LUND UNIVERSITY

The Presence of the Absent. Memorials and Places of Ritual.

Petersson, Anna

2004

[Link to publication](#)

Total number of authors:
1

THE PRESENCE OF THE ABSENT

Memorials and Places of Ritual

Anna Petersson

THE PRESENCE OF THE ABSENT

Memorials and Places of Ritual

Anna Petersson

The Presence of the Absent

A Dissertation for the Licentiate Degree in Theoretical and Applied Aesthetics
at the Department of Architecture, LTH, Lund University, 2004.

Acknowledgements

Anna Petersson

Lund, August 2004.

Table of contents

☺

1:1
Introduction

Memorials and places of ritual, such as funeral monuments, roadside memorials and cemeteries, can be said to reveal the politics of religious space as in the tension between sacred and secular and between private and public interests. At the same time they also reflect a given society's religious structures, cultural differences and social orderings, as well as the changes in these matters over time.

New ways of dealing with the deceased continuously leave traces in the space of death. From the churchyard, as the sacred heart of the city, to the anonymous placing of cremated remains in extra-urban cemeteries, and, more recently, to the practice of strewing the ashes outside the borders of the cemetery, in an environment that is specific to the deceased. Some researchers even speak of a shift: from an institutional to an individual notion of death, leaving its mark on ritual activity, memorials and places of ritual.[1] An important issue in this context, since it often seems to collide with this individualisation of death, is the great need for easy maintenance, rationality and functionality in the contemporary large-scale cemetery.

A delicate issue is also the growing demand on cemeteries of today to express their symbolic and spiritual character without religious codes.[2] Our current funeral rites and customs are born out of religious traditions, and even the most secular societies tend to associate cemeteries and funeral monuments with religious beliefs. It is interesting to note here that spontaneous

---

[1] Douglas J. Davies, *Death, Ritual and Belief: The Rhetoric of Funerary Rites*, second edition (London, New York: Continuum, 2002) [First edition published in 1997]. Curt Dahlgren, *När döden skiljer oss åt… Anonymitet och individualisering i dödsannonser: 1945-1999* (Stockholm: Databokförlaget AB, 2000). Göran Gustavsson, *När det sociala kapitalet växlas in: om begravningar och deltagandet i begravningar*, Lund studies in Sociology of Religion, 4 (Centrum för Teologi och Religionsvetenskap, Lund University: Arken bokhandel, 2003). Curt Dahlgren & Jan Hermanson, "Kremation och spridning av aska: förändrade begravningsseder i Sverige under sent 1990-tal?", [Online] *RIT religionsvetenskaplig internettidskrift*, 6/2003 (Copyright: Curt Dahlgren, Jan Hermanson & CTR, Lund University), retrieved 30 March 2004, URL <http://www.teol.lu.se/rit6/artiklar/jh1.pdf>.

[2] Generally, cemeteries of today are designed to host different religious groups as well as non-believers. Bruno Wall, *Gravskick i förändring, tradition och visioner* (Stockholm: Svenska kyrkans Församlingsförbund, 2000), 9.

sacralisation and personalisation of public space, as in memorials at the sites of motor vehicle accidents, murders, terrorist acts or other catastrophes, somewhat run counter to the current demand for rational and efficient environments, free from religious and persona-oriented symbols.

In addition to this we must not forget that cemeteries should function as sacred spaces for all kinds of survivors as well as for society at large. It might therefore be crucial to work with symbols that signify the use of the space, so that the cemetery differs from an ordinary park and detaches itself from the surrounding setting.[3] Although it might be obvious that cemeteries to some extent function as *memento mori*, I believe it may be worth recapturing the cemetery of today as a trigger for existential questions, even though it should not promote religious ideals. A walk through the cemetery might – just like the imbibing of a Bestiary[4] – help the individual to "perceive physically things which it [the mind] has difficulty grasping mentally".[5]

Aims and approaches

With a background consisting mainly of practice based activities this text serves as an initial venture into the theoretical analysis of memorials and places of ritual. It should be seen as a foundation for future investigations, which hopefully will consist of design related activities as well as further theoretical investigation. My field of study adjoins to various disciplines among which the most evident in this text are sociology, anthropology and what we may call anthropological semiotics. Besides reading and writing, my work includes the attendance of conferences and seminars connected to academic disciplines as well as practising professions, nationally and

---

[3] Bruno Wall, *Gravskick i förändring*, 9.

[4] What is interesting with the Bestiary is that it strives to explain the order of things on different levels at the same time. One might perhaps suggest that the information in a Bestiary could be grasped on an ecclesiastical level, a popular level, or a "scientific" level. However, even though the Bestiary could be seen as a didactic tool for explaining Christian dogma, I want to forefront it as a cultural phenomenon reflecting the changes in our values, norms and beliefs over time.

[5] "Folio 25v", [Online] *On-line Bestiary*, The Aberdeen Bestiary Project, second edition, translation & transcription Colin Mc Laren & Aberdeen University Library (Copyright: Colin Mc Laren & Aberdeen University Library, 1995), retrieved 27 Jan. 2004, URL <http://www.abdn.ac.uk/bestiary/translat/25v.hti>.

internationally. In these attendances my approach has been to be curious and as open to various influences and diverse inspirational sources as possible.

My overall aim has been to recognise and appreciate the cemetery and other places of ritual as cultural phenomena offering an existential dimension to everyday life, and to acknowledge that this dimension may be present in different ways, whether religiously, socially, historically or culturally. It is important to remember that cemeteries and memorials, just like any other cultural phenomena, reflect the changes in our values and beliefs over time. It is therefore my concern to stress the transformability of the cemetery in that it can alter its meaning but at the same time retain its specific function when the society or culture in which it exists changes direction.[6]

Theoretical framework

One could easily argue that my work has little to do with either architecture or design theory. Even so, I believe the ideas and theoreticians chosen for this text may contribute to new viewpoints on the subject of cemeteries and memorials. In order to grasp the function of ritual activity in society I have chosen to study texts from a wide historical range, from early scholars such as the sociologist Émile Durkheim and the anthropologist Arnold van Gennep, over later scholars such as the anthropologist Edward Evans-Pritchard, to more recent scholars such as the anthropologist Victor Turner, the thinkers Michel de Certeau and Michel Foucault, as well as the sociologists Henri Lefebvre and Pierre Bourdieu.

Writers used in the historical revue of death, disposal and dying are the historian Philippe Ariés and the art historian Michel Ragon, as well as various recent academic works in Sweden on the subject of death, the dead body, funeral rites and cemeteries.[7] Also interesting for the area under discussion are

---

[6] Based on one of Michel Foucault's characteristics of heterotopias, in which the Western cemetery serves as an example. I will discuss Foucault's concept of heterotopias in the second part of this text, in the chapter *Heterotopias and the order of things*. Michel Foucault, "Of Other Spaces", *Diacritics*, spring, translation by Jay Miskowiec (1986): 25 [Original title: "Des Espaces Autres", *Architecture-Mouvement-Continué*, 5 (1984): 46-9].

[7] These Swedish academic works could be said to derive primarily from four directions: 1) From art historical studies, focusing on the art historical and cultural value of funeral monuments, cemeteries and crematorium chapels. 2) From the field of landscape architecture, focusing on the history of the cemetery, the cemetery as cultural heritage, as well as the design and function of future cemeteries. 3) From the field of ethnology, concerning our shifting

research studies deriving from the interest of cultural geographers in religious geography, which during the last decades has developed into a separate field of study called *deathscapes*.

In addition to this I have searched for a semiotic aspect on memorials and places of ritual, although from an anthropological or philosophical rather than a general semiotic viewpoint. The semiotic aspect is used for the purpose of dealing with the factors involved in the association of a person with a place or a thing. This interest could be said to derive from two directions. Firstly, from the anthropologist Edmund Leach's introductory work *Culture and Communication: The logic by which symbols are connected*, dealing with the patterns of structure in cultural phenomena, which led me towards the linguists Jan Mulder and Sándor Hervey's theory of the linguistic sign. Leach also led me to earlier scholars like the anthropologist Sir James George Frazer and his two laws of magic, homeopathic and contagious, as well as to the structural linguist Roman Jakobson and his work on metaphor and metonymy. Secondly, my colleagues at the Department of Theoretical and Applied Aesthetics often refer to both philosophical and semiotic perspectives in their work, which has been clearly beneficial. My use of the philosopher Emmanuel Levinas, as well as the psychologist and feminist Julia Kristeva, derives directly from this milieu.

