

Narration of Embodied Memories



Anji Kobayashi

Research Paper

Funerary and Memory Space

Research Tutor: Alper Alkan

Design Tutor: Johan van Lierop

Architectural Design Crossovers Graduation Studio 2022/23

TU Delft Faculty of Architecture and the Built Environment

Abstract

Foremost, I would like to point out that in terms of layout and order, this research paper has been designed and outlined to be printed on A4 portrait with a double page spread. The intention behind this layout choice is to provide a visually cohesive and engaging reading experience for the reader.

The structure of the paper follows a specific format. With the exception of the introduction and conclusion, each chapter is episodic and self-contained. Though each does discuss correlated ideas and concepts, it does not follow within the restriction of predetermined reading order. This non-hierarchical approach to the abstracted chapter titles emphasizes their equal importance and encourages readers to explore the content in a way that suits their interests or preferences. To enhance the episodic reading experience and create a sense of pause and transition between chapters, blank pages have been included, which also is to make the readers think of each theme as a separable chapter even if it was read backwards. In terms of visual elements, photos and images have been incorporated into the research paper. These photos are used without accompanying descriptions. This is to stimulate the reader's thinking and encourage them to establish their own connections and interpretations between the research content and the images. By leaving room for interpretation, the photos serve as visual prompts that complement and enhance the spatial experience that was involved in the research.

Lastly, the goal of these choices is to present research outcome in a way to create an engaging and visually appealing reading experience that encourages personal interpretation and reflection.

Contents

Fascination	9
Introduction	13
Death	16
London	20
Memory	30
Material	38
Ritual	46
Conclusion	50

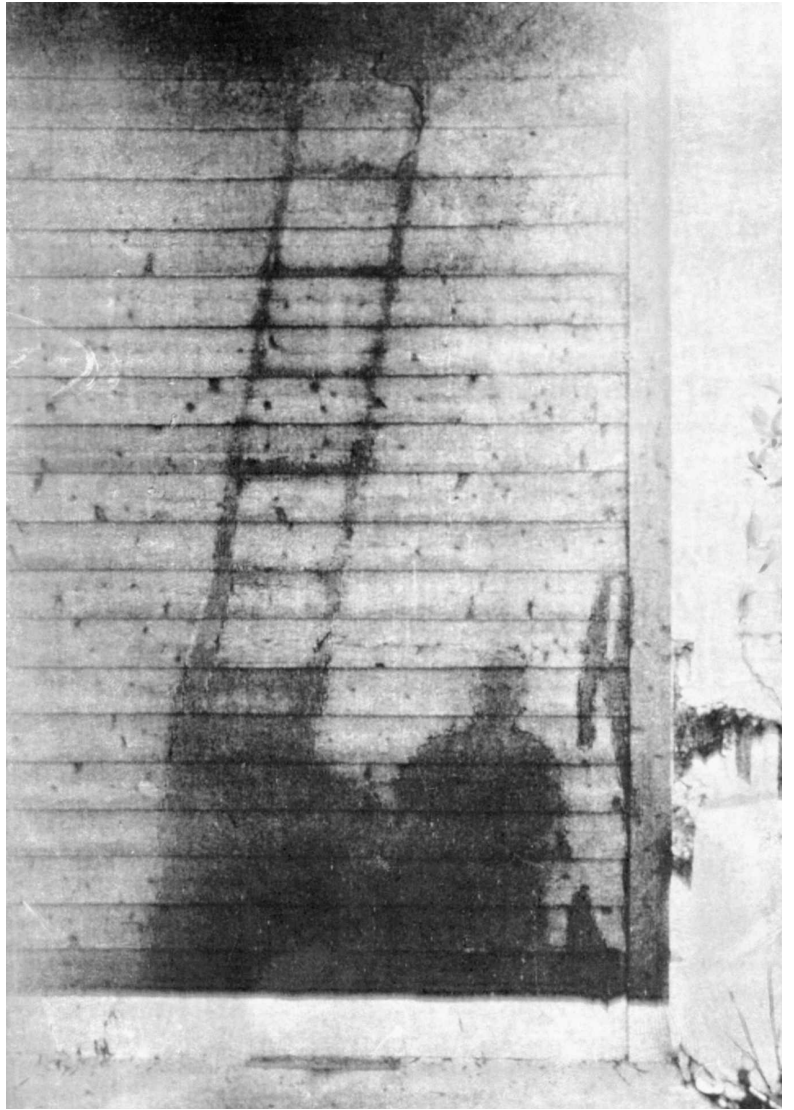
Fascination

My grandfather passed away before I was old enough to remember. At the Japanese wooden house my grandmother lives in, there was the *Butsudan* next to the window where natural light streams through. I used to visit twice a year during my summer break and new year, when I hear the sound of cicadas crying in summer and smell of a gas heater in winter. Sensory experience helps me to still remember clearly. I sit down in front of this space right after I wake up and before I go to sleep. During my stay, this ritual begins and ends my day. I hear the sound of a singing bowl I ring and the smell of incense I light up. I close my eyes and I remember this space, where there was no statue of Buddha, instead there was his photo. I serve a small portion of rice in a little bowl and pour some beer in a glass, and bring these to this space. I recall these moments through action. Rituals that involve preparations and movements had been constructed deeply into my minds and as memories. I know nothing but his face from the photo, stories my grandmother tells and myself imagining through these rituals in this space. I was born and raised in Tokyo, and I used to be surrounded by the constant sound of people, traffic, ventilation, construction, and other noise of the city. I would say that these rituals barely impacted my life, it was fairly meaningless, but that was what I lacked in my daily activities. This ritual of remembering was not only for the sake of remembrance, but rather became an excuse for me to experience calm and peaceful time in contrast to my life in Tokyo.

Visiting cemeteries provides me with a similar experience, a unique metaphysical one, which involves instead of sitting down but walking through. As I walk by, it reminds me of nature and cycle of life. These people had lived and died. The physical ruins of the people in the past do not have direct influences on my life, but these graves exist. Places nowadays, must attract more people to sustain, but a cemetery. Its calmness and subtlety guides me to escape from what surrounds my contemporary life.

At the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum, designed by Kenzo Tange, I have seen images of human shadows etched around the city. With a sudden explosion and radiation of the atomic bomb, their shadows had remained. We don't know who they were, but their shadows leave a fragment of time, a memory of someone who was there when the bomb exploded. These images alone do not tell much of the contexts of the war. It is only a trace of memory that triggers you to imagine a reality of the past. Graves as well a trace of memory, that provokes certain stories of both real and unreal but imagined. These memories have the power to connect with something unreal and I was always fascinated by such places and images I see and experience for the first time but evoke a certain connection and nostalgic feeling.





Photography by Eiichi Matsumoto (1945)



Photography by Unknown (1945)

Introduction

Graves, someday get abandoned. Cemeteries depict qualities of ruins and evidence that we have forgotten by the physicality of their ruins. It does not serve any functional purpose, but it still exists upon sacredness. It continues to exist with the premise of permanence, though our society is as dynamic and as uncertain as ever. It exists with the premise of 'Rest In Peace' in the bustle of the metropolitan city. It provides spaces for flora and fauna. It provides a temporary escape for those in need. Perhaps, it is not the cemetery we wish for, but a place of mnemonic and calm experiences.

Over the course of history, funerary spaces have been transforming and being shaped by the religious, cultural, and societal changes. From famines, massacres, epidemics to wars, such tragic events depicted in London's palimpsests forced people to adopt their practices and interactions with the deceased. All these layers of memories are mostly altered to create new spaces for another use, however some of the memorials are saved and still visible in London. Those fragments of mass graves and churchyards have survived for centuries, if not millennia, secluded and hidden from our daily activities. Besides, what does this mean for an architect designing funerary space?

How long do we feel the need for one's memorial? How long do we keep a grave or niche? 5 years? 50 years? 100 years? When it starts to get reused, would there be a point of building more cemeteries for all? Death is a natural phenomenon, it is an ultimate collective and unavoidable experience every person goes through, on one side, is very personal and specific for the ones left. Thus, the cemetery provides a repetition of personal memorials, which as a whole is creating a collective space. However, does it actually bring something to the people as a collective? Since individual needs of a memorial only lasts for short-term, long-term function of a cemetery is only to exchange with some other values. Besides a few cemeteries acquiring heritage and preservation status, what is the value of the majority of cemeteries when the city is densified? Primary function of burial ground originates from the fact that people of the past had valued afterlife as much as their life was, resulting in the invention of churchyard and cemetery as typology for its permanency. However, the fundamental purpose of cemetery space in the city and present-day society conveys a clear mismatch. In addition, society nowadays offers infinite possibilities of ways we could memorize *things*, which could meet the demands of a diverse population and their preference. Although my fascination has started from death memorial and I personally love to visit cemeteries, creating more cemeteries in a metropolis is questionable, due to the fact that cemetery as a preexisting typology is not necessarily required as the only way of contemporary memorialization practice.





