landscape Narratives

There are a multitude of themes that may be drawn from the preceding historical/cultural analysis. Here, only the most salient themes from the progression of Western culture's perception of death and the investigation of traditional therapeutic landscapes were examined for their implications for landscape form. The primary themes that were conceptually situated in the landscape were humanity's lack of control over death, humanity's relationship with nature and the multifaceted journey of human grief.

A progression from a cultivated landscape to naturalized grassland, marshland and forests (*Figure 84 & 85*) exemplifies the ability of both death and nature to expose the limitations of Western society. However, though these phenomena cannot be controlled, they need not be feared. The landscape is ultimately intended to display the beauty of the natural world and of the journey of life. For this reason, therapeutic landscape theory is applied to provide visitors with an experience of security and hope.

The primary device used to create a therapeutic experience is providing the visitor control over his or her experience (*Figure 86*). Within areas that may appear ominous to some, built features or views will provide anchor points or alternative routes for way finding and a sense of prospect and refuge. The paths and slopes will be accessible to those of limited

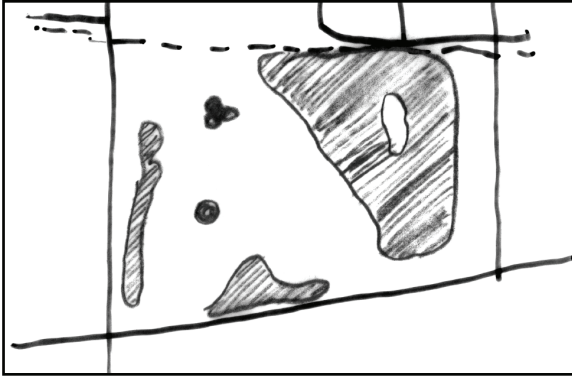


Figure 80: Naturally occurring landscape space types on site. (A)

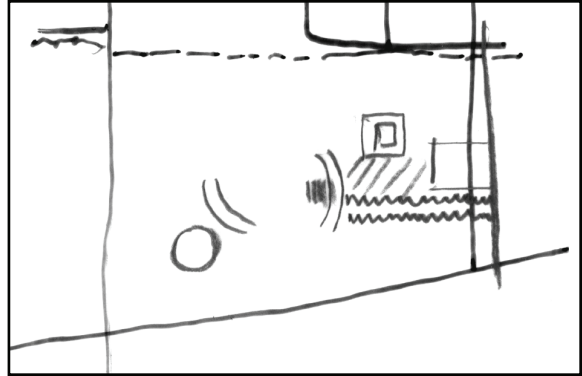


Figure 81: Potential locations for designed landscape space types. (A)

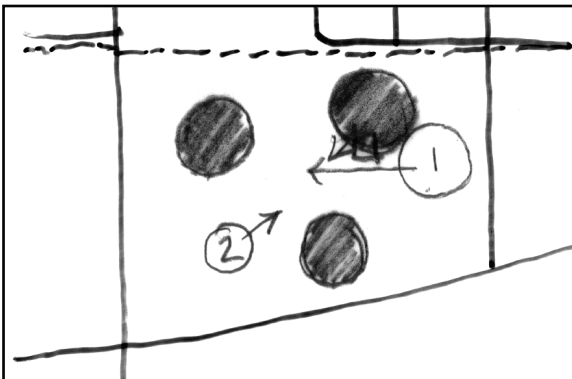


Figure 82: Existing refuges and potential prospects. (A)

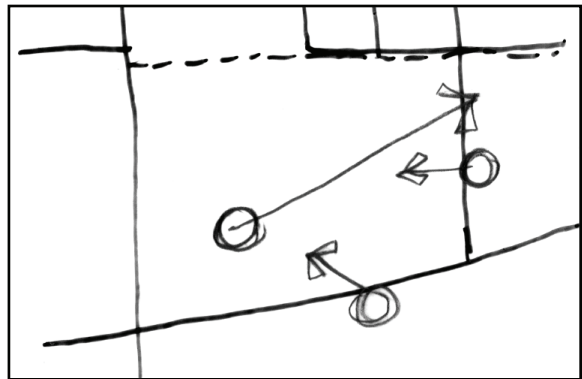


Figure 83: Major views into and out of the site. (A)

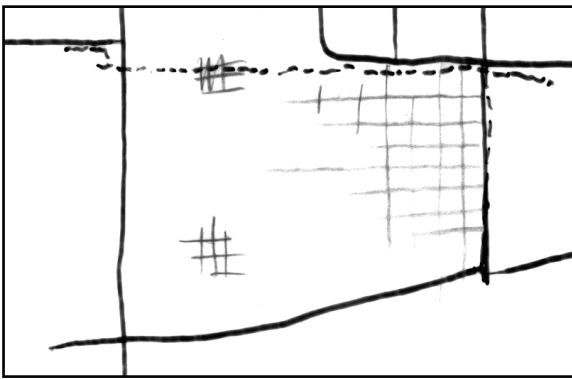


Figure 84: Progression from architectural to naturalized landscape. (A)

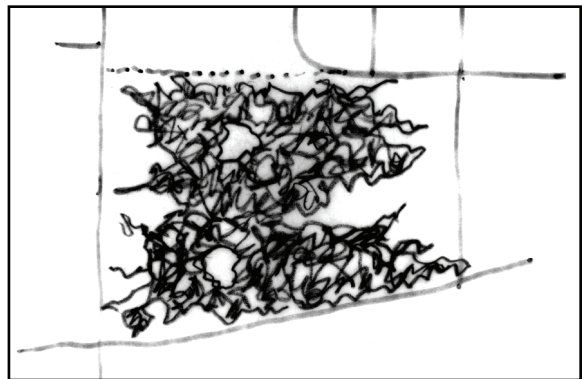


Figure 85: Overtime, the landscape will begin to supersede the cemetery's designed features. (A)