Questions and chapters

Before moving on I would like to pose some questions, which loosely follow the chapters of this text. 1) Do standardised or even anonymous burial sites embrace the individual's need for identity, remembrance and homage? 2) Do memorials and places of ritual need to be site-specific architectural or artistic

apprehensions of the dead body as well as the rituals connected to funerals and cemeteries. These studies are similar to research from the field of cultural studies, dealing with the social and cultural aspect of the histories of ideas on death, the dead body and modernity. 4) From the field of sociology of religion, investigating newspaper ads, funeral eulogies and other media connected to bereavement, as well as our shifting burial customs, along with a study on funeral directors focusing on stigma, dead bodies, funeral rites and professionalisation. When it comes to the Nordic Countries, the department of Sociology of Religion at Lund University is well represented and at the fore-front. In the rest of Europe, the department of Sociology at the University of Reading in Great Britain, informally collaborating with the department of Sociology of Religion at Lund University, could be seen as leading, probably even world-leading. The department at the University of Reading even has its own research field on the subject of death, disposal and dying, called *the sociology of death*, seen as a subfield to the sociology of culture.

constructions or could they be anything, in any place, which by continued existence commemorates a person, action or event? 3) What factors are involved in the association of a person with a place or a thing? These questions should further be seen as a starting point for my interest in the matters discussed rather than as clear-cut inquiries requiring clear-cut answers.

I would also like to take a moment to discern the main ingredients active in these questions, namely: *ritual activity*, *places of ritual*, and *memorials*. These main ingredients could also be seen as loosely following the chapters of this text: from action, over place, to thing. The framework in which these questions and their ingredients are discussed may further be seen as moving from a historical and sociological to an anthropological and semiotic perspective.

Ritual activity

From a sociological point of view a rite may be described as a special event affecting a social group and tending towards strengthening the bonds of that group in uniting its members.[8] In an anthropological context the term *rite* is often used regarding a general or usual custom of a country, people, or class of persons, where as the term *ritual* seems connected to an ordered performance of actions within that certain custom.[9] Similarly, in practical theology the ritual can be said to offer a strict definition or a precise order to the performance of religious devotional services. In this framework, the rite refers to a collective, repetitive and meaning-bearing procedure without a given order, but with a given meaning.[10] On a more emotional level the ritual may perhaps be seen as offering a secure and meaningful structure to an insecure situation. Through the use of given rhythms, symbolic actions and a symbolic language, the ritual act can serve as a tool with which to handle

---

[8] See for instance: Emile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, translated by Carol Cosman (Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 287-8, 302-5 [First published in 1912]. "Rite", [Online] *OED Online*, second edition 1989, eds. J. A. Simpson and E. S. C. Weiner (Copyright: Oxford University Press), retrieved 17 Dec. 2003, URL <http://dictionary.oed.com/cgi/entry/00207357>.

[9] See for instance: Victor Turner, *The Forest of Symbols: Aspects of Ndembu Ritual* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1970), 19-20, 50 [First published in 1967].

[10] Jan-Olof Aggedal, *Griftetalet mellan trostolkning och livstydning: en pastoralteologisk studie*, Bibliotheca theologiae practicae, 71 (Lund: Arcus, 2003), 5 footnote 25.

emotions, ideas and thoughts that are socially unmanageable.[11] Consequently, from the perspective of psychology the term ritual may illustrate "a series of actions compulsively performed under certain circumstances, the non-performance of which results in tension and anxiety".[12]

In exploring the semiotics of spectacles in the context of theatre, play, ritual and life, the semiotician Göran Sonesson distinguishes the ritual as an essentially custom bound act.[13] For Sonesson the rite as praxis does not change the world materially, "not fundamentally in any way", although it may function in a "spiritual" way, i.e. by changing the interpretation of the world.[14]

> Ritual in order to function as such must refer to a system of collective
> norms and interpret reality in the spirit of this system; that is to say,
> it's subordinated to a mythology.[15]

The ritual is further singled out by Sonesson as an expression, or rather a repetition, of a former act performed by other people in another time and space, whereas theatre, art performance, sports and play are events which follow "some kind of script".[16]

A perhaps wider definition of ritual action can be found in the works of Richard Schechner, the founder of the academic field known as performance studies.[17] In *The Future of Ritual; writings on culture and performance*,

---

[11] For this discussion see the theologian Jan-Olof Aggedal's *Griftetalet mellan trostolkning och livstydning*, 97-101, referring to Werner Jetter's great work, *Symbol und Ritual. Anthropologische Elemente im Gottesdienst* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1978).

[12] "Ritual, a. and n.", [Online] *OED Online*, second edition 1989, eds. J. A. Simpson and E. S. C. Weiner (Copyright: Oxford University Press), retrieved 17 Dec. 2003, URL <http://dictionary.oed.com/cgi/entry/00207381>.

[13] In this particular text Sonesson uses the terms *rite* and *ritual* alternatively, since Sonesson's main interest is to distinguish rite and ritual together from theatre, performance and play, not to distinguish the two terms from each other.

[14] Göran Sonesson, "Action becoming Art: 'Performance' in the context of Theatre, Play Ritual – and Life", *Visio: revue internationale de sémiotique visuelle*, 5/3 autumn (2000): 110.

[15] Göran Sonesson, "Action becoming Art", 114.

[16] Göran Sonesson, "Action becoming Art", 112-3.

[17] It is important to note here that Sonesson's interest in ritual is strictly semiotic, that is concerned with "the way things mean, with how they mean rather than what they mean"

Schechner explores what he calls "the broad spectrum of performance", including performative behaviour as well as the performing arts.[18] In this broad spectrum, Schechner reveals the ritual as a *redemptive force* with a compensative function, as in the way traditional religious rituals provide "ready-made answers to deal with crisis" states Schechner.[19] A modern example of this is what Schechner calls the "low-level ritualising" attained by the repetitive broadcasting of images from catastrophe areas on television.[20] A repetition which Schechner believes transforms the shock of "first time" or original violence into something weaker and graspable.[21] However, in Schechner's point of view the ritual may also be seen as a *creative force*. This Schechner exemplifies with what he calls "activist political theatre", such as the actions of Greenpeace, which like traditional religious rituals strive to get a message across to the public and at the same time reinforce the group itself.[22] For Schechner, "rituals are not safe deposit vaults of accepted ideas but in many cases dynamic performative systems generating new materials and recombining traditional actions in new ways".[23]

Another interesting issue is the distinction between ritual and ceremony, a distinction that Turner hints at by stating: "Ritual is transformative, ceremony confirmative".[24] Similarly, the term *ceremony* often appears to be used to describe ritual acts in religious, stately, or other formal collective usages. In these usages, the term ceremony connotes a prescribed form that expresses deference or respect to superiors in rank through courtesy, politeness, or civility. An example of this may be the way we tend to use the

---

(Göran Sonesson, "Action becoming Art", 106), whereas Schechner seems to have a broader field of interest.

[18] Schechner is interested in how performance-like acts are used in politics, medicine, religion, popular entertainment, and everyday face-to-face interactions. Richard Schechner, *The Future of Ritual; writings on culture and performance* (London & New York: Ruthledge, 1995), 21.

[19] Richard Schechner, *The Future of Ritual*, 231.

[20] A recent example of this may be the repetitive broadcasting of images showing the murder site of the Swedish Foreign Minister Anna Lind.

[21] Richard Schechner, *The Future of Ritual*, 232.

[22] Richard Schechner, *The Future of Ritual*, 9.

[23] Richard Schechner, *The Future of Ritual*, 228.

[24] Victor Turner, *The Forest of Symbols*, 95. Turner considers the term *ritual* as best used in association with social transitions whereas the term *ceremony* is better applied to events concerned with social states.

term ceremony in a judgmental way about performances regarded as merely formal or external, i.e. as empty forms, as well as in the way the word ceremony may be loosely applied to a thing done in a formal or *ceremonious* way.[25]

In this text I will settle for using the term *ritual activity* in order to refer to the repetitive act of visiting a place of ritual for the sake of veneration and remembrance, whether this be the placing of memorials or simply visiting for commemorative reasons.[26] In this framework the functional qualities of the ritual are also important in that the ritual may be used as both a redemptive and a creative tool. In the first part of this text, called *Ritual and Society*, I will recognise ritual activity as a mediator *Between individual and society*. A supposed symbiotic process between the two interacting poles of society and individual is important here, since diverse individual activities may just as well as collective acts have the power of producing and reproducing values, manners and beliefs. I will proceed in this discussion with the help of scholars such as Durkheim, Turner and Certeau, and the cultural geographer Anssi Paasi.

With this brief investigation as a framework I will look into what I choose to call *The production of a proper space of death* exemplified by various strategies institutionalising a proper space of death from the eighteenth century onwards.[27] As examples of such strategies I present the detachment of burial

---

[25] "Ceremony", [Online] *OED Online*, second edition 1989, eds. J. A. Simpson and E. S. C. Weiner (Copyright: Oxford University Press), retrieved 17 Dec. 2003, URL <http://dictionary.oed.com/cgi/entry/00035866>.

[26] These commemorative acts may of course be quite diverse. An example of a ritual activity with commemorative features is my grandmother's springtime visits to my grandfather's grave in order to listen to the first cuckoo of the year together with him, as they did when he was alive.