Death

Shifting and Diversification of Perceptions

Death is a natural phenomenon, which we are able to recognize and conceptualize, and its meaning and perception shift through time. During Victorian London, you have a sip of water in the morning and by the evening you could be deceased. It was for most people a sudden encounter and it became a symbolism of fragility of their life, therefore female angles are often used as a rhetorical metaphor. Cultures surrounding *Memento Mori*, meaning remember that you will die, are enriched due to epidemics. People find their acceptance of one's death shortly. Not only do these values change over time, they differ from person to person. For instance, a child before the age of 7 thinks death is a reversible phenomenon. Legalized death considers brain death as just other deaths, regardless of heartbeat. For neurologists, its definition may be delayed from how most think one is dead, as they will tell you that hearing as a sense persists for a couple of hours and for some a couple of days even after your heart stops beating. *Meaning of Death* by Herman Feifel writes on how different people perceive death and explore psychological aspects of our reaction to it. Not only it tells about our perspectives but also it discusses how our ritual practices as a cultural construction is tied to our perception and he informs the significance of expression and different expressions through the grieving process.

“The religious rites and practices surrounding the process of mourning can help the bereft individual to engage all his feelings in a framework that makes them not only acceptable but also easily expressible...The emotions of grieving tend to cluster about three main psychological processes; incorporation, substitution, and feelings of guilt. Within bounds, each is normal and a valid expression of the deep feelings of the individual which may be worked through and resolved. When the expression is delayed or repressed, it tends to find its outlet in less desirable forms.”¹

The book came out in 1959, and desirable forms of current society in a metropolitan city exist in many ways both formally and informally, the space must accommodate diverse needs of practices.

In *The Sacred and The Profane*², Eliade describes one's phenomenological perception that is connected to something sacred. Especially, how the so-called non-religious population react to death and still practice some form of funerary ritual proves his point on 'homo religiosus', and our common desire for a space that connects to something divine, where it provides metaphysical experience. When the way of disposing bodies develops into more of a sustainable, and economic realm, where do we implement rooms for our spiritual needs? Our lives are well taken care of

¹Feifel, Herman. *The Meaning of Death*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1965.

²Eliade, Mircea. *The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion*. San Diego, CA: Harvest, 1968.

with the likes of an improved medical system and balanced health care. Therefore, more and more people are prepared for their death and the society we live in depicts our deaths dictated by medical and scientific aftermath. Apart from our beliefs on medical and psychological science, rather unscientific and sacred parts of our daily lives are overlooked and neglected, socially as well as spatially. This might explain one of the reasons why people choosing to die at home are on the rise as they look for comfort and intimacy as opposed to hospitals. Does the preexisting funerary system and their space work for everyone? Though, such space should provide a timeless experience, it is often restricted within the limitation of time.

As discussed on the skepticism towards creation of new cemeteries, there is certainly a demand on funerary spaces to help our grieving process and possibly others in need of temporal escape from the busy city. The question now is when our reactions and wishes are purely dependent on diversified beliefs and uncertain conceptualizations of death, how should such space be designed and shaped? These different perspectives on death have also been a key element for architects when designing funerary spaces, which they often portray their belief, value, and experiences to their design. For instance, E.Miralles and C.Pinós designed the Igualada cemetery by their belief that we are born from the earth and we should go back to earth, translating to the idea of excavating the land, and the cemetery goes below ground level. Aldo Rossi recalls the experiences from his childhood when he had been hospitalized for a while after an automobile accident, and describes his project for San Cataldo Cemetery.

“During the following summer, in my study for the project, perhaps only this image and the pain in my bones remained with me: I saw the skeletal structure of the body as a series of fractures to be reassembled. At Slawonski Brod, I had identified death with the morphology of the skeleton and the alterations it could undergo.”³

Since it was not entirely built, what he called skeletons are missing for most part thus the compositional relationship is lost for the most. However, the repetition and hollowness is clearly expressed in the design and missing parts are creating almost a functionless garden, providing an open and free experience to the visitor.

Funerary space must exist with its primary function to help the living to eventually look forward in their lives. Although their meanings contrast from one another, death as an experience is a collective phenomenon, in comparison to the rhetorical spaces of worship, the funerary space must be neutral and accept every being. A place where ‘Rest And Peace’ comes for the living.

³Rossi, Aldo. Aldo Rossi: A Scientific Autobiography. Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1981.





London

Factual Death of Londoner's

The theme of this studio, “London: Heterogenous City” informs the absence of an absolute identity of the whole city. Whether one calls it a disparity or diversity, their ethnicity, religion to the cityscape, differ from one place to another. As a post-colonial city, experiencing constant immigration and emigration, multiplicity is certainly what characterizes London and their values on death show no exception. This chapter analyzes London historically and numerically through the lens of death and funerary practices to explore possible demands and opportunities towards the project.

To begin with, it should be pointed out that throughout the past, the shift of funerary culture and space always came due to the sanitary and capacitive issues. Modern history of death-scape has greatly changed during the Victorian health reform, cemetery as a typology rapidly began to grow in numbers, overcrowded churchyards slowly disappeared from the city for the better health conditions. Present-day culture depicts rather complex situations, which are not only of capacity and hygiene. Ever since the industrial revolution, new technologies of the time are involved with the practices, such as photography, trains, internet, etc. Secularization and individualization of the society had diversified ways of funeral and memorial. Moreover, the capitalist economy has also impacted the large population to prefer low-cost ways of disposal, which is a cremation, as burial takes up more space. With an improved medical system and increased health awareness, less and less people encounter sudden deaths, being able to prepare for their end of life care and preferences. Therefore, current beliefs towards funerary practices are not only whether one is religious or non-religious but rather plenty of other aspects getting involved in their choices.

Currently, London has a population of over 9 million people. Even though its population has been at a rapid growth, the population's life expectancy is likewise increasing, and as the majority of recent immigrants are mostly young and middle aged, the overall dying population is relatively the same every year. However, it is expected to increase sooner or later when a country starts to age. In contrast to other metropolises in the world, London has a unique burial act in place since 1857, that forbids any disturbances of human remains, which is putting cemeteries under high pressure on their capacity. The audit came out in 2011, predicted that all cemeteries are going to be full in 20 years.⁴ This has constrained political discussion on new policy. And as of 2014, only the city of London cemetery had started grave reuse, now its numbers are slowly on the rise to meet the demands of the people.

⁴Rugg, Julie, and Nicholas Pleace. Rep. An Audit of London Burial Provision. The Greater London Authority, 2011.

Around 1.5 million people require burial. Around 4 million people are Christians, some prefer burial and some prefer cremation. Buddhist and Hindu population, most times choose cremation. The necessity of body disposal is closely tied to certain religious beliefs and ritual practices, which are inseparable. However, what about those non-religious populations? Do they just dispose of a body for solely economical reasons and do nothing? This is where we feel our desire to express in some form of ritual. In an overcrowded metropolitan city, where the choice of disposal only becomes a matter of economical and capacitive rationale, it warns of the significance to such a space where rituals are practiced, from funeral to post-funeral supports of people. Secularized society has forgotten some of our important natural tendencies that are spiritual and funeral is one of those events, we still value sacredness, experience various emotions and convey in some ways. London does not have ‘an identity’, but it has ‘identities’. Burial is gradually becoming an identifier for Muslim and Jewish population. Cremation is for the rest of the population. Tissue donation is for those who care about science. Natural burial for those who care about the environment. Both disposal and memorization ways are becoming personal choices, diversified and unpredictable, nonetheless, they will all wish for a temporal escape from one’s loss.