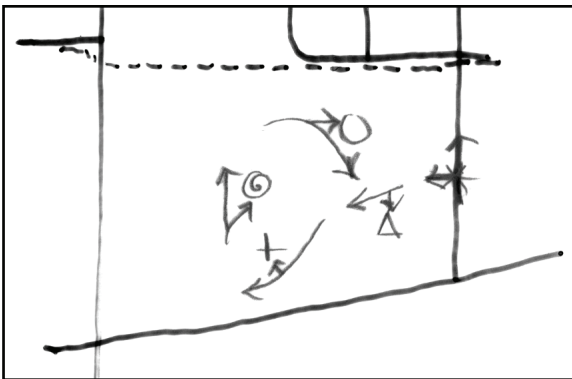


Figure 86: Diversity of experiential sequence options. (A)

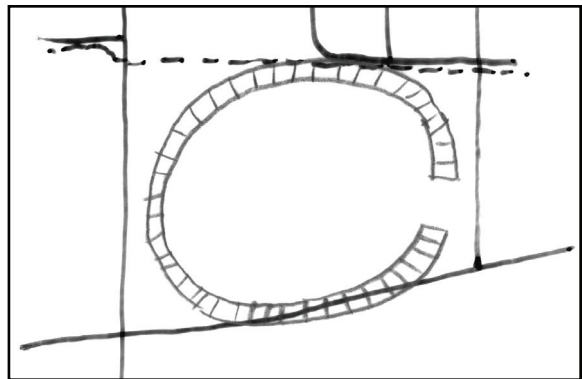


Figure 87: To create a therapeutic and contemplative environment, audible and visual disturbances from the urban context should be buffered. (A)

mobility with short spans between resting points, providing additional independence and control.

Other elements common to traditional therapeutic landscapes such as silence, threshold, ritual, simplification and sublime nature are also situated in the landscape to provide a therapeutic memorial experience. The site will need to be buffered acoustically and visually from its residential and vehicular context (*Figure 87*). This buffer zone of trees and/or landform will combine with existing peripheral changes of grade to create a sense of threshold as the site is subtly separated from its surrounding context. A sense of threshold and memorial is intended to create a ritual atmosphere where visitors will feel comfortable developing their own methods of memorialization and mourning. The simplification of features at the landscape entrance also creates a sense of threshold and ritual upon entering the site. The westward portion of the landscape, which becomes increasingly 'wild' and sublime, contrasts this simplified landscape in the east, echoing the relationship between humanity and nature and reinforcing the contrast between the funerary landscape and the urban setting.

19. SITE DESIGN

The preceding analyses provided the basis for the development of multiple concept plans, the most successful of which are included in Appendix C. The final design is in fact a hybrid of these (*Figure 88, 89, 90, 91 & 92*). This final concept places the administrative components in the Central East side, nearer to Fairmont Road and Marj Edey Park and, though buffered by maintenance and forested areas, near to existing utilities of Charleswood to the North. To the West, the landscape's spaces become increasingly naturalized ending in a dense coniferous forest and berm that buffers residential development along Harstone Road from the cemetery. Positioning the more traditional administrative buildings and landscape elements closer to the entrance serves as a conceptual buffer between current Western practices and the alternative funerary landscape.

For the bereaved, a variety of spatial experiences have been created to provide the grieving with the elements deemed necessary for developing therapeutic environments. Intersecting paths will allow the visitor to form some sense of control as they move through the cemetery (*Figure 93*). Venues for social support and security have been incorporated at multiple scales of interaction. The extensive grounds allow varying degrees of exertion from a jog up the memorial mound to simply stepping over to a nearby bench. Existing wildlife, dynamic plant life and visitor activities will animate the site, providing natural distractions for the grieving and depressed. Specific spaces and sightlines, such as the view from the peak of the memorial mound over the local residential buildings to the horizon, are arranged to promote contemplation of loved ones and eternity.

For those making arrangements for interment and memorial, the administration will provide sustainable options that will vary in monumentality and permanence (*Figure 94*). The temporal nature of the monuments will not create a landscape of forgetfulness. Rather, though monuments and memories may fade with time, the cemetery will be the final resting place for their remains, making the landscape a memorial for and to the dead and a place of humanity where one can come to terms with eternity. In all instances of scattering (*Figure 95*) and ash burial, a record of the general GPS co-ordinates of the site and biography of the



Figure 88: Final Design Plan (A)

1)Entrance; 2)Parking; 3)Maintenance Yard/Nursery; 4)Funeral home & crematorium; 5)Primary axis; 6)Marshland terrace; 7)Aspen Forest; 8)The Clearing; 9)The Fen; 10)Marshland; 11)Oak & Spruce forest; 12)Memorial Walk; 13)Prospect peak; 14)Grassland; 15)Reflection Pool; 16)Meadow; 17)Marj Edey Park; 18)Existing Residential; 19)Residential development; 20)Freeway; 21)Harte Trail.