[27] I have borrowed the concept *proper* from Certeau's notion of *proper place*. According to Certeau, a proper place emerges when a strategy circumscribes a place as proper, thereby excluding that which is improper. Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, new edition, translated by Steven Rendall (Berkeley and Los Angeles, California: University of California Press, 2002), xix [First published in 1984, printed as paperback in 1988]. Certeau implies that place is more rigid and hegemonic than space, and consequently the term *space* is often used by Certeau with reference to repressed tactic practices modifying strategically produced places. Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, 117-8. For a thorough discussion of Certeau's treatment of the terms space and place see: Gunnar Sandin, *Modalities of Place: On polarisation and Exclusion in Concepts of Place in Site-Specific Art*, Doctoral dissertation presented at the Department of Theoretical and Applied Aesthetics, School of

grounds from the intra-urban church, the connection between taste and moral principles as regards both cemeteries and funeral monuments, the progression of the Cremation Society's aesthetic programme,[28] and the development of the wide-spread supposition of death as invisible in modern Western society. These strategies could also be held to harbour a shift of belief from a religious to a scientifically ordered worldview. Well-known scholars dealing with this shift of belief and its influence on burial customs are among others Ariés, Ragon, the sociologist Zygmunt Bauman and the theologian Douglas J. Davies. Other authors consulted in this matter are mostly drawn from the previously mentioned academic studies in Sweden on the subject of death, disposal and dying. Articles published by cultural geographers studying deathscapes are also an important source of information. I will further discuss the supposition of death as invisible in modern Western society with scholars like Ariés, Bauman, Certeau, the ethnologist Lynn Åkesson, the historian of ideas and science Eva Åhrén Snickare and the landscape architect Maria Westerdahl.

Another focal point in part one is the *Spontaneous sacralisation of public space* provoking the institutionalisation of new places of ritual as well as reinforcing social or cultural identity. A consideration in this matter is that all public symbolisation originates, at some point, in private symbols.[29] This will be exemplified by various forms of spontaneous sacralisation and personalisation of public space, such as roadside memorials, memorials at murder sites, as well as ritual activity responsible for the development of the first Swedish pet cemetery. In these exemplifications, cultural geographers studying deathscapes have been especially helpful.

Architecture, Lund Institute of Technology, Lund University (Lund: KFS AB, 2003), especially pages 100-8. It is important to note here that I use the terms *space* and *place* in a way which is more or less the reverse of Certeau's usage. Certeau's concept of strategies and tactics, as well as Paasi's view on the process of institutionalisation, will be presented shortly in the chapter called *Between individual and society*.

[28] With respect to Eva Åhrén Snickare, who uses the phrase "the aesthetic programme" [my translation, originally in Swedish: "det estetiska programmet"], with reference to the Cremation Society's aesthetic arguments. Eva Åhrén Snickare, *Döden, kroppen och moderniteten*, Linköping Studies in Arts and Science, 249 (Stockholm: Carlsson, 2002), 205. The meaning of the word *aesthetic* in this context will be discussed in the chapter *The Cremation Society's aesthetic program*.

[29] Edmund Leach, "Magical Hair", *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland*, 88/2 (Jul. – Dec., 1958): 160.

It is important to note that the chapters mentioned do not claim to be all-encompassing, nor essentially innovative, as regards the history of the Western extra-urban cemetery, the Cremation Society, the modern apprehension of death, or the development of memorials at the sites of accidents, murders or pet burials. This extremely reduced historical background, mostly built on second hand information, should rather be seen as an attempt to reveal the emergence of what I call a proper space of death. A secondary concern has been to illustrate the ability of the cemetery to transform.

Last in part one I will discuss *The problem of value judgment* often attached to phenomena which can not be logically explained or scientifically proven, inspired by Durkheim and Evans-Pritchard as well as Kristeva.

Places of ritual

The difference between the terms space, place and site has over the last decades become a major question in among others the fields of sociology, geography, philosophy, and architecture.[30] My aim here is merely to acknowledge this discussion *not* to join it since this would be too great a task and one that might lead my work into a different direction altogether. In my reduced approach to the terms space and place, the term *space* may be held to convey a mental and spatial abstraction with a collective dimension, continuously experienced as well as produced and reproduced by individual and institutional everyday practices. In the same reduced manner the term *place* may be held to express, as Paasi suggests, a more man-centred abstraction, continuously made real when the individual in interplay with other individuals, as well as with the institutions of a society, reproduces his/her own "material and intellectual existence".[31]

---

[30] For this discussion see: Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, translated by Donald Nicholson-Smith (Oxford UK och Cambridge USA: Blackwell, 1991) [Original title: *La Production de l'espace* (Paris: Anthropos, 1974)]. Doreen Massey, *Space, Place and Gender* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1994). Edward W. Soja, *Thirdspace. Journeys to Los Angeles and other real-and-imagined places* (Malden USA and Oxford UK: Blackwell, 1996). Edward S. Casey, *The Fate of Place: A Philosophical History* (Berkley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1998). Gunnar Sandin, *Modalities of Place*.

[31] Anssi Paasi, "The institutionalization of regions: a theoretical framework for understanding the emergence of regions and the constitution of regional identity", *Fennia*, 164/1 (1986):

In part two, *The Ritual Space of Liminality*, I look at *places of ritual* mainly with the help of van Gennep's theory on the three stages in rites of passage, as well as its further development by Turner. By occasionally using Bourdieu and Lefebvre I will try to give these theoreticians a somewhat critical reading. In the first chapter, *Communitas*, I will examine Turner's postulated symbiosis between what he calls structure and communitas. Through a discussion on the role of rites of passage in Western secular and large-scale society I will approach Turner's concept of the liminoid in the chapter *Liminoid events and their places*. I will then reach the chapter *Heterotopias and the order of things* where Foucault's concept of heterotopia, along with the sociologist Kevin Hetherington's treatment of it, will be analysed. Thereafter I will investigate the cemetery as an interstructural valve in society with among others Foucault, Kristeva and Davies. Finally, I will acknowledge the Western cemetery of today as a cultural phenomenon and as an ever transforming place of ritual, a view that could be seen as coherent with cultural geographers such as Catherine Howett and Lily Kong. As a general standpoint I hope this view will provide an approach to the design strategies of cemetery construction, which in the long run might help our cemeteries to function actively as the sacred spaces they should be.

Memorials

By *memorials* I mean all those things that for one reason or other serve as reminders of a certain person, place or event. This might be funeral monuments constructed for commemorative reasons but just as well everyday objects, parts of nature or man made things associated with private sentimental values.[32] A spot on an asphalt road, or even a whole setting, may

---

113-4. Paasi's view on the two concepts region and place will be discussed further in the chapter *Between individual and society*.

[32] The art historian Aloise Riegel distinguishes between *intentional monuments*, erected for the specific purpose of commemorating a specific person or event, and *unintentional monuments* that are objects which have become monuments over time because of their irreplaceable value for man. Aloise Riegel, "The Modern Cult of Monuments: Its Character and Origin", *Oppositions*, 25, translated by Forster and Ghirardo (1982): 21 [Original title: *Der moderne Denkmalkultus. Sein Wesen und seine Entstehung* (Vienna, 1903)]. The Swedish sociologist Johan Asplund discusses the sentimental value of a thing as something quite distinct from its economical or functional value. Johan Asplund, *Rivaler och syndabockar* (Göteborg: Korpen, 1989), 95-115.

also serve as a memorial, since the surroundings of a place have the ability to cause the revelation of memory or sentiment just as well as non-fixed things.[33]

Part three, *The Transportation of Meaning*, is mainly concerned with the factors involved in the association of a person with a place or a thing. I will approach this question with the study of tropes, inspired by Jakobson's focus on metaphor and metonymy as two semantic branches in the development of communicative expressions.[34] The symbols and sequences in both dreams and magic rites are according to Jakobson based on either similarity (metaphor) or contiguity (metonymy). To exemplify this, Jacobson uses Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic tools for deciphering dreams: (the metonymic) displacement and (the synecdochic) condensation, both according to Jakobson based on contiguity, and (the metaphoric) representation built on similarity. Jakobson also mentions Frazer's distinction between two laws of magic; (the metaphoric) "law of similarity" and (the metonymic) "law of contact" as built on either similarity or contiguity.[35] Leach, also fascinated by this issue, emphasises the confusion of metonymic and metaphoric associations, which he considers to be evident in all forms of human communication.

In the first chapter in part three, *A communication dyad*, I will follow another source of Leach's, namely Mulder and Hervey's theory of the linguistic sign. With this source of inspiration as a background I will then look into the increasing interest in persona-oriented symbols as well as the notion of the symbol as a growing and changing entity. Practice based examples of both these phenomena will also be taken from the sociologist Curt Dahlgren's study of death announcements. In the second chapter, *Similarity and*

---

[33] For a fuller discussion see: Edward S. Casey, "Place Memory", *Remembrance: A Phenomenological Study*, second edition (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2000), 181-215 [First edition published in 1987].