Before 19th Century

60AD: Londinium (Roman Settlement)
Cemeteries were located outside the city wall
Both burial and cremation were practiced



7th century :Conversion to Christianity
(Churchyards)

1258:Famines

1269:Construction of Westminster Abbey

1315-1317:Great Famines

Danse Macabre



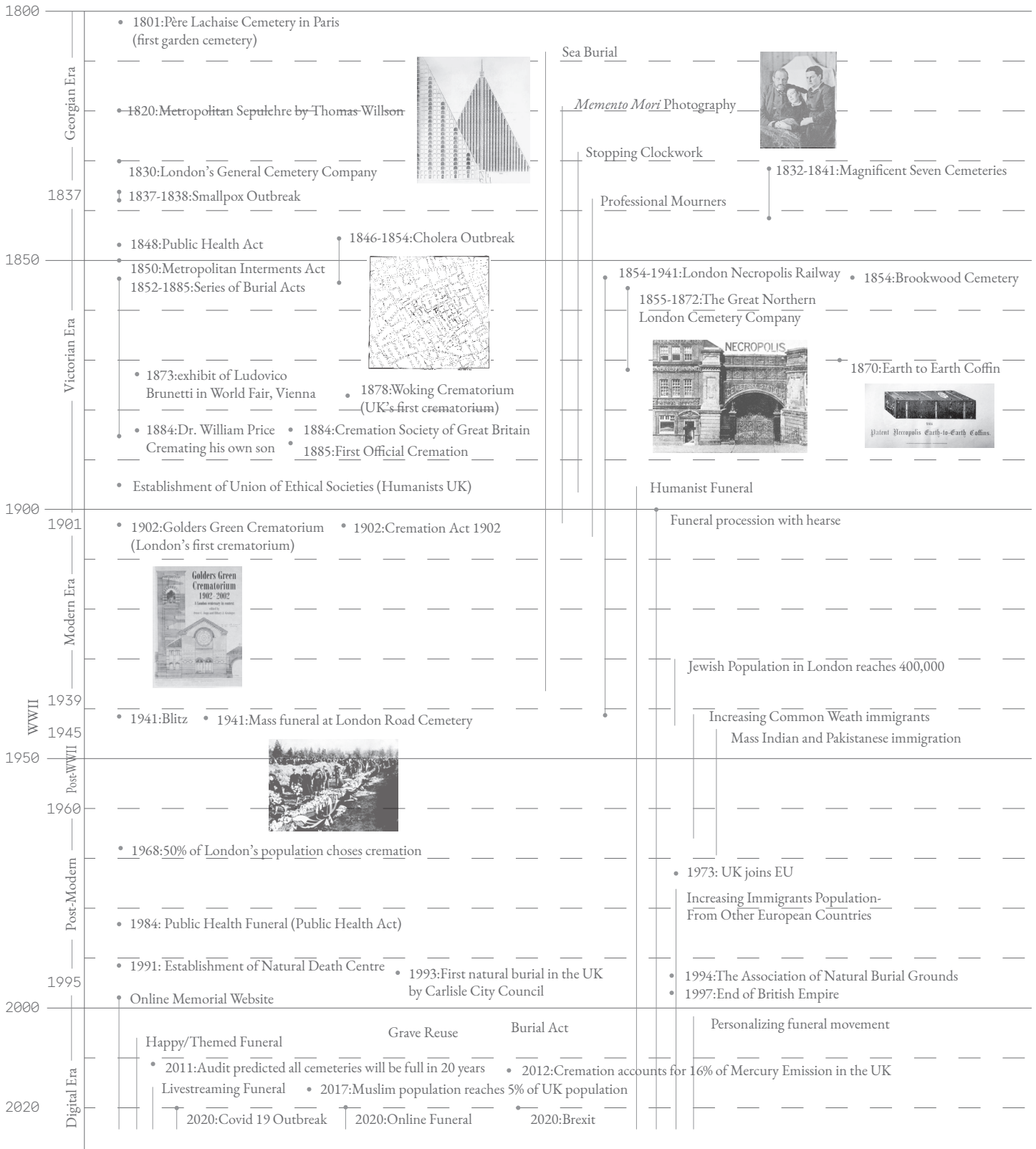
1347-1351:First Plague Outbreak

1563:"Six Feet Under" Law

1665-1666:Great Plague of London

1666:Great Fire of London

1666:Wren's plan for rebuilding London featuring garden/rural cemetery



Hindu Population Map in London (2019)



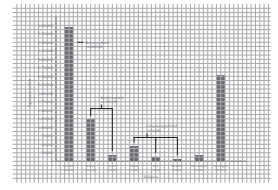
Christian Population Map in London (2019)



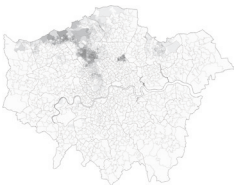
Muslim Population Map in London (2019)



Population by Religious Group (2020)



Jewish Population Map in London (2019)



Area

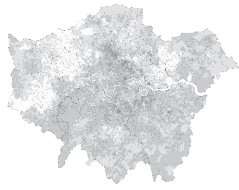
Buddhist Population Map in London (2019)



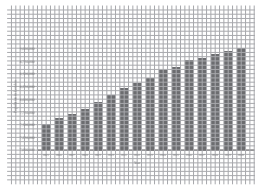
Religion



Non-Religious Population Map in London (2020)



Population

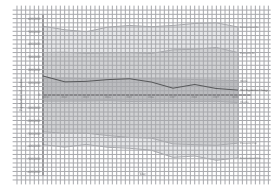
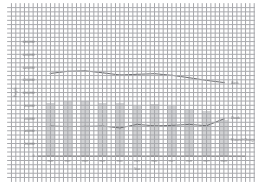


Population Growth of London (2020)

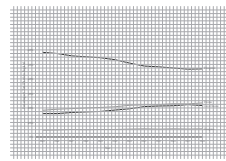
Percentage of people die in hospital is decreasing, whereas people die at home increases.



Number of Birth and Death (2020)

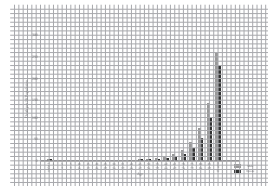


Modal (most common) age at death in London is 86.7 years for males and 89.3 years for females from 2018 to 2020



Net Population Change (2020)

"There are over 120 cemeteries in London alone, covering an estimated 3,500 acres, or one-fifth of the total cemetery acreage in all of England"



Average Total Cost of dying reaches 9,000 pounds and over 27% people had borrowed money from friends or family.

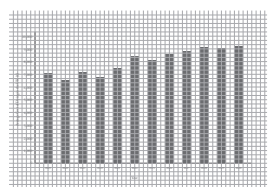


Death Per Age Group (2020)

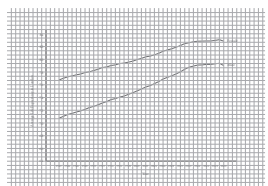


Cost

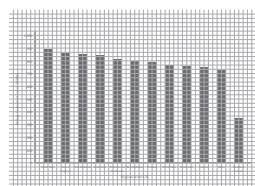
Average Cost of Dying (2020)



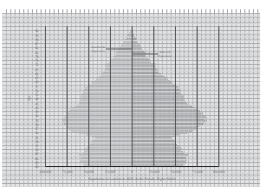
Age



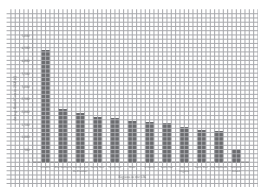
Average Life Expectancy in London (2020)



Average Cost of Cremation by Region (2020)

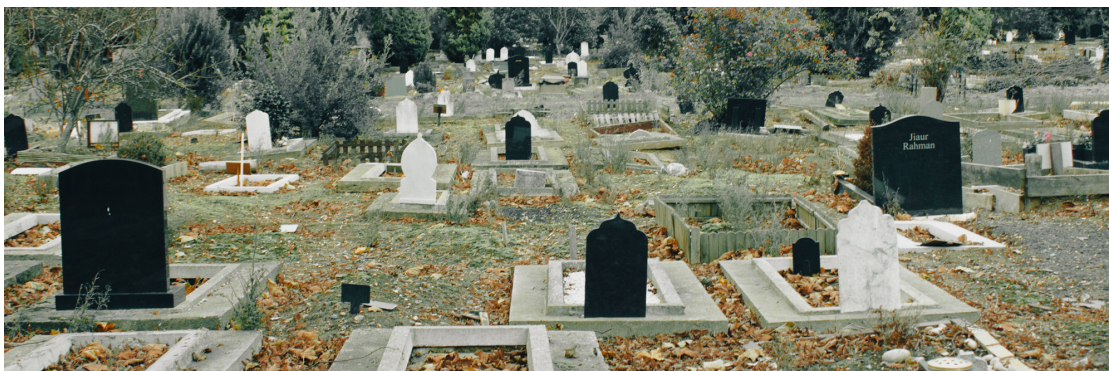


Age Structure in London (2020)