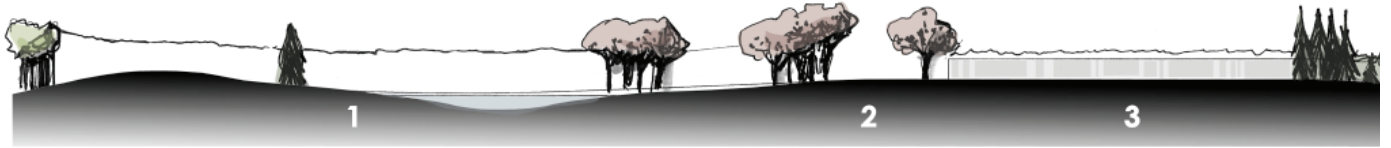


Figure 89: Entrance & Garden Section (A)

1)Meadow; 2)Entry axis; 3)Crematorium & Funeral home; 4)Maintenance yard & nursery; 5)Service Road

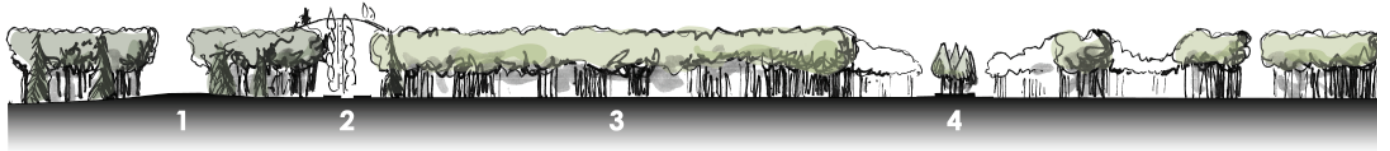


Figure 90: Forest Grove & Clearing Section (A)

1)Oak & Spruce forest; 2)Reflection pool; 3)Aspen forest; 4)Primary axis roundabout; 5)Natural clearing



Figure 91: Marshland Section (A)

1)Harte trail; 2)Fen & Island; 3)Bridge; 4)Marshland; 5)Island; 6)Border roadway

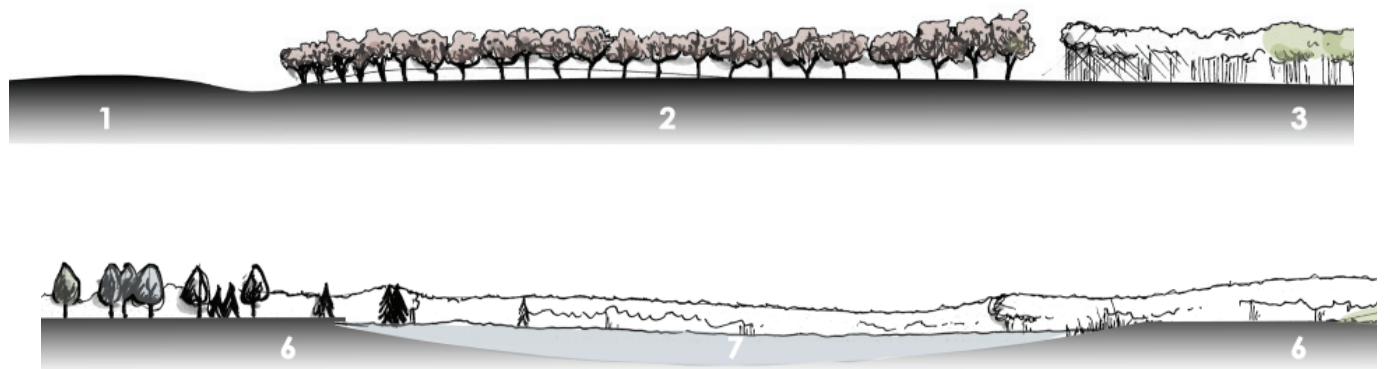
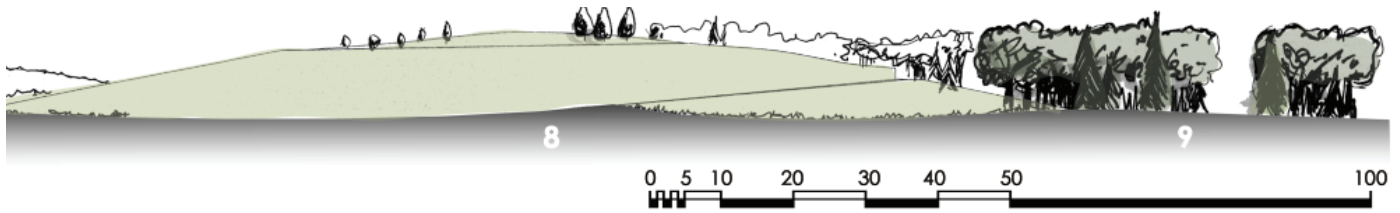
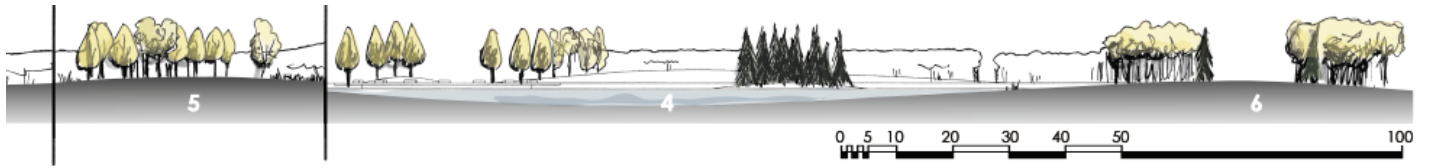
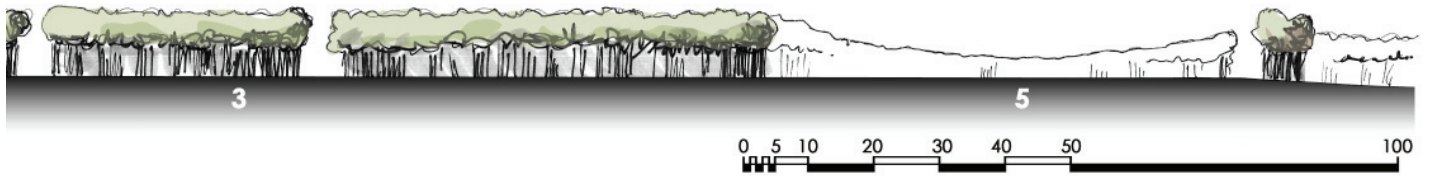
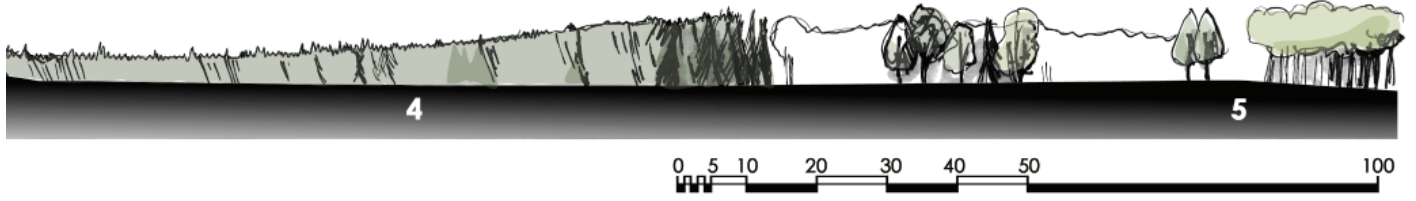