[34] As an example Jakobson states that in the development of a discourse "one topic leads to another either through their similarity or through their contiguity". The process ruled by similarity Jakobson calls the metaphoric way and the process ruled by contiguity the metonymic way. Roman Jakobson, "Two aspects of language and two types of aphasic disturbances", *Fundamentals of Language*, Janua Linguarum: Series Minor 1 (The Hague: Mouton, 1956), 69-96.

[35] Roman Jakobson, "Two aspects of language", 90-96, with reference to Sigmund Freud, *Die Traumdeutung*, ninth edition (Vienna, 1950) [First edition published in 1900], and James George Frazer, *The Golden Bough: A study in Magic and Religion*, part I, third edition (Vienna, 1950), chapter III [First abridged edition published in New York: Macmillan, 1922].

contiguity, I will explore Leach's thesis of the division between symbol/sign and the division between metaphor/metonymy as being similar to the division between similarity/contiguity. As a sidetrack I will then investigate the "fetishisation" of places and things, something which often seems to be regarded as bad in one way or another.[36] An important issue, connected to the discussion on fetishism in a religious context, is the clash between ecclesiastical culture and folkloric culture.[37] Finally, as the last stop in part three, I will follow Levinas to trace the phenomenological grounds of religious ritual and kerygmatic language back to the touch and the caress, in *The presence of the absent.*

---

[36] Whether in a religious context, as in the distinction between venerating iconolatry and worshiping idolatry made by Thomas Aquinas, in a psychoanalytical context, as in the works on fetishes by Sigmund Freud, or as used by Karl Marx in the critique of political economy. Martin Jay, *Downcast Eyes; the denigration of vision in twentieth-century French thought* (Berkley, Los Angeles, London: University Of California Press, 1993), 44. Sigmund Freud, *Föreläsningar. Orientering i psykoanalysen*, del 1, i översättning av Assar Asker (Stockholm: Natur och Kultur, 1996), 283 [Original title: *Vorlesungen zur Einführung in die Psychoanalyse* (1899) and *Neue Folge der Vorlesungen zur Einführung in die Psychoanalyse* (1933)]. Karl Marx, "The Fetishism of the Commodity and Its Secret", *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy*, vol I (London: Penguin, 1990), 163 [This edition first published in Pelican Books in 1976. Original title: *Das Kapital. Kritik der politischen Oekonomie*, (1867)].

[37] The social anthropologist Peter Brown, interested in the cult of saints along with conceptions of power in the rise of Christendom, emphasises the distinction between *translation*, i.e. the movement of relics to people, and *pilgrimage*, i.e. the movement of people to relics, as a socio-economic issue. The later and much discussed trade with pieces of relics should according to Brown be considered in this socio-economic framework. Peter Robert Lamont Brown, *The Cult of the Saints: its rise and function in Latin Christianity* (London: The University of Chicago Press, 1981), 12-22.

1
Ritual and Society

According to Catherine Bell's anthropological and sociological studies of ritual, the starting point for the academic interest in ritual stems from an expanded debate on the origins of religion and culture. This debate engaged scholars from fields such as anthropology, sociology and psychology, producing new fields of scholarship along the way, all concerned with one main question, namely: whether religion and culture evolved out of *myth* or *ritual*.[38] This debate can be said to consist of four main schools of thought, states Bell: the early theorists who first raised the issues, the myth and ritual schools that favoured ritual as the source of religion and culture, some phenomenologists of religion who emphasised myth, and the psychological standpoint borrowing ideas from the other three schools of thought.[39] Among the early theorists we find the linguist and Old Testament scholar William Robertson-Smith, whose work paved the way for three well known schools on the interpretation of religion, the myth and ritual school associated with Frazer, the sociological standpoint associated with Durkheim, and the psychoanalytical school founded by Freud.[40]

Out of this quest for the origins of religion and culture, and subsequently for the historical and psychological origins of ritual, developed the so called functionalist view concerned more with the ritual's social function than its historical and psychological origins, from predecessors such as the historian N. D. Fustel de Coulanges and the aforementioned Robertson-Smith to the fathers of British social anthropology such as Bronislaw Malinowski,[41] and

---

[38] Catherine Bell, *Ritual; Perspectives and Dimensions* (New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 3.

[39] Catherine Bell, *Ritual; Perspectives and Dimensions*, 3.

[40] Catherine Bell, *Ritual; Perspectives and Dimensions*, 3-16.

[41] Malinowski's interest in what he calls the *phatic* aspect of language has come to serve as a source of inspiration for several theoreticians, such as for instance Jakobson and Certeau. In *The problem of meaning in primitive languages* Malinowski describes the linguistic difficulties that he encountered during ethnographic field-work in the Trobriand Islands, New Guinea, which drove him towards linguistic theory. Malinowski focuses here on a linguistic phenomenon that he names *phatic communion*, which is "a type of speech in which ties of union are created by a mere exchange of words" without the purpose of conveying any meaning. This type of speech is compared by Malinowski to gossip or small talk in "civilised

A. R. Radcliffe-Brown.[42] Out of functionalist anthropology grew structural functionalism, stressing the interconnection between social institutions, practiced by Evans-Pritchard in his work *Nuer religion*.[43] Similarly, interpretive anthropology, which focuses on traces left by actors from which the beliefs, motivations and meanings of these actors are interpreted "as a text", with Clifford Geertz as a leading scholar, and structuralist anthropology, focusing on structures of meaning rather than social structures, developed by Claude Lévi-Strauss.[44] A number of anthropologists may be seen as taking some kind of middle road between the British anthropologists' functionalist view of ritual and Lévi-Strauss' structuralist view. Van Gennep and Leach are examples of such scholars along with Turner and Mary Douglas. According to Bell, Turner and Douglas are seen as having a semantic, symbolic or semiotic style of anthropological interpretation in that they focus on the meaning of statements, activities and events whereas Leach is seen as having a more syntactical approach in his concern for the patterns of structure in cultural phenomena.[45]

Over the last decades new fields of scholarship have evolved. A combination of ethological and biogenetic approaches to ritual has produced a field called

---

society", as it creates bonds of mutual understanding through phatic communion. Bronislaw Malinowski, "The problem of meaning in primitive languages", supplement nr 1 to eds. C. K. Ogden and I. A. Richards, *The Meaning of Meaning; A study of the Influence of Language upon Thought and of the Science of Symbolism* (Routledge: Thoemmes Press, 1994), 435-496 [First published in 1923]. Malinowski thus reveals the phatic aspect of language, which has later been reused by both Jakobson and Certeau. See, for instance: Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, 99, 219 footnote 17, and Roman Jakobson, "Lingvistik og poetic", *Vindrosen*, 7 (København, 1967): 41-52.

[42] Catherine Bell, *Ritual; Perspectives and Dimensions*, 23-33.

[43] However, it seems that Evans-Pritchard basically agrees with the functionalist notion, i.e. that religion is a product of social life, even though he clearly disagrees with Durkheim's way of seeing religion as a representation of a society's social order, ignoring the fact that it might actually have a meaning of its own. Edward Evans-Pritchard, *Nuer religion* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1974), 313, 315, 320 [First published in 1956]. For this discussion, see also: Catherine Bell, *Ritual; Perspectives and Dimensions*, 34-5.

[44] The French anthropologist Levi-Strauss builds his theories on Durkheim as well as on structural linguists such as Jakobson and Ferdinand de Saussure. For these various standpoints in anthropology see: Thomas J. Barfield, ed. [Online] *The Dictionary of Anthropology* (Cambridge: Mass Blackwell Publishers, 2000), 209, 263, 451, retrieved 21 Nov. 2003, URL <http://www.netlibrary.com/Reader/> [First published as hardback in Malden, MA & Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1997].

[45] Catherine Bell, *Ritual; Perspectives and Dimensions*, 68.

biogenetic structuralism, with authors like the anthropologist Charles D. Laughlin and psychiatrist Eugene G. d'Aquili.[46] The study of ritual or theatre-like performance, in art as well as in political activist actions, has as we have seen also grown into an academic field of its own known as performance studies, with Schechner as the founder of the first Department of Performance Studies, at New York University's Tisch School of the Arts.[47] We have also touched upon the semiotics of ritual, which according to Sonesson should precede and be presupposed by an anthropological analysis of ritual.[48] The semiotics of ritual could further be said to study the *way* in which a ritual means something rather than *what* it means.[49]

Between individual and society

In *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, inspired by Robertson-Smith, Durkheim proposes that religious concepts, such as the concept of the sacred, ultimately refers to people's emotionally charged interdependence and their social arrangements rather than to a supernatural entity.[50] By this Durkheim means that what is considered sacred or profane in a given society is just a collectively projected symbolic representation of that society's values and orders. Freud later modifies this conclusion by declaring that God is just a projection of paternal family values.[51] Evans-Pritchard's sarcastically states: "For Freud God is the father, for Durkheim God is society".[52] One of Durkheim's main interests is the social function of religious concepts, especially their ability to affect the social structure with the help of

---

[46] Bell states that in biogenetic and ethological approaches to ritual the theories of the psychoanalyst Erik H. Erikson and the psychologist Jean Piaget are often used. Catherine Bell, *Ritual; Perspectives and Dimensions*, 32.