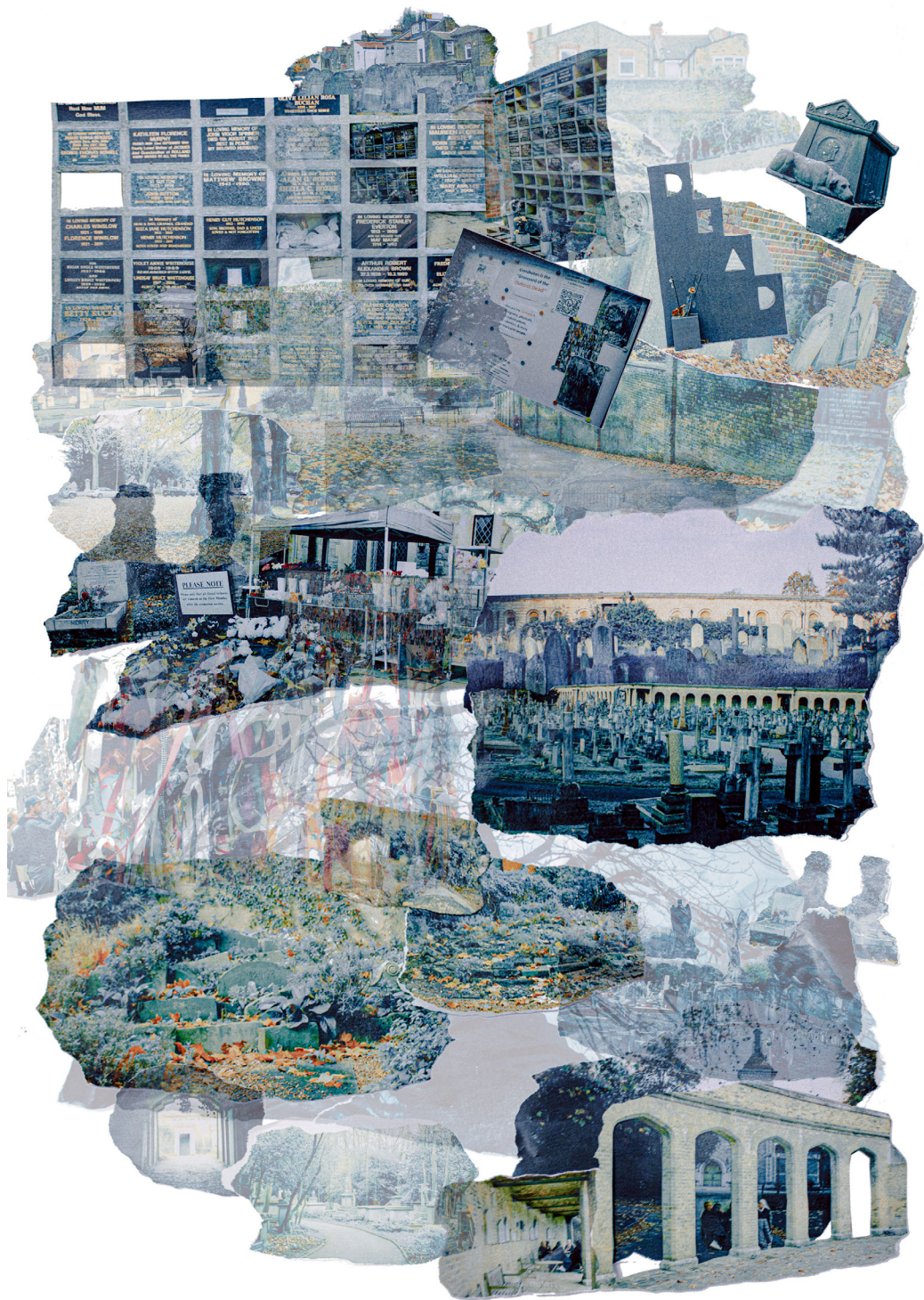


Average Cost of Burial by Region (2020)

Average cost of burial in London is more than double of West Midlands reaching around 4,500 pounds







Memory

Materiality and Fragility of Remembering

Material gets broken, and immaterial gets forgotten. For those abandoned graves, forgotten memories are kept only because of the materialization. Individual memories are fragile and easy to disappear. Some memories are blurred, some are distorted, some are displaced, some are tied, and some are overlapped. It is the nature of how our brain works. Not all memory must be clear. Thus, graves disguise the vagueness of our memory by its physicality, meaning those are not representations of what we will remember but what we will forget. However, messages engraved on graves often use words like ‘We will always remember...’, ‘We will never forget...’, and ‘Forever...’. How could a space make individuals understand our fragility of memory and its material representation of it needs only a short time before it gets passed onto others. Due to this neglect towards forgetting, there are many cemeteries in London that have been full for years, and decades, if not centuries. It is often walled off or gated and it is a place secluded from the living, misinterpreting it for the dead. Reusing them will only preserve pre-existing imbalanced culture, instead of adapting to contemporary metropolitan society. Graves provides personal memories to bereft. So does that mean a cemetery is providing collective urban memory to the public? Existing cemetery as a collection of personal memorials can only be exchanged by its age value, though most of them are invisible. How could a personal memory, which lasts only temporarily, be exchanged for other long-term values? In addition, how could a space be designed where the collective use helps personal memories to be preserved without their physicality. A place where new memories will overlies the past, but past memories get embedded. With these layers of memories, it continues to exist with some purpose.

In Jean Baudrillard’s *Symbolic Exchange and Death*, he describes a funeral home as a place where death is shielded from mourning and living and it is designed and the act of embalming as a way to represent beauty instead of reality and signs of nature.

“This is what separates those societies that are afraid neither of the sign nor of death, since they make it signify overtly, from our ‘ideological’ societies where everything is buried under the natural, where signs have become nothing but designs, entertaining the illusion of a natural reason. Death is the first victim of this ideologisation: rigidly set in the banal simulacrum of life, it becomes shameful and obscene.”⁵

Just as cemeteries are seen for the dead, for the permanence, and for certain religious practice, the whole funerary culture is designed based on our strong neglect and

⁵Baudrillard, Jean, and Iain Hamilton Grant. *Symbolic Exchange and Death*. London: SAGE Publications Ltd, 2017.

rejection towards what is natural and real death and wish for beautiful life. Not only its practice, should funerary space offer ideological and imaginary experience, it also must give a sense of reality. Imaginary realm of our lives are on the same side of a coin as the physical realm with a sense of other active lives and personal calmness. When the balance is kept, it accelerates co-existence and synergy between private and public functions to such places.

Brompton Cemetery, one of the Magnificent Seven Cemeteries in London, has a shape of long rectangle with opening on both ends, creating a natural urban corridor for those in the city. As I walk through, I see people and animals that are chatting, running, playing, crying, etc. Not only am I moving but what surrounds my experience is dynamic. I recall these moments through movements and fragments of my perception as stories. The cemetery is a place in the public realm, both quiet and lively. It offers social activities, and also provides imagination. A chapter in the Spatial Recall, talks about how our memory is always tied to spatial reality that recalling certain experiences always comes in space.

“Our recollections are situational and spatialized memories; they are memories attached to places and events. It is hard to recall, for instance, a familiar or iconic photograph as a two-dimensional image on photographic paper, we tend to remember the depicted object, person, or event in its full spatial reality.”⁶

In order to build a long-lasting memory, you need stories, movements, and a space. Death in a hospital does not provide the space. It only allows within a limit of medical, sanitary, and functional purposes. Thereafter, you need another space for your memory construction and memorization practices, which requires a space for you to move and share your stories.

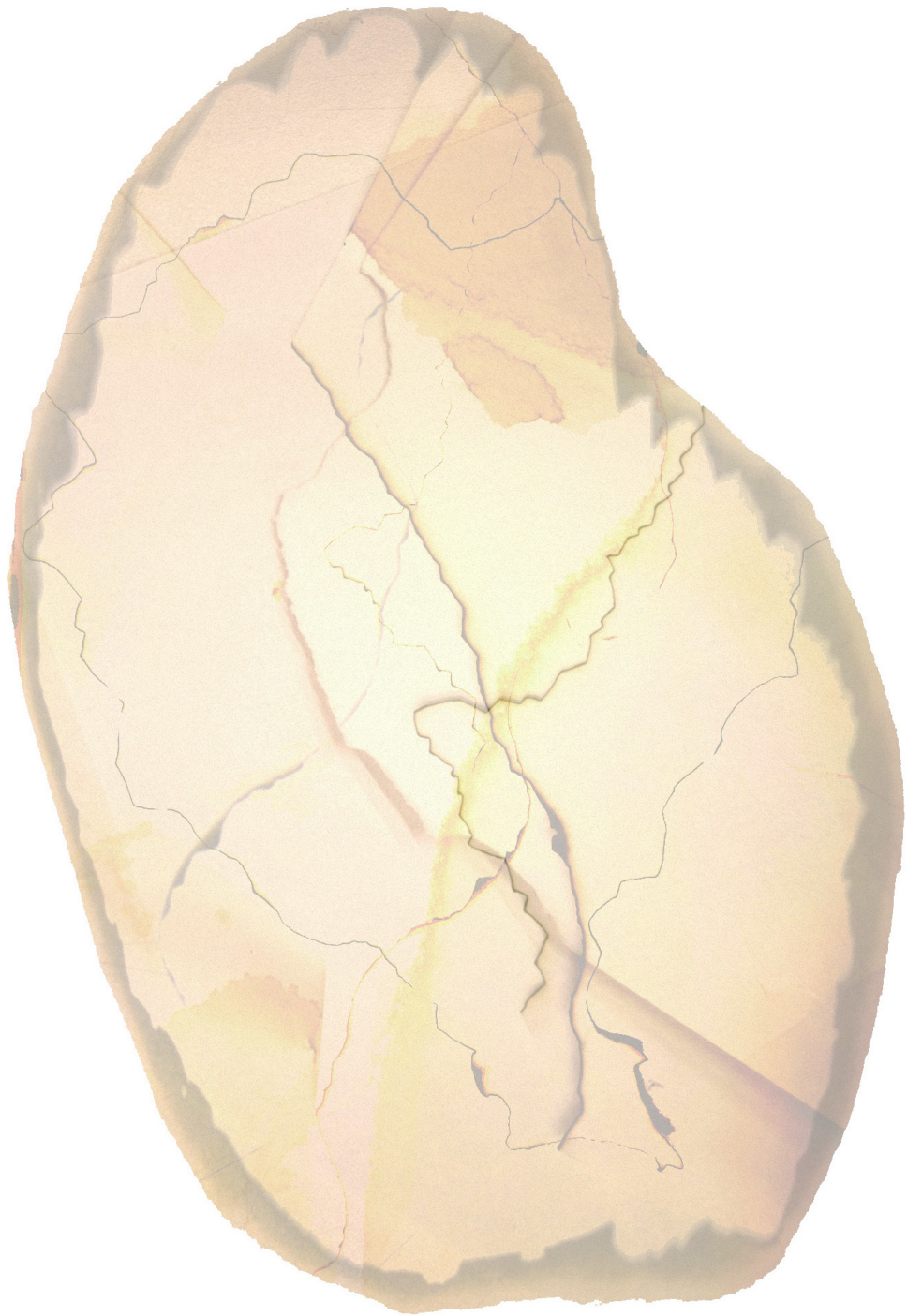
⁶Treib, Marc. Spatial Recall: Memory in Architecture and Landscape, 2009.