Figure 92: Primary Axis Section (A)

1)Fairmont Road; 2)Meadow; 3)Aspen forest; 4)Primary axis roundabout; 5)Grassland; 6)Marshland terrace; 7)Marshland; 8)Prospect peak & Memorial walk; 9)Oak & Spruce forest



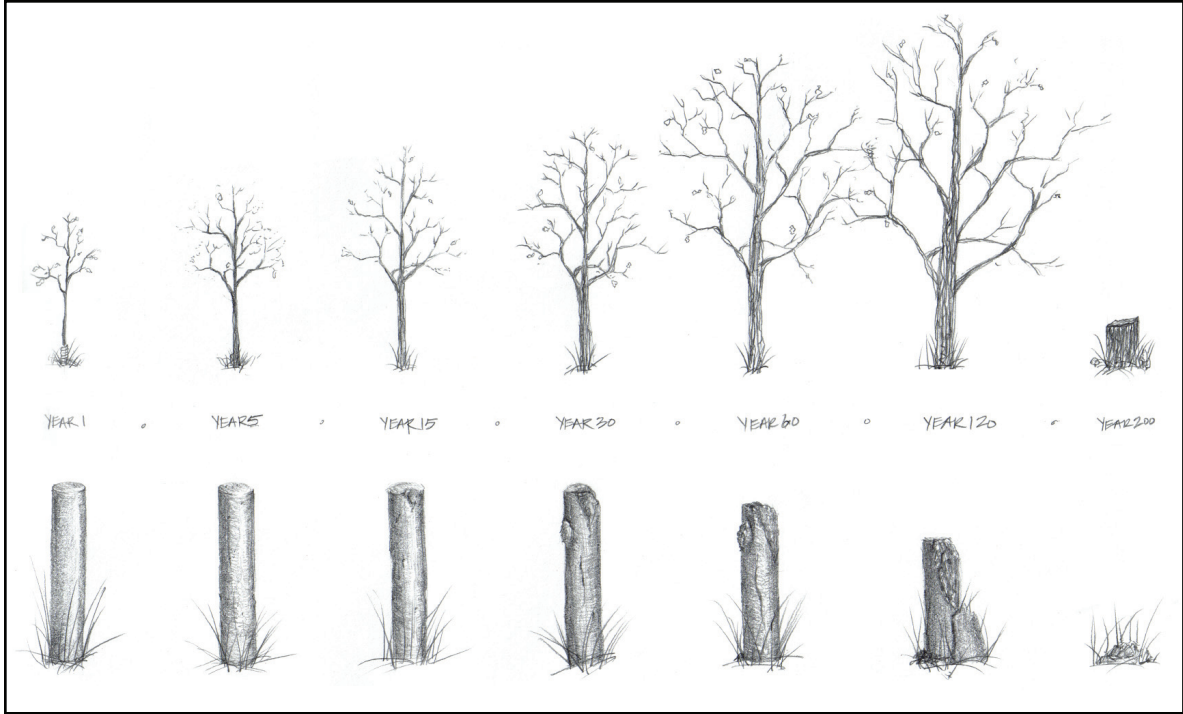


Figure 94: Memorials through time. (A)

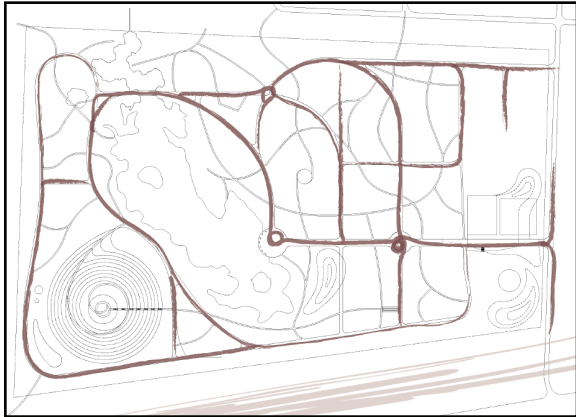


Figure 93: Vehicular circulation. (A)

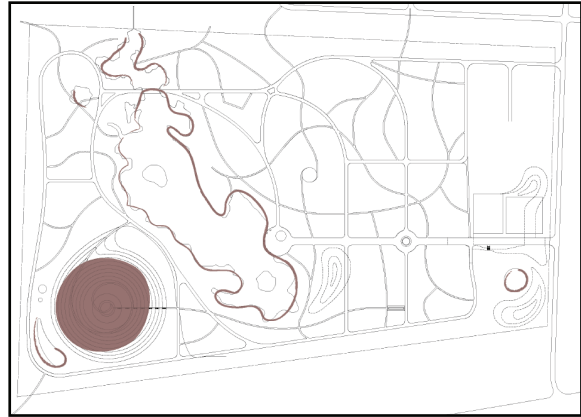


Figure 95: Primary scattering sites. (A)



Figure 96: Memorial walls. (A)

deceased will be maintained in the archive library. The sites of memorial become increasingly temporal further into the naturalized landscape. This progression from the constructed features to naturalized wilderness subtly reinforces the numerous potential narrative sequences within the landscape.