[47] "Performance Studies", [Online] *Tisch School of the Arts at NYU*, retrieved 23 Apr. 2004, URL <http://performance.tisch.nyu.edu/page/home>.

[48] Göran Sonesson, "Action becoming Art", 106, referring to Göran Sonesson, "El lugar del rito en la semiótica del spectaculo / Ritens plats i skådespelets semiotik", *Heterogénesis*, 8/29 (1999): 12-27.

[49] Göran Sonesson, "Action becoming Art", 106.

[50] Emile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, 160-1, 193, 318.

[51] Sigmund Freud, *Föreläsningar. Orientering i psykoanalysen*, del 1, 571-572.

[52] Edward Evans-Pritchard, *Theories of Primitive Religion* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965), 63. A point also noted by Bell: Catherine Bell, *Ritual; Perspectives and Dimensions*, 34-5.

ceremonies and rituals.[53] Durkheim holds that religious rituals and ceremonies skilfully confirm societal values at the same time as they forefront the importance of communal identity.[54]

> By seeming to strengthen the ties between the worshipper and his god, they [the acts of worship] really strengthen the ties that bind the individual to his society[55]

In viewing the ritual as a societal mechanism for recreating the confirmed unity of the group, not just affirming it, Turner goes one step further than Durkheim. Turner calls the ritual a *social drama* and sees it as the safety valve of society in that the ritual enables the release and revision of tensions and stresses built into the social structure. For Turner, social structure is thus a dynamic process and not just a static organisation.[56]

Even though Durkheim clearly favours the externality of *social facts* over internal individual experiences,[57] Durkheim, in *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, continuously suggests that external social facts become effective only when internalised. As a more recent statement on the effectiveness of internalised social facts, an article by Paasi might be mentioned. In *The institutionalization of regions: a theoretical framework for understanding the emergence of regions and the constitution of regional identity* Paasi emphasises the import of what he calls invisible power relations, evident in both institutional and individual practices. By way of example he mentions how various societal institutions, such as the school system or different kinds of media, act as mediators of *structures of expectation*,[58] influencing the manners,

---

[53] Another issue for Durkheim is the way embodied representations of abstract ideas serve as the roots of social life, which I will discuss further in the chapter *Representation and fetishism*.

[54] Emile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, 11, 171, 278-88.

[55] Emile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, 171.

[56] Victor Turner, *Dramas, Fields and Metaphors: Symbolic Action in Human Society* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1974), especially pages 23-35. Catherine Bell, *Ritual; Perspectives and Dimensions*, 38-40.

[57] That is, the manners of acting, and ways of thinking and feeling, imprinted on the individual by the traditions, norms and ideologies of a given society.

[58] Described by Paasi as the ways in which people organise their knowledge of the world based on their previous experience of the world in a given culture (or cultures). Anssi Paasi, "The institutionalization of regions", 122. For the origin of the concept structures of expectation Paasi refers to the linguists R. N. Ross, "Ellipsis and the structure of expectation", *San Jose*

values and ideals of individuals, creating feelings of (in this case) regional identity.[59] For Paasi, the institutional practices of a society represent the collective dimension of a region and its history, whereas individual practices represent the place of a single individual along with his/her own history.[60] Further, institutional practices are seen by Paasi as mediators between individual practises and the time-space of society, and they are thus essential for the production of both regions and places.[61] Therefore, as Paasi points out, even though the repetitive everyday acts of individuals play an important role in the reproduction of society they are always permeated by overall structures in the given society.[62] Even so, Paasi reveals a cyclic process between the two interacting poles of individual and society, as well as between the emergence of places and regions, where meanings and values are mediated via society's institutional practices to individuals and their societal situation. This leads to diverse individual as well as collective practices that in turn affect the constitution of regional identity and the emergence of regions. Paasi concludes that the emergence of regions should be understood as a continuous historical process consisting of four equally important stages of institutionalisation, which to some extent appear parallel: the development of *territorial shape*, the development of *conceptual* (or symbolic) *shape*, the development of *institutional shape*, and the establishment of the region as an

---

Occasional Papers in Linguistics, 1 (1975): 183-91 and Deborah Tannen, "What's in a frame? Surface evidence for underlying expectations", *New Directions in Discourse Processing* (1979): 137-81. Other concepts that represent almost the same idea as structures of expectation are, according to Paasi, *structures of feeling*, coined by Raymond Williams in the field of cultural studies, as well as Bourdieu's sociological concept *habitus*. The reason why Paasi uses the linguistic term instead of structures of feeling or habitus is that the linguistic term appears more suitable for region-bounded perception in that it refers to time-space specific "institutionally embedded schemes of perception", states Paasi, whereas habitus and structures of feeling are bounded by a specific "way of life" in a certain social group. Thus, the concept of structures of expectation appears to me to be quite similar to what Durkheim calls social facts. The immanence of structures of expectations in institutional practices, their tradition boundedness, and their time-space dependency are also, in my opinion, convincing reasons for using the concept.

[59] Anssi Paasi, "The institutionalization of regions", 122.

[60] Anssi Paasi, "The institutionalization of regions", 113-4. According to Paasi, a *place* is where the individual reproduces his/her own material and intellectual existence, whereas in the collective production of a *region* the role of a single individual is always replaceable.

[61] Anssi Paasi, "The institutionalization of regions", 122-4.

[62] Anssi Paasi, "The institutionalization of regions", 106-9.

entity among other regions along with an awareness of the region's *established role*, in other words regional consciousness.[63] These four interdependent stages of institutionalisation seem to me quite useful for the discussion of other kinds of institutionalisation processes as well as, for instance, the upcoming discussion of the production of a proper space of death.

Another cyclic procedure, which to some extent could be seen as operating along with the institutionalisation process discussed above,[64] can be found in Certeau's discussion of what he calls *strategies* and *tactics*.[65] In a way, Certeau uses the terms strategies and tactics as opposites, since strategies are connected to the ruling forces in society, such as for instance economic, political or scientific institutions, "seeking to create places in conformity with abstract models", whereas tactics belong rather to the oppressed or to the common people who do not have the means or status, neither financially nor socially, to produce a proper place of their own.[66] Thus tactics can only use, manipulate, or divert, the proper places produced by strategies. They can never own them.[67] Where strategies successively plan and create a proper place by separating it from an "environment", tactics depend on sudden opportunities and calculated coups enacted at just the right moment. The fact that tactics cannot produce a proper place of their own can also be seen as the very engine for the tactic procedure, since tactics do not need to obey the law of the proper place "for they [tactics] are not defined or identified by it".[68] The social structures and proper places produced by strategies thus provoke tactics to enact coups. This in turn inspires new strategies for reordering and

---

[63] Anssi Paasi, "The institutionalization of regions", 121.

[64] However, it is important to note that Certeau's cyclic process, between strategies and tactics, illustrates some kind of "master and servant" relationship, such as for instance the bourgeois as master over the common people, whereas Paasi's cyclic process illustrates the symbiotic relation between individual and society.

[65] Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, especially 29-42.

[66] As was noted before, I use the concepts space and place in a more or less reversed manner as compared to Certeau. However, in this short section on Certeau's strategies and tactics the use of the terms space and place follows Certeau's usage.

[67] Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, 36-7.

[68] Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, 29.

reorganising the tactics produced and so on.[69] This symbiotic procedure will later be used to exemplify two starting points from which the institutionalisation of various places of ritual may progress.[70] Even though strategies are higher up in the chain of command than tactics, the two terms should not be seen as a fixed dichotomy, since they repeat as well as reinforce one another. Neither should the difference between them be seen as clear-cut since the one may happen to slide into the other and vice versa.

The production of a proper space of death

As we have seen, some theoreticians emphasise the existence of a symbiotic process between society and individual or between successively planned proceedings and calculated coups, in which manners, values and ideologies are continuously being mediated, produced and reproduced. Even though Certeau's strategic and tactic procedures, or Paasi's institutional and individual practices, cannot simply be compared to rituals since they lack "the repetitive fixity of rites",[71] the different stages in the ritualisation of everyday life may be considered to have the same kind of mediating function, whether between society and individual, between producer and user or, as the developmental psychologist Erik H. Erikson suggests, between the development of the individual (ontogeny) and the evolution of the human species (phylogeny).[72] The ritual situation may at least be held as *one* mediator

---

[69] This process seems quite similar to Turner's concept of structure and anti-structure, which I will discuss further in the chapter *Communitas* in part two of this text.