Material

The Multifaceted Nature of Material Perception

The word material is often associated with something physical to many. They possess material properties, from softness and hardness, smoothness and roughness, homogeneity and heterogeneity, etc. On the other hand, there are feelings material gives. Comfort, calmness, warmth, chill, fear, etc. are things we feel when we interact with material, which are also things interrelated to the physical properties of material. Moreover, it displays history and culture. For instance, stone is mostly used for the grave to represent perpetuity and material tradition and the broken stone column is a metaphor for those whose life is cut short, which was a common Victorian symbolism for immature death. As said, due to its physicality the stone helps to keep the emotional connection of the living and dead, at the same time, it leaves behind changing social aspects surrounding graveside. By the stationery culture embedded in a grave or niche, some bereaved in present-day society do not go through a proper grieving process as they feel various emotions over the course of periods.

In addition to the materiality of graves and how it is shaped to tell a certain culture, materials used for the memorialization by bereaved illustrate how their grieving process is expressed to public. They visit their graves, and leave ‘things’ by graveside and *Matter of Death* explains on their ethnographic research conducted in the City of London Cemetery, where researchers analyzed sanitary and health policy limits the way of expression, that of typically fragile and lightweight except for flowers.

*“Usually prohibiting visitors from leaving glass mementoes, metal objects and food, the enforcement of these policies in some cemeteries has meant that the grounds have been stripped of the artefacts that one would expect to see in a cemetery. In some parts of the country bereaved visitors have expressed feelings of aggravation in response to such practices. In explaining why bereaved people might be so upset about artefacts being removed from the grave”.*⁷

This further examines feelings and culture expressed by the graveside. Some leave a card to let the family know that they are visiting and to show that they still care. Memorialization has a side of contestedness and becoming unwanted social expression to the other bereaved rather than to memorize the deceased and not whole graveside culture is not providing a suitable place of grieving.

In *Material Imagination*, Jonathan Hale starts out explaining on postwar ruination that ruins are interpreted as a potential renewal and reinterpretation of the past to make things essential to the present.⁸ Once things have been destroyed, its original function is lost, requiring a replacement and they are already transformed from the

⁷Hockney, Jenny. *Matter of Death: Space, Place and Materiality*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2014.

⁸Mindrup, Matthew. *Material Imagination: Reveries on Architecture and Matter*. Routledge, 2017.

original context, with other values. Similar discussion is made by Elizabeth Wright when explaining the quality of a cemetery

*“The cemetery’s very real graves leave the possibility of being rediscovered even after they are forgotten. With this rediscovery, then, the place allows the space to survive. A memory can be saved. Yet, unlike the physicality of the cemetery, the saved memory is not real and is therefore open to numerous interpretations.”*⁹

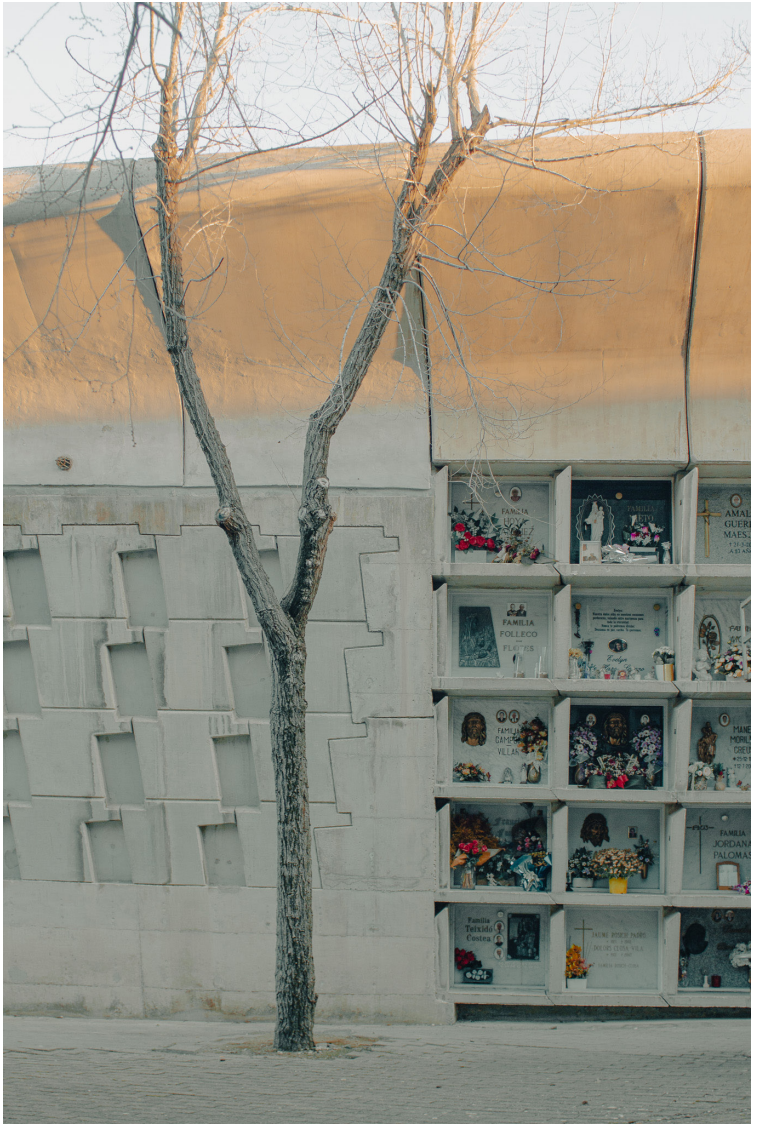
Whether it is a ruin or grave, the presence of material gives us an opportunity to rethink and reimagine what is meaningful to the current society. Not only the rediscovery means another value with cemeteries but towards new materiality and practices that surrounds it. Thus, the imaginary realm of such space becomes as important as its actual materiality for progress. Most existing cemeteries in London depict qualities that are outdated to contemporary metropolitan lives of people.

Once graves get abandoned and ruined, nature takes over. These are some of the qualities often cemeteries portray. As stated in the chapter of memory, there must be a sense of life and nature as opposed to only something that is made-up. Should a funerary space wait until it gets abandoned to create this value? I don’t believe so. Thereby, I have conducted quick experiments in relation to materials that I had in hand, which were papers. I started to burn it, rip it, and pour liquids to it and unlike cutting or folding a paper, these translations depict qualities that were the outcome of intentional acts and plans but unexpected as force of nature comes in between the cause and effect. Nature follows certain rules, so types of materials, angles, and scales expose different qualities of nature. Patterns of edges by the fire are different from the types of paper I use. This will be further researched through the design phase, which material suits the context and certain human experiences.