In more cultivated and/or engineered areas such as the entrance, orchard and hill, walls of stone and compressed earth integrate with the landscape and may be engraved to memorialize the deceased (*Figure 96*). The deciduous and coniferous forests will provide multiple options for memorial. The options of woodland burial (*Figure 97*), where a native tree will be planted to mark the interment site (*Figure 98 & 99*), wood or compressed earth markers (*Figure 100*), which will gradually be absorbed by the forest, and/or memorial stones along the paths are available in these areas. In areas of grassland (*Figure 101*), the seeds of native prairie wildflowers may be scattered and/or the deceased may be memorialized in engraved stones bordering the paths. Though these are the basic options provided, it is recognized that other modes of memorial may be requested and would be assessed and permitted, provided they align with the native ecology and narrative sequence of the landscape.

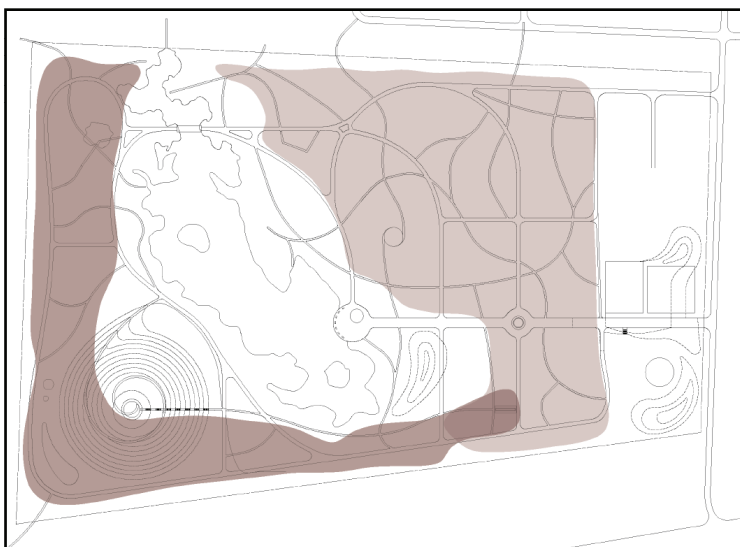


Figure 97: Sites of woodland burial and scattering. (A)



Figure 98: Planting a living memorial. (A)



Figure 99: The woodland memorial landscape. (A)



Figure 100: Compressed earth memorials. (A)

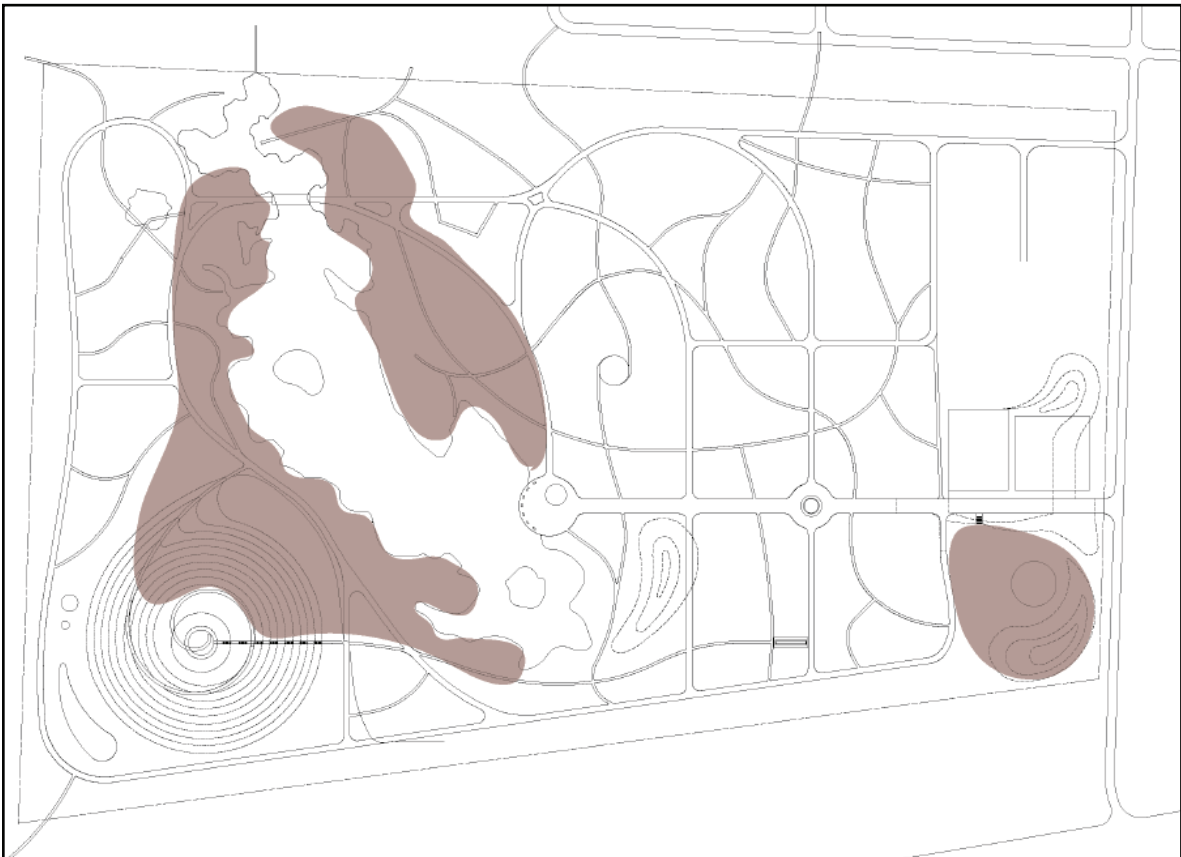


Figure 101: Areas of grassland burial and scattering. (A)