[70] For a discussion on the role of strategies and tactics in the emergence of territoriality see the Architect Mattias Kärrholm's PhD thesis: *Arkitekturens territorialitet – till en diskussion om territoriell makt och gestaltning i stadens offentliga rum* (Lund: Grahns Tryckeri AB, 2004), especially chapter four.

[71] Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, 45.

[72] Erikson views ritualisation as having both a compensatory and an adaptive function in helping the individual both physically and emotionally to cope with other human beings and social relationships. Ritualisation does not only help the small child to distinguish between self and other but also to separate right from wrong. Erikson refers here to the Swiss psychologist Jean Piaget, *Construction of Reality in the Child* (New York: Basic Books, 1954), 3. Suggested elements in the stages of ritualisation in everyday life are according to Erikson: 1) *Pre-verbal ritual games*, such as the greeting ritual between a parent and the infant child, supporting a human need which will never be outgrown, namely the need for regular and mutual affirmation and certification. 2) *Early childhood rituals*, which train the child to "watch himself" and help the child to discriminate between right and wrong. 3) *Play age rituals*, offering the child the possibility to elaborate with the roles and demands of adult age. With the

among others, passing on social facts or structures of expectation through ritual activities in school or church, in private or state institutions. In addition to this we might reveal both social facts and structures of expectation as products of a concern to systematise, classify and order the experience of life. Some values and beliefs may derive from religious classification systems while others are inherited as traditions or norms, sometimes with importance for the function of society, sometimes seen as part of our cultural heritage. In their function as classification systems, Durkheim saw the similarities between the role of religion and the ascending role of science in the society of his day. He also believed that the role of science in the future would surpass the role of religion as the medium through which the social and natural world was confirmed, expressed and lived.[73]

This shift of medium from a religiously ordered to a scientific world view, is clearly visible in our relationship to death and consequently in the way we care for our dead. What is interesting to note here is not so much the shift in itself as the way in which society responds to it by reordering the space of death with the help of various new strategies, such as the emplacement of death by excluding the cemetery from the city centre, the connection between taste and moral principles as regards the design and construction of both cemeteries and funeral monuments, the introduction of the Cremation Society's aesthetic programme, as well as the development of the widespread supposition of death as invisible in modern Western society. If we may

---

help of solitary play, and later by joining peers in games, play age rituals help the child to develop an ideological conviction that links him/her to a group. 4) *School age rituals*, described by Erikson as "the social interplay and prescribed tasks which are structured according to the prevailing technology", give the individual a formal aspect of ritual by transforming play into work and game into cooperation. 5) *Adulthood rituals*, concerning rites of confirmation, initiation and ending (such as for instance rites of passage which I will discuss further in part two in this text), help the individual to act creatively and responsibly within a larger group such as the society. According to Erikson, adulthood rituals also prepare for the "generational" aspect of ritualisation, including reproductive, parental, instructive, creative and curative actions. Finally, Erikson states that each era has the possibility of developing new forms of adaptive ritualisation suitable for its specific technological, political, professional and intellectual setting. With the help of a creative institutional setting the ego is, according to Erikson, integrated, and cultural solidarity is thus maintained and enhanced. Erik H. Erikson, "Ontogeny of Ritualization in Man", *Psychoanalysis – a general psychology: essays in honour of Heinz Hartmann*, ed. Rudolf M. Loewenstein (New York: International Universities Press, 1966), 601-21. For a fuller discussion, see also: Erik Erikson, *Toys and reasons: stages in the ritualization of experience* (New York: W. W. Norton cop., 1977).

[73] Emile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, 324-7.

borrow Paasi's four interdependent stages of institutionalisation for our purposes, the production of a proper space of death may thus be seen to consist of: the development of territorial shape, the development of conceptual (or symbolic) shape, the development of institutional shape, and the establishment of an awareness and a consciousness of a proper space of death.

The extra-urban cemetery

Over the last thousand years the Western cemetery has gone through some major changes, recognised by among others Ariés.[74] Many French intellectuals, such as Ariés, Bauman and Certeau, state that death has become alienated and denied whilst Swedish academics such as Åkesson and Snickare, prefer to see our shifting burial customs as a natural development.[75] Although scholars may argue whether death today is denied or not it is clear that a major change in our attitudes towards death occurred in the eighteenth century, in both Western Europe and North America.[76] Most scholars will also agree that it was this fundamental shift that started the dissolution of the funeral rite as a rite of passage.[77] It is also evident that the custom of visiting the deceased was born along with this shift and has, as Ariés describes it, become "the great continuing religious act" of our time, since those who no longer go to church still visit the cemetery.[78]

Until the end of the eighteenth century the cemetery was closely tied to the church, which was situated in the centre of the city or village. Ariés declares

[74] Philippe Ariés, *Western Attitudes Toward Death; from the Middle Ages to the Present*, translated by Patricia M. Ranum (London and New York: Marion Boyars, 1976). Philippe Ariés, *The Hour of Death*, translated by Helen Weaver (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1983) [First published in Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1977]. From now on I will only use the word *cemetery*, though meaning the "Western cemetery".

[75] I will come back to this discussion shortly, in the chapter *(In)visible death*.

[76] States the historian of classic history Ian Morris in *Burial and ancient society: The rise of the Greek city-state* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 35.

[77] Ian Morris, *Burial and ancient society*, 35. With reference to: Robert Hertz, *Death and The right hand*, translated by Rodney and Claudia Needham, with an introduction by Edward Evans-Pritchard (Aberdeen: Cohen and West, 1960) [First published in *L'Année Sociologique*, 1907, and *Revue Philosophique*, 1909], and Peter Metcalf & Richard Huntington, *Celebrations of Death: the anthropology of mortuary ritual*, second edition (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991) [First edition published in 1979].

[78] Philippe Ariés, *Western Attitudes Toward Death*, 73.

that "if one wished to found a cemetery, one built a church".[79] Due to industrialisation and urbanisation in the late eighteenth century the city churchyard soon grew overcrowded and unsanitary. Physicians and hygienists therefore suggested new burial patterns, with extra-urban cemeteries far away from the crowded city centres. In Britain, a nation that joined the fight between the city and the cemetery rather late, the struggle came to coincide with the whole sanitary reform movement that had as its grounds the cholera epidemics of London in the beginning of the nineteenth century. Part of the crusade against unhealthy environments was directed towards the unsanitary conditions of London's churchyards, which were considered to spread diseases through "fatal fumes". The historian of architecture Göran Lindahl illustrates the situation in Sweden in a corresponding way:

> The ultimate solution [for the extra-urban cemeteries] belongs to the same active and pro-reform era in Stockholm, which not only changed the city's appearance but also led to an absolutely essential technological and hygienic restoration. The new burial ground was mainly seen as a means by which to improve the health of the city - this was the main goal for the reform movement, whether it concerned water and sewage pipes, new streets, parks or hospitals.[80] [My translation]

A central force for the new hygienic and rational way of burial was the Enlightenment movement, evoking thoughts of clarity, common sense and empirical experience that questioned the religiously ordered world view. The French Revolution is by some scholars consequently seen as a catalyst for the construction of a new space of death.[81] In the latter half of the eighteenth

---

[79] Philippe Ariés, *The Hour of Death*, 51.

[80] [Originally in Swedish: "Den definitiva lösningen tillhör samma aktiva och reformvilliga tid i Stockholm, som inte bara förändrade stadsbildens utseende utan också genomförde en tvingande nödvändig teknisk och hygienisk upprustning. I den nya begravningsplatsen såg man främst ett medel att förbättra sundheten i staden - det var hela reformarbetets huvudmål, antingen det nu gällde vatten- och avloppsledningar, nya gator, parker eller sjukhus."] Göran Lindahl, *Grav och Rum: svenskt gravskick från medeltiden till 1800-talets slut* (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1969), 208.

[81] John McManners, *Death and the Enlightenment. Changing Attitudes to Death among Christians and Unbelievers in Eighteenh-century France* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 309. See also: Kjell Lundquist, "Från beteshage till trädgård – kyrkogårdens historia", *Kyrkogårdens gröna kulturarv*, Stad och land, 103 (Alnarp: Movium, 1992), 27.

century, a period that harbours both the great movement of the famous Paris churchyard Saints-Innocents down to the equally famous catacombs, as well as new plans to build larger freestanding cemeteries outside the city centre, we find two French "revolutionary architects" promoting the new enlightened cemetery, Claude Nicolas Ledoux and Étienne-Louis Boullée. Boullée can be said to possess an extraordinary position amongst funerary architects in that he presented several purely utopian propositions for funerary monuments where religious symbols were replaced by astronomically inspired figures and geometrical shapes. One of Boullée's most well known funeral monuments is the symbolic cenotaph made in the honour of Isaac Newton, designed to inspire visitors to contemplate the immensity, eternity and perfection of the universe.[82]

In Sweden, King Gustav III held a speech at the opening of the *Riksdag* in 1786 which has later come to be known as the "Swedish Enlightenment's Churchyard Tract" [my translation], where he begged the Church of Sweden to release the cemetery from the church, to enable the construction of new extra-urban cemeteries.[83] In the year 1815 all churches in Sweden were finally commissioned to build cemeteries outside the larger cities.[84] The largest of these new extra-urban cemeteries, the Stockholm Northern cemetery

---

[82] Étienne-Louis Boullée, "Architecture, essay on art", *Boullée and visionary architecture*, ed. Helene Rosenau (London, 1976).