As written, opposed to the physical quality, there is a spatial quality that materials constitute, this part suddenly deals with complex relations of aspects as our spatial experiences not only depend on the material itself but the whole atmospheric condition, whether it is about the site, weather, volume and scale, that are all in reciprocally connected to the materiality. So the relationship of materiality and its surrounding environment is as significant as the material itself and crucial to the human experiences. My recent visit to Igualada cemetery explains just this, the solidness of imposed concrete and roughness of gabion walls and exposed steel wire may at first sound like a rough and hard feeling but my experience was rather subtle and calm, which are not only of materiality but dependency with atmospheric condition.

⁹Wright, Elizabeth A. “Rhetorical Spaces in Memorial Places: The Cemetery as a Rhetorical Memory Place/Space.” *Rhetoric Society Quarterly* 35, no. 4 (2005): 51–81.







"In my view, however, architecture is inherently a slow and quiet, emotionally low-energy art form in comparison with the dramatic arts of sudden affective impact. Its role is not to create strong foreground figures or feelings but to establish frames of perception and horizons of understanding. The task of architecture is not to make us weep or laugh but to sensitize us to be able to enter all emotional states.

Architecture is needed to provide the ground and projection screen of remembrance and emotion. I believe in an architecture that slows down and focuses human experience instead of diffusing or speeding it up. In my view, architecture has to safeguard memories and protect the authenticity and independence of human experience."

Space, Place, Memory, and Imagination: The Temporal
Dimension of Existential Space by Juhani Pallasmaa

Ritual

Temporal Escape Through Embodied Experience

When a loved one dies, are bereaved able to go back to work as usual within the next hours, and next day? Depending on the situation, it might differ. Historically, most deaths came suddenly and most are not mentally prepared for this natural phenomenon, funeral and post-funeral rituals have been existing in any culture, not necessarily for the dead but for the living to take a moment. They do not just leave a dead body in places where they died, but dispose of them in some ways. This necessity had led to the cultural construction of various funeral rituals, which also gave the bereaved time to express. Although more deaths in the current context are prepared and well communicated with family before one passes away, funeral rituals have still been performed. Whether it is just about scattering ashes or following a traditional way of religious funerals, bereaved will face the necessity of doing things because bodies are materials. Certain actions and ritual practices are inevitable and because of our common obligation of body disposal will allow a diverse population to escape from their everyday time and space, both physically and mentally. For this reason, in my view, funeral and memorialization culture exist by means of temporal escaping from your daily activities, that is to look back and imagine, but also to face the reality of one's death, which will help the grieving process temporarily and for long-term. Since whatever bereaved feels from one's death, it carries countless diverse and contrasting emotional and spiritual thoughts that are unpredictable and uncontrollable, thus this chapter explores further from the disposal practices to funerary customs involving actions and movements and how it affects our experiences and perceptions.

Firstly, funerary rites are practiced because it is essential to the life of bereaved. From eating, drinking to dancing, various forms of ritual are performed across cultures. Are there common practices done by different religions and cultures? Which of it is actually helpful and which of it isn't? Reevaluating existing customs lead to invention of new culture that will suit the life of Londoners. In order to do so, some exercises are done that show body movements required for traditional rituals practiced involve a very formal body movement. Sitting down, standing still, praying are somewhat slow and gentle acts. The connection of our experiences and actions are explicit in these events.

“In human evolution, there's evidence to support a nonhierarchical relation between thought and action. As our species evolved, the expanding cerebral cortex (the thinking part) was accompanied by a growing cerebellum (the locus of motor control), suggesting that the newly freed hands were engaging in technical activities that were increasingly elaborate.”¹⁰

¹⁰Bardt, Christopher. *Material and Mind*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2019.

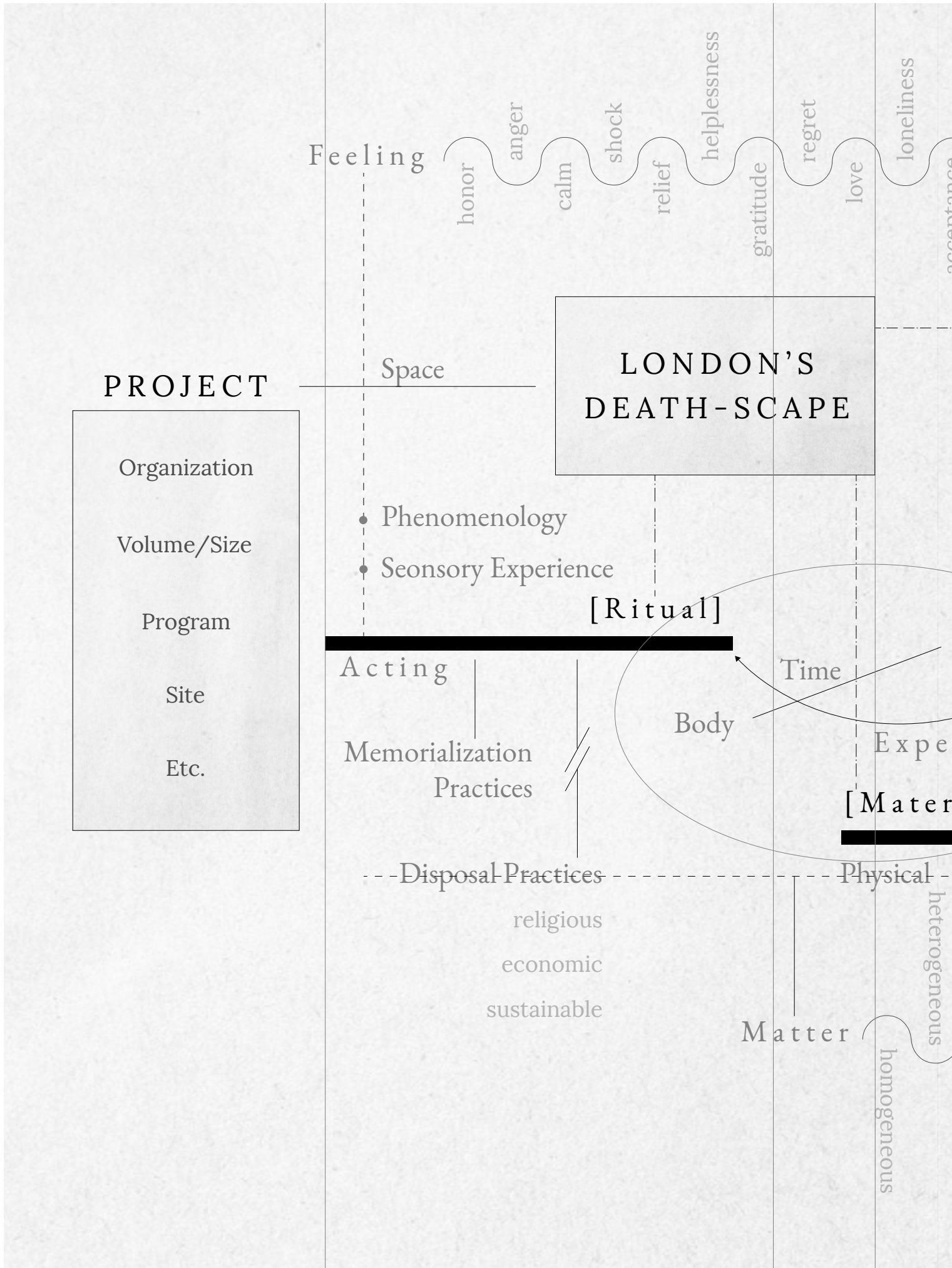
Whether the *thought precedes action*, or the action precedes thought, the relationship of our mind and body is undoubtful. Funerary rituals consist of various acts, which most of the time follows certain phases in most cultures. Different rituals should be performed at different emotional phases and states, though, existing memorization culture requires repetition of same acts. How could a use of space be transformed throughout the grieving process?