Within the framework of landscape and memorial features are multiple sites and transitions intended to evoke moments of epiphany and reflection on life, death and eternity (*Figure 102, 103 & 104*). These areas are not intended for individual memorials, but rather for temporal installations of commissioned artworks and/or naturally occurring phenomena that evoke contemplation of transcendence, eternity, life and death. The varying scale of these sites, accommodating a group of people or a solitary individual, will provide options for interaction, social support and additional contemplation. Some of these points may change over time, while others will become anchor points that contrast with the fluctuations of the landscape.

Through providing a landscape of contemplation and of therapeutic features and memorial for the bereaved and for society, the landscape may be used to erode the isolation and fear that has become associated with death. Instead of a landscape of denial that is merely a space for interment set apart from society, this memorial landscape commemorates both life and death, forming a place for death within 21st century Western culture.

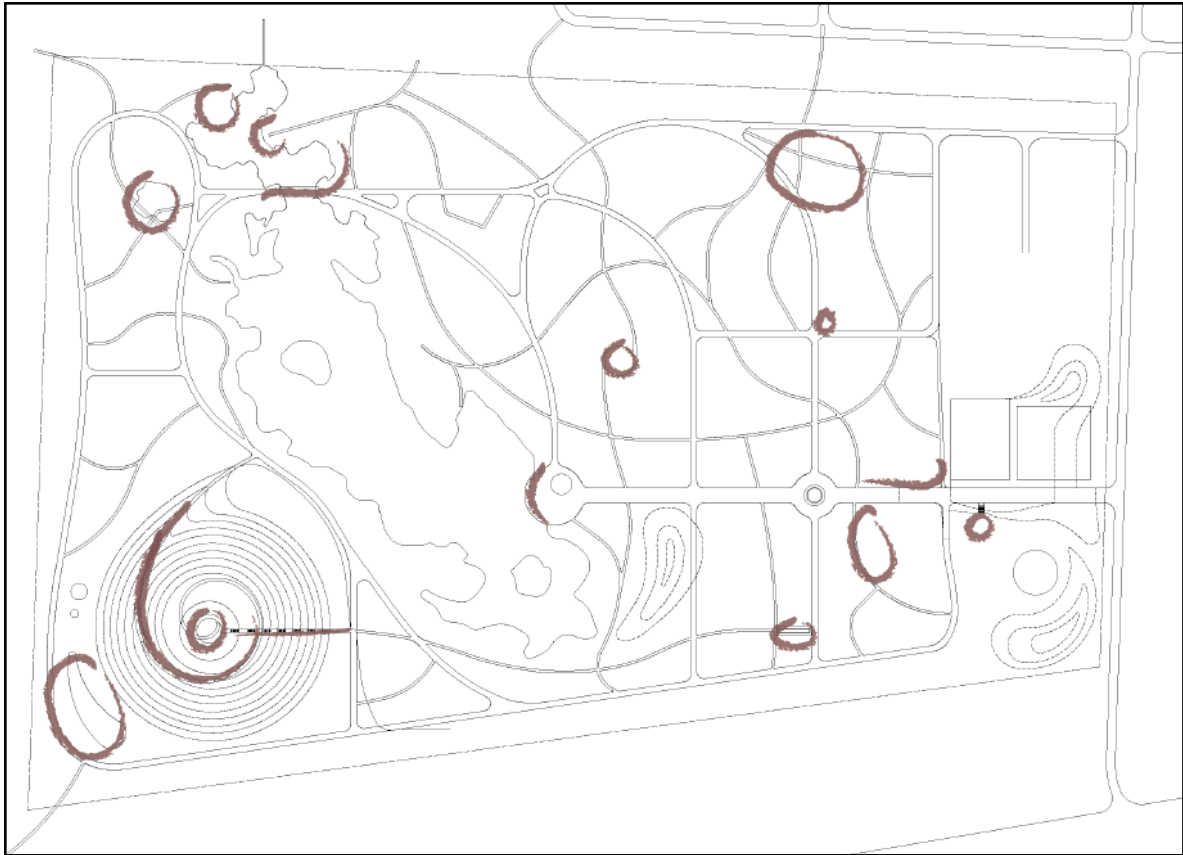


Figure 102: Primary sites for reflection. (A)



Figure 103: A place to pause. (A)



Figure 104: A chance to find your way. (A)

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: THE TOUR

Approaching the cemetery from the South and the freeway one can leave the busy rush of urban life behind (1). To the left a glimpse of an open meadow is seen through a gap between a sweeping hill and pleasant row of ornamental trees. To the right children can be seen playing baseball in the distance. Turning left, (2) the drive into the cemetery is lined with blossoming rows of apple trees that embrace visitors as they enter the cemetery. This low arcade divides the driveway from the parking lot and funeral home to the north from the peaceful meadow opening to the south. The faint calls of the baseball game drift over from the recreation center.

A grey haired woman is planting wildflowers in the meadow, near a circular pool, in remembrance of a long departed friend (3). She looks up and watches a funeral procession make its way down the main avenue into the forest. Some mourners drive ahead while others walk slowly down the path. Instead of continuing westward along the avenue to the pond, the procession turns Northward into the labyrinthine aspen forest (4), congregating in a clearing where a small box is ceremonially buried at the base of an elegant birch tree. A gentleman slowly, reverently places a bouquet of roses beside the small mound.