[83] [Originally in Swedish: "den svenska upplysningstidens kyrkogårdstraktat".] Göran Lindahl, *Grav och rum*, 197-9. Kjell Lundquist, "Från beteshage till trädgård", 27.

[84] Although the spatial link between the church and the cemetery had been broken, the burial ground was not to be released from the order of the Church of Sweden until 1991. In 1991 the Diocesan Associations in Sweden were instructed to arrange additional public burial places for those not belonging to a Christian religious community, whether they belonged to another religious community or simply did not want to be buried in consecrated ground. Since the year 2000, when the relations between the Swedish Government and the Church of Sweden were changed, the various territorial parishes in Sweden extended their responsibility as regards public burial activities and are now principally responsible for all deceased with a Swedish national registration, regardless of their religious faith. There are however two territorial exceptions. In Stockholm and Tranås the municipal authorities are responsible for public burial activities. There are of course also a few private burial grounds in Sweden, such as, for instance, Jewish cemeteries. Bruno Wall, *Gravskick i förändring*, 13, 16-7. *Begravningslag* (1990:1144). Bengt Erman, *Begravningsrätten i praktiken*, reviderad upplaga (Stockholm: Verbum Förlag AB, 2001), 13-7.

(sometimes called the New cemetery), was constructed in 1827 and designed as a French classicistic park.[85]

However, not all the ideas behind the extra-urban cemeteries sprung from rational thinking and hygienic principles. In Sweden, Bishop Jesper Svedberg (father of the scientist and philosopher Emanuel Svedenborg) had already argued, in 1711, for the German religious reformer Martin Luther's earlier concept of park-like burial spaces placed outside the city centre.[86] Luther's cemetery concept was later fruitfully promoted in Germany by Count Nikolas Ludwig von Zinzendorf along with the religious community of the Hernhutt's. The construction of a park-like cemetery in Hernhutt in 1730 was followed by the construction of several similar Hernhutt cemeteries both inside and outside Germany.[87]

Romantic visions of ideal landscapes and English gardening also contributed to new thoughts of a pleasant form of burial, as expressed in the concept of garden cemeteries, in Sweden known as "park cemeteries" [my translation].[88] Père-Lachaise, the Paris cemetery built in 1804, is often recognised as the first of the great garden cemeteries, with influences from Romantic ideas of English landscape gardening reflected in the informality of the scattered sculptural monuments in the cemetery's wooded park.[89] The garden tomb of the philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau, on the isle of poplars at Ermonville outside Paris, is often mentioned as an inspirational source for the garden

---

[85] Göran Lindahl, *Grav och rum*, 204. Other extra-urban cemeteries constructed in Sweden at this time are: Lund 1809, Borås 1812 and Helsingborg 1815. The new cemeteries in Sweden were mainly constructed in a standardised and uniform way, with large blocks and symmetrical grids of paths and roads. Freer forms were not to be used until the 1880s, states Lindahl. Göran Lindahl, *Grav och rum*, 206.

[86] Kjell Lundquist, "Från beteshage till trädgård", 17, 21, 24. Luther spoke about burial spaces built outside the city centre, characterised by beautiful and peaceful surroundings, where one could stroll around in a park-like environment while pondering on death, the last judgement, and the awaiting resurrection. Thus, the ideas behind Luther's, and also Svedberg's, proposal had not so much to do with hygienic or rational motives as with religious beliefs, arguing that the trees and herbs planted in these park-like cemeteries would serve as reminders of infinity through their perpetual cycle of growth, death and regrowth. Bruno Wall, *Gravskick i förändring*, 7.

[87] Kjell Lundquist, "Från beteshage till trädgård", 24-5.

[88] [Originally in Swedish: "parkkyrkogårdar" or "parklika kyrkogårdar".]

[89] Catherine Howett, "Living Landscapes for the Dead", *Landscape*, 21 (1977): 10.

cemetery. Hence, as the historian of ecclesiastical history John McManners states, "From the death of Rousseau to the Revolution, sentimental writers had to put their tombs into unspoilt natural landscapes."[90] As a supplementary source of inspiration the landscape architect Kjell Lundquist mentions Ch. C. L. Hirschfeldt's great work *Theorie der Gartenkunst*.[91] Hirschfeldt's garden cemetery was to be constructed as a surreal surrounding, secluded from the space and time of the everyday, provoking the mourners to experience a sense of holy melancholy. The planting of vegetation would not only make the cemetery more garden-like, and therefore pleasurable to visit; Hirschfeldt also considered vegetation to have a purifying effect.

As an additional goal for the new cemeteries egalitarianism might be mentioned. That is, the new burial grounds were no longer to exclude people on account of their social or financial status.[92] Ironically, the best burial plots were of course quite expensive and therefore only available to the wealthy. Ragon quotes;

> Just as we display our wealth by acquiring, in the city, a house of our own, so we confirm that wealth by providing ourselves, in the necropolis, with a posthumous, sumptuous, and durable house.[93]

The main change was instead the specific function of the cemeteries in relation to society. In being specialised secluded spaces where the dead were taken care of in the most hygienic, rational and pleasant way.[94] Ragon

---

[90] John McManners, *Death and the Enlightenment*, 350.

[91] Kjell Lundquist, "Från beteshage till trädgård", 25, referring to Hirschfeldt's work *Theorie der Gartenkunst*, vol 5, (Leipzig: Weidmann Erben u. Reich, 1779-1785).

[92] Göran Lindahl, *Grav och rum*, 208.

[93] Michel Ragon, *The Space of Death; a study of funerary architecture, decoration, and urbanism*, translated by Alan Sheridan (Charlottesville: Univ. Press of Virginia, 1983), 25 [Original title: *L'espace de la mort. - Essai sur l'architecture, la décoration et l'urbanisme funéraires*, ed. Michel Albin (Paris, 1981)], quoting Emile Magne, *L'esthetique des villes* (Paris: Mercure de France, 1908).

[94] We may, for instance, compare the cemetery with other examples of spatial concealment during the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries, such as the prison, the hospital and the sanatorium. See for instance: Michel Foucault, *Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason*, new edition, translated by Richard Howard (New York: Vintage Books, 1988). Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: the Birth of the Prison*, translated by Alan Sheridan (New York: Vintage Books, 1979). See also Mattias Kärrholm, *Arkitekturens territorialitet*, especially chapter nine.

consequently states that for the architects of the late eighteenth century the great interest in cemeteries and cenotaphs coincides with a fascination for functional prisons and industrial estates.

> The idea of building new cemeteries, as one designs new cities, […] could only come about at a time when functional prisons and the first "industrial estate", Claude Nicolas Ledoux´s Salines d'Arch-et-Senans, were being designed. [95]

In a similar way Foucault holds that when the relocation of the cemetery was initiated, "the cemeteries […] came to constitute, no longer the sacred and immortal heart of the city, but 'the other' city, where each family possesses its dark resting place". [96]

"Moral sentiments and tastes of all classes"

The previously mentioned fight against the city cemeteries in Britain was largely directed by the surgeon George Alfred Walker and his 1839 book *Gatherings from Grave Yards*, [97] in which Walker went so far as to see the city cemeteries as the direct or indirect cause of "inhumanity, immorality, and irreligion". [98] With glorifying stories of "the history of the burying places among the ancients", such as the extra-urban necropolises used by the Greeks, the Romans, and also the early Christians, Walker condemns "the unwise and revolting customs of inhuming the dead in the midst of the living". [99] Aries describes similar ideas in France where the cemetery was promoted to regain the place "both physical and moral" that it had occupied in Antiquity but lost in the early Middle Ages. [100]

Nevertheless, when new extra-urban cemeteries were finally constructed in Britain in the 1830's, they were often run like profit oriented companies,

---

[95] Michel Ragon, *The space of Death*, 238.

[96] Michel Foucault, "Of Other Spaces", 25.

[97] George Alfred Walker, *Gatherings from Grave Yards*, facsimile edition of the first edition (Kila, MT, USA: Kessinger Publishing, 2003) [First published in 1839].

[98] George Alfred Walker, *Gatherings from Grave Yards*, III.

[99] George Alfred Walker, *Gatherings from Grave Yards*, I.