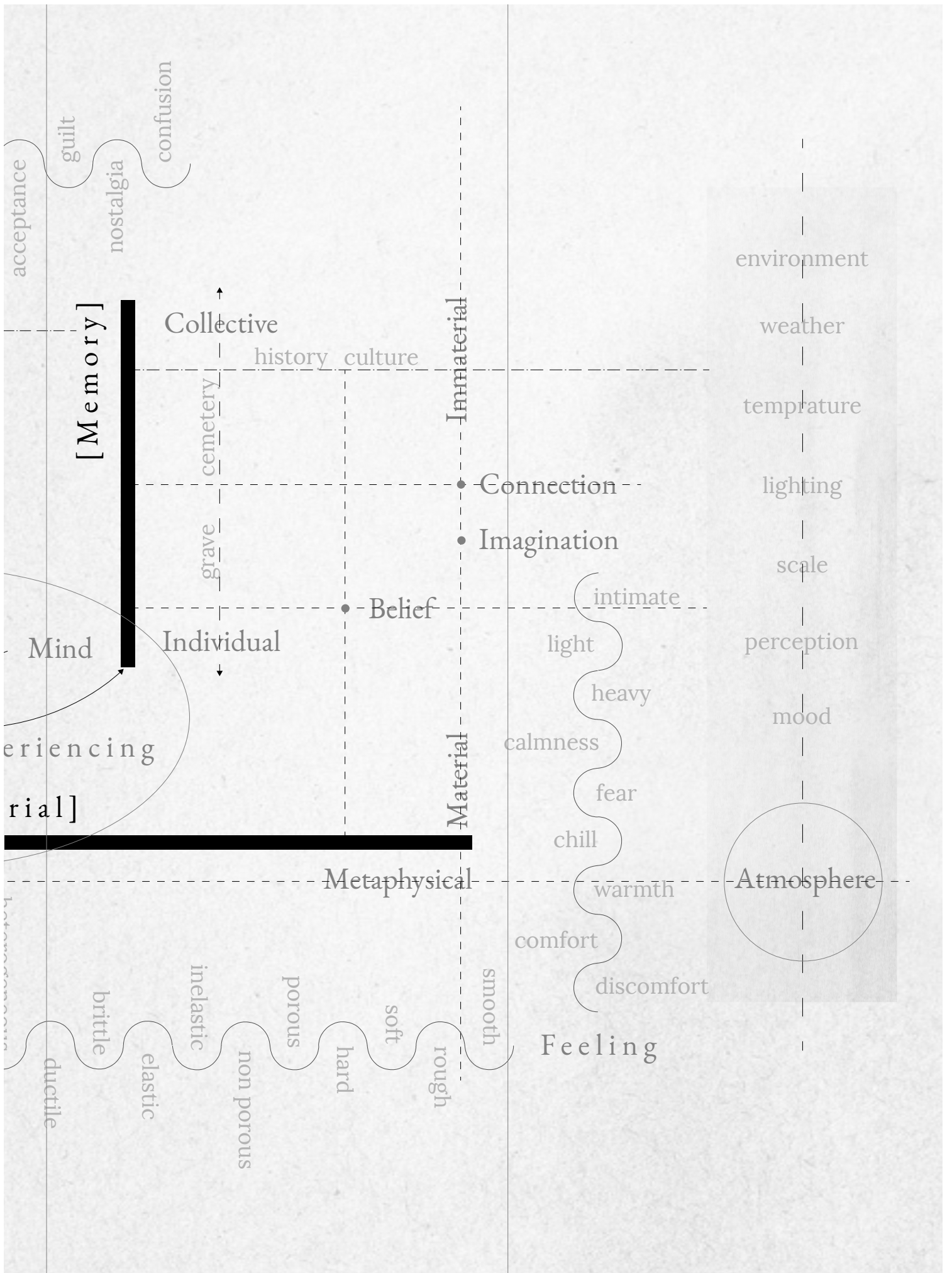
“What is missing is the sense of a shared cultural ideal pattern, implicit in hopes that death could be meaningful and dignified, but also in fears of dying suddenly and unprepared... It is not so much personal belief that has diminished, it is the shared social space in which it might have found a home and a voice. Even when more and more “public space” has been granted to religion”¹¹

Crossbones Graveyard in London shows palimpsest of memories and interactions, deviating from the original historical context of the site, every ritual in this case involves the act of folding ribbon and putting notes, which are layering those visitors' thoughts and feeling. These are expressed by individuals toward public, and they see its demand through these expression. Just as a fire on a candle requires someone to light up, these little memorials are the showcase of those actions. These add and give values to the place, and while visitors through this act have meditative experiences. How the rituals are performed and the place shapes as a result of rituals creates dynamism and equilibrium between the two actors, without the place enforcing visitors to follow certain customs. In contrast to other rhetoric spaces and places of worship, funerary and memorial should become places of nature and places of public health, through practices made expressed.

¹¹Bregman, Lucy. *Religion, Death, and Dying*. Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger Publishers, 2010.







Conclusion

Lastly, death is only a concept followed by the recognition of its natural phenomenon that carries shifting meanings and perceptions across time and individuals. The loss of shared cultural patterns surrounding death highlights London's diverse population encompassing various identities, and burial practices have become markers of cultural and personal choices and body disposal and memorialization are increasingly personalized, diversified, and unpredictable. However, a common thread among all individuals is the longing for a temporal escape from the loss experienced, expressing the importance of spaces and practices that support the grieving process and offer solace in a bustling metropolis like London.

Examining funerary rituals reveals their essential role in the lives of the bereaved. These rituals, which vary across cultures and religions, the relationship between mind and body is crucial in designing spaces that can transform throughout the grieving process, offering support at different emotional phases and states. By tying the place of these rituals such as funeral ceremony that have been practiced for millennia and monument of remembrance together, offer for those in need. Places like the Crossbones Graveyard in London serve as powerful examples of how rituals and expressions can shape a space, creating a dynamic equilibrium between visitors and the environment. Through acts such as folding ribbons and leaving notes, individuals contribute to the value and meditative experiences of these places. Personal memorialization creates a facade shared among the collective.

Moreover, the research features the notion that material objects, such as graves, serve as reminders and keepers of memories, which are easily forgotten in their immaterial form. Thus, such space and objects are used temporarily for the bereaved. This calls for a reconsideration of funerary spaces, emphasizing the need for spaces that acknowledge the fragility of memory, provide a sense of reality, simultaneously providing temporal escape, and allow for the exchange and preservation of personal and collective memories beyond the limitations of physicality and territory.

Therefore, the project takes into consideration leaving traces of personal memories that are shared collectively as a material form; one gets abandoned but the other starts to remember. A place where those temporal spatial needs would create a cycle of forgetting and remembering, one family stops visiting but the other starts to visit.

References

- Authority, Competition and Markets. *CMA Publishes Final Report in Funerals Market Investigation*. GOV.UK, December 18, 2020. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/cma-publishes-final-report-in-funerals-market-investigation>.
- Barber, Bruno, David Bowsher, and Ken Whittaker. *Recent Excavations of a Cemetery of 'Londinium.'* *Britannia* 21 (1990): 1. <https://doi.org/10.2307/526287>.
- Bardt, Christopher. *Material and Mind*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2019.
- Baudrillard, Jean, and Iain Hamilton Grant. *Symbolic Exchange and Death*. London: SAGE Publications Ltd, 2017.
- Bregman, Lucy. *Religion, Death, and Dying*. Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger Publishers, 2010.
- Bunhill Fields Burial Ground Draft Management Plan - 2015-2020*. Accessed May 18, 2023. <https://democracy.cityoflondon.gov.uk/documents/s49592/Appendix%20%20-%20Bunhill%20Fields%20Burial%20Ground%20Draft%20Management%20Plan%202015%20-2020.pdf>.
- Burial grounds the results of a survey of burial grounds in England and ...* Accessed May 18, 2023. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/217908/burial_grounds_web_whole_plus_bookmarks.pdf.
- Burial law and policy in the 21st Century* - University of York. Accessed May 18, 2023. https://www.york.ac.uk/media/spsw/images/crg/buriallaw_cp.pdf.
- Coates, Sarah. *Population Estimates by Ethnic Group and Religion, England and Wales: 2019*. Population estimates by ethnic group and religion, England and Wales - Office for National Statistics, December 16, 2021. <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/articles/populationestimatesbyethnicgroupandreligionenglandandwales/2019>.
- Cost of dying report 2018* - sunlife. Accessed May 18, 2023. <https://www.sunlife.co.uk/siteassets/documents/cost-of-dying/cost-of-dying-report-2018.pdf?page=8>.
- Crabtree, Lisa. *The changing discourse of death : A study of the evolution of the contemporary funeral industry.*, n.d. <https://doi.org/10.18297/etd/286>.
- Cultural ecology*. Accessed May 18, 2023. <http://blog.culturalecology.info/2021/05/20/cultural-ecology-of-urban-cemeteries/>.
- Davies, P.J., and G. Bennett. *Planning, Provision and Perpetuity of Deathscapes—Past and Future Trends and the Impact for City Planners*. *Land Use Policy* 55 (2016): 98–107. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.landusepol.2016.03.029>.

Dust to Dust: Celebrations of Death in Victorian England - Anna's Archive. Accessed May 18, 2023. <https://annas-archive.org/md5/378f68b434076064c5c1fbc9788e116a>.

Eliade, Mircea. *The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion*. San Diego, CA: Harvest, 1968.

Farragher, Thomas. *A Gravedigger's to-Do List: 'burial. Burial. Burial.'* - *The Boston Globe*. BostonGlobe.com, May 11, 2020. <https://www.bostonglobe.com/2020/05/11/nation/grave-diggers-to-do-list-burial-burial-burial/>.

Feifel, Herman. *The Meaning of Death*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1965.

Funerals Market Study. GOV.UK. Accessed May 18, 2023. <https://www.gov.uk/cma-cases/funerals-market-study>.