Two joggers pad quietly past along the avenue, which continues westward (5). They turn into the forest before the axis terminates rather abruptly at a patio that is cantilevered over a serpentine pond. This pool provides an area for scattering ashes and for commemorative rituals such as lantern festivals where small paper lanterns are cast off en-masse on the water and concerts that echo over the water and through the forest. From this point, the far shore appears unattainable. To move on, one must pick a new path either returning to the forest or remaining in the sunlit meadow surrounding the marshland.

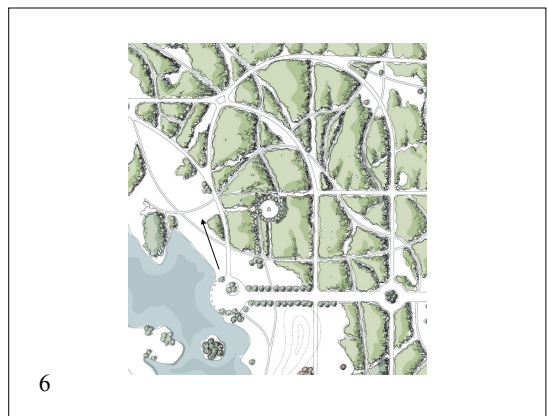
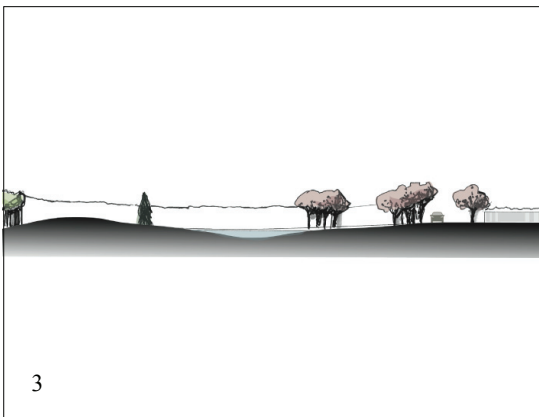
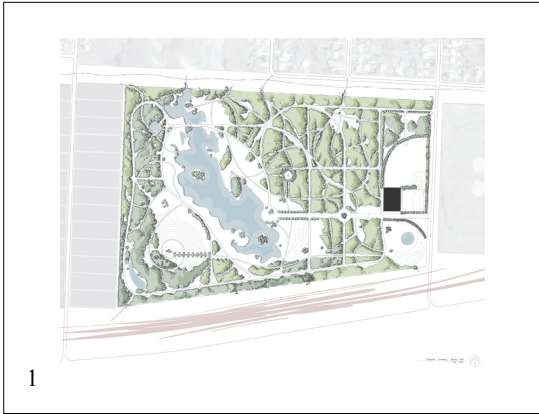
Following the meadow drive north (6), there are numerous sightlines cut through the aspen forest through which visitors can spy out clearings and paths tucked in the eastern forest.

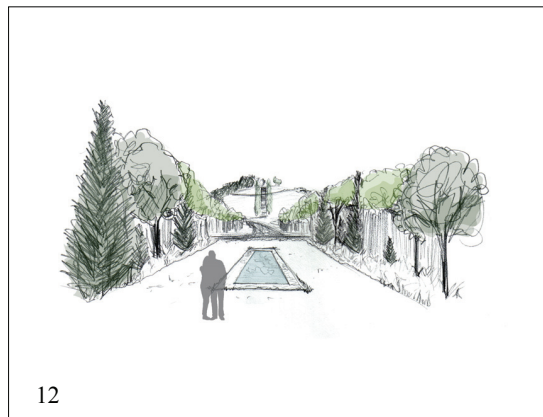
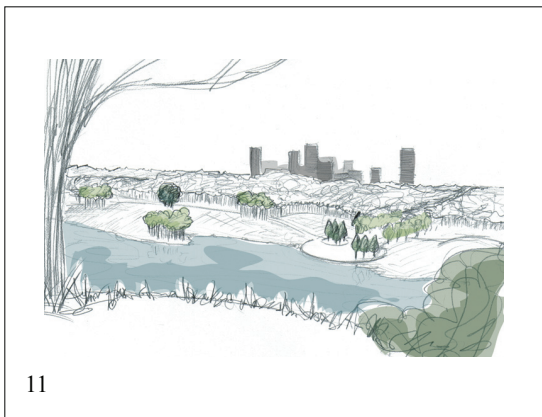
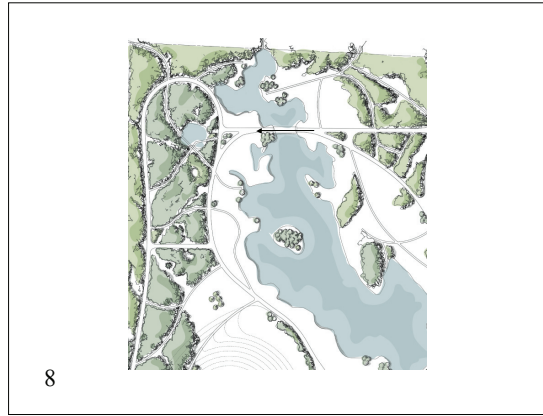
Those wandering in the forest can glimpse the sunlit field and pond in the west. The drive comes to a low bridge framed by the lyrical drooping branches of willows (7). Crossing the bridge, an intimate wetland is revealed where willow branches droop to the water and waterfowl swim in the shadows.

A fork in the road demands another choice (8); remain in the bright, open meadow or push into a solemn forest of spruce, basswood and oak. The meadow drive continues a circuit around the pond (9), returning to the cemetery entrance while the path of the forest is serpentine and mysterious. Within one of the forest clearings the members of a bereavement support group share and relate their experiences in the intimate stillness. Through a break in the trees can be seen the most significant feature of the cemetery (10), a high but gently sloping hill. The path gradually curves inwards and upwards toward the summit. The forest encroaches the ascending path, but then opens to an eastward view of the cemetery with downtown Winnipeg in the distance (11).

To descend, one can retrace the gently sloping path of the ascent or use the series of steps on the Eastern slope.

A long rectangular reflecting pool can be seen glinting in the distance as the stairs are descended (12). In that shallow pool the changing colours of the rising and setting prairie sun and the movement of the clouds are reflected, temporarily connecting earth with sky. A doe and her fawn step tentatively out of the forest to graze in the golden glow of sunset. The dense forest muffles the sounds of the outside world and allows the cemetery to become a place set apart from daily life (13), a reverent place of peace and contemplation.





APPENDIX B: PRESENTATION QUESTIONS

Following are questions that were posed following the presentation of this thesis/practicum.

1. *If this is an alternative funerary landscape, why continue to refer to it as a cemetery?*

Though Western culture is apparently changing at unprecedented rates, my research indicates that, in the event of death of a loved one, society is resistant to change. There is a desire to “do the right thing”, which for many means following traditional cultural norms. This desire to do right often translates into fear of doing wrong, which can be found at the root of many of the cases made against alternative forms of burial, whether from the perspective of environmental regulations or spiritual ramifications. The proposed landscape presents alternative options for interring and memorializing the dead, but the dead are still interred and memorialized, thus functioning as a traditional cemetery. This continued use of the name, it is hoped, would allow people to reconsider how they perceive interment and memorial.

2. *Was the seasonal consideration of mosquitoes in summer considered in this design?*

Mosquitoes were not considered directly in analysis of the site. Some measures such as stocking the marshland with fish or seeding the wetlands with dragonfly larva could be conducted. However, mosquitoes are part of the native Manitoban ecosystem and may be regarded as part of the contextual experience.

3. *The views expressed here are particularly North Western history. With Canadian culture becoming increasingly multicultural, were other cultures considered?*

The focus of this thesis was intentionally Western, for multiple reasons. Initially it was due primarily to the practical implications of researching so many complex and divergent cultures. However, my research did often converge with other cultural influences. It became apparent that the majority of cultures have very particular requirements regarding interment and memorial that are met by existing funerary landscapes. In Western culture, where the frequency of cremation has increased exponentially, there are few if any pre-existing requirements or norms related to cremation, creating the opportunity to develop a new landscape better suited to alternative forms of interment than the lawn cemetery. It must also be noted that the beliefs within many non-western cultures, such as Islam, Judaism and Catholicism, do not permit cremation and, therefore, would not form part of this landscape’s user group.

4. *The title for this presentation is Death Perception: Envisioning a cemetery landscape for the 21st century in what way is this a 21st century landscape?*

I am under not delusions. This cemetery is not a revolutionary landscape. It is essentially aspen and oak forest surrounding a marshland, a native ecological setting that has existed in Manitoba for centuries. However, it is a 21st century *cemetery* landscape as, unlike in previous Western cemeteries of history, death and wilderness are united. Where previously some semblance of control over death was manifested in control over the landscape of death, this 21st century cemetery accepts the limitations of humanity in the face of both nature and death. Though not immediately apparent, this landscape is a hybridization of technological advances and cultural individuality with native ecology forming a landscape unique to the context of the 21st century.

5. *The final landscape proposal appears very similar in style to that of Mount Auburn is this a return to the rural cemetery?*

Yes and no. Though this landscape plan may be similar to Mount Auburn in form (ie. circulation patterns, forest groves, open meadows and organic ponds), in execution it is unique. Where Mount Auburn was a cultivated landscape using traditional forms of burial and memorialization, this cemetery landscape seeks to maintain and enhance the existing native Manitoban ecology of the site and memorialize the dead more temporally.

6. *What would the capacity of this cemetery be?*

The site, not including water-bodies, is approximately 378,067 m², if cremain burial only was considered, allotting a 500mmx500mm area per burial, this cemetery would permit 756,134 burials at one time. Acts of scattering and the temporal nature of the majority of interment sites would permit an even greater population. However, the environmental impact of this many cremain burials and scatterings at one time would likely unbalance the site's existing ecology. It is intended that burials will fluctuate in location and frequency over time, thus allowing the remains to be absorbed by the landscape gradually, minimizing their impact.

7. *With the existing context, it is likely that the site may be used as just another park. Is boundary important and, if so, how is it being created?*

Boundary appears to be extremely important to the creation of a therapeutic landscape and, thus, a therapeutic cemetery landscape as historical landscape precedents for therapeutic landscapes such as the Japanese Zen and Tea gardens, Medieval cloister garden and Persian Paradise garden all were very consciously separated from their surrounding contexts physically, psychologically and

spiritually. There are two conflicting intentions for this landscape's program. There is a desire to increase the presence of death and the landscapes of death in Western society. However, there is also the requirement of enclosure to create a therapeutic environment for the bereaved. In response to these constraints, this landscape design uses the existing topographical descent from Harte Trail and surrounding roadways into the site as well as forest density, path materiality and memorial placement to create a sense that this is a landscape different from other urban parks.

8. *Where are the dead? How is the programming of the elements creating a notion of a historic record in the landscape?*

It is intended that the several memorial options, whether memorial wall inscriptions, stones, flowers or trees as well as mementoes left at the grave sites, will indicate the presence of the dead. Also, the act of burial or scattering will leave traces such as churned up earth or residual ash. However, a notion of permanent record is not desired. Rather, these memorials are intended to mark the passage of time as they erode or grow respectively, marking the presence of the dead, but also our own mortality.

9. *The presentation of this landscape is clean and 'pretty', how is death made visible in this cemetery?*

See answer to question 8.

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