Greyson, Bruce, Pim van Lommel, and Peter Fenwick. *Commentary: Enhanced Interplay of Neuronal Coherence and Coupling in the Dying Human Brain*. *Frontiers in Aging Neuroscience* 14 (2022). <https://doi.org/10.3389/fnagi.2022.899491>.

Highgate Cemetery Options Report Draft prepared for FOHCT August 2017. Accessed May 18, 2023. https://highgatecemetery.org/uploads/1746-170_Highgate_Cemetery_Options_Report_V2.pdf.

Hockney, Jenny, Carol Komaromy, and Kate Woodthorpe. *Matter of Death: Space, Place and Materiality*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2014.

Hoile, Sarah. *Coffin Furniture in London c. 1700–1850: The Establishment of Tradition in the Material Culture of the Grave*. *Post-Medieval Archaeology* 52, no. 2 (2018): 210–23. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00794236.2018.1515399>.

Holl, Steven. *Parallax*. New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2000.

Holloway, Margaret, Susan Adamson, Vassos Argyrou, Peter Draper, and Daniel Mariau. *'Funerals Aren't Nice but It Couldn't Have Been Nicer'. the Makings of a Good Funeral*. *Mortality* 18, no. 1 (2013): 30–53. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13576275.2012.755505>.

Holmes, Basil. *The London Burial Grounds*. New York: Macmillan, 1896.

Hounslow's cemetery strategy. Accessed May 18, 2023. <https://democraticservices.hounslow.gov.uk/documents/s155545/Appendix%201-%20Hounslows%20Cemetery%20Strategy%20pdf.pdf>.

The impact of cemeteries on the Environment and Public Health. Accessed May 18, 2023. [https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/108132/EUR_ICP_EHNA_01_04_01\(A\).pdf;sequence=1](https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/108132/EUR_ICP_EHNA_01_04_01(A).pdf;sequence=1).

Johnson, Eugene J. *What Remains of Man-Aldo Rossi's Modena Cemetery*. *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 41, no. 1 (1982): 38–54. <https://doi.org/10.2307/989761>.

Justice, Ministry of. *Burial Grounds: Guidance for Managers*. GOV.UK, January 2, 2010. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/burial-grounds-guidance-for-managers>.

Justice, Ministry of. *Natural Burial Ground: Guidance for Operators*. GOV.UK, January 2, 2009. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/natural-burial-ground-guidance-for-operators>.

Kong, L. *Cemetaries and Columbaria, Memorials and Mausoleums: Narrative and Interpretation in the Study of Deathscapes in Geography*. *Australian Geographical Studies* 37, no. 1 (1999): 1–10. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8470.00061>.

Landers, John, and Anastasia Mouzas. *Burial Seasonality and Causes of Death in London 1670–1819*. *Population Studies* 42, no. 1 (1988): 59–83. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0032472031000143126>.

Landscapes of Remembrance. Historic England. Accessed May 18, 2023. <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/drpgsg-landscapes-remembrance/>.

London Road Cemetery - Coventry City Council. Accessed May 18, 2023. <https://www.coventry.gov.uk/downloads/file/23275/london-road-cemetery-report>.

Lucas, Raymond. *Designing a Notation for the Senses*. *Architectural Theory Review* 14, no. 2 (2009): 173–92. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13264820903049240>.

Löki, Viktor, Balázs Deák, András Balázs Lukács, and Attila Molnár V. *Biodiversity Potential of Burial Places – a Review on the Flora and Fauna of Cemeteries and Churchyards*. *Global Ecology and Conservation* 18 (2019). <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.gecco.2019.e00614>.

Made. Legislation.gov.uk. Accessed May 18, 2023. <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/1977/204/contents/made/data.html>.

Mindrup, Matthew. *Material Imagination: Reveries on Architecture and Matter*. Routledge, 2017.

Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government. *Review of Crematoria Provision and Facilities: Discussion Paper*. GOV.UK, April 8, 2019. <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/review-of-crematoria-provision-and-facilities-discussion-paper>.

Mitima-Verloop, Huibertha B., Trudy T. Mooren, and Paul A. Boelen. *Facilitating Grief: An Exploration of the Function of Funerals and Rituals in Relation to Grief Reactions*. *Death Studies* 45, no. 9 (2019): 735–45. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07481187.2019.1686090>.

Mytum, Harold. *Public Health and Private Sentiment: The Development of Cemetery Architecture and Funerary Monuments from the Eighteenth Century Onwards*. *World Archaeology* 21, no. 2 (1989): 283–97. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00438243.1989.9980107>.

Paradise preserved an introduction to the assessment, evaluation ... Accessed May 18, 2023. <https://thegardenstrust.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/EH-Paradise-Preserved-2007-1.pdf>.

Reuse of Graves. Accessed May 18, 2023. <https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/SN04060/SN04060.pdf>.

Rossi, Aldo. *Aldo Rossi: A Scientific Autobiography*. Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1981.

Rugg, Julie. *Architecture, Death and Nationhood: Monumental Cemeteries of Nineteenth-Century Italy*. *Mortality* 24, no. 4 (2019): 489–90. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13576275.2019.1572086>.

Rugg, Julie, and Nicholas Pleace. Rep. *An Audit of London Burial Provision*. The Greater London Authority, 2011.

Strang, John. *Necropolis glasguensis; with observations on ancient and modern tombs and sepulture*. Glasgow: Atkinson, 1831.

Treib, Marc. *Spatial Recall: Memory in Architecture and Landscape*, 2009.

Worpole, Ken, and Lorraine Worpole. *Last landscapes: The architecture of the cemetery in the West*. London: Reaktion Books, 2011.

Wright, Elizabethada A. *Rhetorical Spaces in Memorial Places: The Cemetery as a Rhetorical Memory Place/Space*. *Rhetoric Society Quarterly* 35, no. 4 (2005): 51–81. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02773940509391322>.

Wright, Elizabethada. *Reading the Cemetery, Lieu de Memoire Par Excellence*. *Rhetoric Society Quarterly* 33, no. 2 (2003): 27–44. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02773940309391252>.



Anji Kobayashi

Research Paper

Funerary and Memory Space

Research Tutor: Alper Alkan

Design Tutor: Johan van Lierop

Architectural Design Crossovers Graduation Studio 2022/23

TU Delft Faculty of Architecture and the Built Environment

Reflection

The studio started off with having a fascination, which in my case was a hobby to visit cemeteries, that led to the research phase. My research has begun with a rather broad perspective on London's history regarding death in general from its culture, religion, and major events that had shaped values of Londoners on the topic. Simultaneously, I have analyzed death in London as numbers, to determine whether there is a demand for what I would be designing as well as potential goals to achieve for the project. As modern society has become more secular and various aspects such as economic and political influence come into play, not only their values but the funerary practices as a whole started to diversify. As thoroughly explained in my research paper, building more cemeteries in London did not make much sense for what I was aiming for, which was to create a space that helps the grieving and memorializing process for the people. Whether the city starts to reuse existing cemeteries, while a large number of the population getting cremated or building new cemeteries outside the Green Belt, which will create an isolation of death as a natural phenomenon to the living, and did make me feel is a right approach for the majority in the city. For this reason, it has shifted my focus to rather materializing personalization through collective use in the city, which incorporates acts of remembering through material aspects and ritual practices.

Transition to the design phase was challenging for me since I had to find a site having an atmosphere that suits funerary function in the bustle of the city and none of the places I have been for the first excursion satisfied this. I spent quite some time testing and analyzing each potential site and finally decided to work with St. Georges Garden, which used to be an old burial ground converted into a garden in the 19th century. This site analysis for my site reflected research methods that I have applied which are on numerical and historical components. Not only researching the history of the site but also measuring the height of trees, the number of tombs that are left and photographing each of them as archives, helping the site to express its history by atmosphere as a whole.

The design consists of functions related to funeral ceremony and memorial space, which possess completely different spatial requirements. Initially, I was planning on building in the park, which disrupted the function and spatial perception of the park, which led to creating functional spaces out of the existing wall and creating only a monument/underground auditorium space in the park. Concept dealt with having slopes and the design presented for P3 showed difficulty with having various

floors creating weird pockets of steps that are not functional. As slope requires large space within rather small space. As the design mostly worked with spatial sequence, organization was the most important part tested by physical models and sketches, which had taken a lot of time to try out. After all, I decided to make it quite plain and have only three floors and it simplified and made my mind more straightforward. I am still designing and figuring out the details.

Finally, the social relevance of my project as written in the problem statement is that through densification of the city, and place of death becoming excluded from the living and gradually becoming back of the scene. Personal monuments/plots are no longer a luxury to afford within a densified city, therefore the idea of collective grave, which could personalize not only tries to implement contemporary diverse values of Londoners but also to solve capacitive issues of having personal memorial space.