[100] Philippe Ariés, *Western Attitudes Toward Death*, 74.

constructed after an earlier American model.[101] This brought on a debate among social reformers, as well as critics of art and architecture, on proper and improper behaviour regarding the "commercialisation of death". Critics, such as the British architect Augustus Welby Pugin, saw the commercialisation of death as a sign of the coming degradation of the Christian faith and with it disrespect for the dead.[102] Similar criticism can be found in the United States, where a widespread conservative reaction against "the pervasive mediocrity of American manners and morals" was apparent among social critics during the 1830's.[103] For Pugin, the promotion of a revival of the Gothic style in architecture and design was not merely a matter of style, but rather of principle.[104] The same can be said of the British landscape architect John C. Loudon who in an 1843 treatise "On the Laying Out, Planting, and Management of Cemeteries" remarks that a cemetery, after having provided a decent place of burial, should function so as to improve "the moral sentiments and tastes of all classes", with a focus on "neatness, order, and high keeping".[105]

The Swedish extra-urban cemeteries offered both private grave lots and public graves. On the private lots architectural monuments were built and on the public graves there were placed simpler grave decorations made of wood, wrought iron or slabs of stone.[106] The two kinds of grave were brought closer to each other in the last decades of the nineteenth century when industrially made mass-produced memorials where created. As these mass-produced

---

[101] George Alfred Walker, *Gatherings from Grave Yards*, 216, 235-8. Augustus Welby Northmore Pugin, "An Apology for the Revival of Christian Architecture in England", *The True Principles of Pointed or Christian Architecture* and *An Apology for the Revival of Christian Architecture in England*, joint facsimile edition of the first editions (Gracewing Publishing: Leominster, Herefordshire, Gracewing, 2003), 12 [*True Principles* first published in 1841; *An Apology* first published in 1943]. In the United States, one of the fathers of urban design, James Hillhouse, constructed the first carefully planned profit oriented private cemetery as early as in 1796, the New Burying Ground in New Haven, with uniform plots, all equally desirable for prospective buyers. J. B. Jackson, "From Monument to Place", *Landscape*, 17 (1967-68): 23.

[102] Augustus Welby Northmore Pugin, *An Apology*, 12-3, 33-6.

[103] Catherine Howett, "Living Landscapes for the Dead", 11.

[104] Augustus Welby Northmore Pugin, *The present state of ecclesiastical architecture in England*, facsimile edition of the first edition (Oxford, 1969), 44 [First published in 1843].

[105] Catherine Howett, "Living Landscapes for the Dead", 12.

[106] Göran Lindahl, *Grav och rum*, 208.

memorials grew more and more common a critique of immoral and blasphemous grave culture arose. Detailed standardised restrictions were soon enforced regarding the design of both the grave lots and their memorials, which did not leave much room for personal choice.[107] By way of a good example, a permanent exhibition of ideal grave lots, vegetation and funeral monuments was arranged in 1919 at the Stockholm Northern cemetery. A cemetery exhibition was also held in 1920, in Seglora cemetery at Skansen in Stockholm, showing stylistically pure tombstones designed by the Swedish architect Harald Wadsjö.[108]

The connection between taste and moral principles, regarding both cemeteries and funeral monuments, seems to go hand in hand with similar contemporary thoughts on social engagement through good design. This is perhaps not so surprising since a relationship between aesthetic judgement and causal as well as moral judgement is already noticeable in the works of philosophers active in the Age of Reason, such as for instance David Hume.[109] Great Britain has a strong foundation of later reformers, such as Pugin and John Ruskin, followed by William Morris and the Arts & Crafts movement as well as the British Guild of Handicrafts, combining design strategies and moral issues in publications as well as design programmes. In Sweden we find Ellen Key (who by the way was a member of the Swedish Cremation Society)[110] with her much debated concept of "beauty for everyone" [my translation] as well as the Swedish Handicrafts union with their propaganda publications formulated by the theoretician Gregor Paulsson. Publications promoting social reform through good design were followed by other propaganda publications, written by Paulsson, Erik Gunnar Asplund, and many other functionalist architects. With instructions on "the modern taste"

---

[107] Bruno Wall, *Gravskick i förändring*, 7-8.

[108] Harald Wadsjö, *Kyrkogårdskonst: avbildningar från äldre Svenska kyrkogårdar* (Stockholm, 1919). Harald Wadsjö, *Gravkonst* (Lund: Samfundet för hembygdsvård, 1930).

[109] See for instance: David Hume, "Of the standard of taste", *Of the delicacy of taste and passion: Of tragedy; Of the standard of taste*, Kurslitteratur, Institutionen för estetik, Uppsala universitet, 22 (Uppsala, 1994), 21-43 [Essays originally written in the 1770's].

[110] Bengt Enström, *Kyrkan och Eldbegängelserörelsen i Sverige 1882-1962*, akademisk avhandling, Teologiska fakulteten, Uppsala universitet (Lund: Berlingska Boktryckeriet, 1964), 184-95.

[my translation] they provided guidelines for the common people on how to live with consumer culture, illustrated by both images and text.[111]

The Cremation Society's aesthetic programme

The development of the Cremation Society at the end of the nineteenth century, with the aim of improving burial grounds hygienically as well as *aesthetically*,[112] runs parallel with the development of extra-urban cemeteries. One might even say that the separation of the cemetery from the church helped the Cremation Society to expand since it had at the start experienced great difficulties in getting clerical approval for its "new" way of burial.[113] As was mentioned earlier, ideas of hygiene and rationality paved the way for the outskirts cemeteries. The same ideas lay behind the Cremation Society, which may perhaps even be seen as a response to them.[114] In 1839, when Walker criticised London's cemetery administration for the city's unsanitary cemeteries, the social reformer Edwin Chadwick proposed that cremation should be introduced. In one of his numerous writings on the Cremation Society, Oscar Övden, states that after Chadwick's proposition the concept of cremation soon became the new ideal among physicians and hygienists.[115] As a clearly noticeable additional source of inspiration stands the Romantic

---

[111] Ellen Key, *Skönhet för alla: Fyra Uppsatser*, Studentföreningen Verdandis småskrifter, 77 (Stockholm: Bonnier, 1899). Gregor Paulsson, *Vackrare vardagsvara*, faksimilupplaga (Stockholm, AB Grafiska Gruppen, 1995) [First published in: Stockholm: Svenska Slöjdföreningen, 1919]. Gregor Paulsson, *Hur bo? Några ord om den moderna smakriktningen* (Stockholm: Kooperativa förbundet, 1934). Gunnar Asplund & Gregor Paulsson, *Acceptera*, faksimilupplaga (Stockholm: Tiden, 1980) [First published in: Stockholm: Tiden, 1931].

[112] The way the Swedish Cremation Society used the word *aesthetic*, it might be held to mean something like spiritual (as opposed to corporeal), civilised (as opposed to the "uncivilised" inhumation) as well as clean, both in a hygienic sense of the word and in a mystical way, i.e. cremation as a spiritually purifying process. Eva Åhrén Snickare, *Döden, kroppen och moderniteten*, 200-3. For a more thorough discussion on the mystical and mythical tendencies in the Cremation Society's programme, see Bengt Enström, *Kyrkan och Eldbegängelserörelsen i Sverige*, 33-8, 139-48, 353-60.

[113] Bengt Enström, *Kyrkan och Eldbegängelserörelsen i Sverige*, 51-133.

[114] Otto von Friesen states that cremation could be seen as a heritage from the French revolution and that a competition regarding the best work on cremation was proposed as early as 1795, in the traces of the French revolution. Otto von Friesen, "Kremering - ett arv från franska revolutionen", *Folket i Bild – Kulturfront*, 19 (1982): 10-11.

[115] Oscar Övden, *Eldbegängelsens historia i Sverige: fem årtionden svensk eldbegängelserörelse 1882 - 1932*, utgiven på uppdrag av Svenska eldbegängelseföreningen (Stockholm, 1932), 19.

Movement in art and literature, nourishing an interest for cremation that stems from a fascination for ancient Greece and Rome as well as for the hedonic Nordic countries. By quoting the *Poetic Edda*, the *Kalevala* as well as the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, folktales that unravel the adventures of high-born persons, the Cremation Society emphasised the connection between civilisation and cremation, and expressed a fascination for the mythical powers of fire.[116] Among artists, poets, writers, and other cultural elite cremation came to be known as an aesthetic burial alternative, superior to inhumation.[117]

The first Cremation Society started in Hamburg in the year 1854 and in 1874 the concept had spread to Britain and Italy.[118] Two years later the first incinerators where constructed in Milan and Washington. The same year, in Sweden, the engineer Per Lindell started an information service about cremation. The physician Ludvig Alexander Soldin and the author August Blanche had earlier published articles on the subject.[119] In 1882 the Swedish Cremation Society was formed in Stockholm and its followers consisted at the start mainly of society's elite. Especially well represented were physicians and scientists, among whom the Swedish scientist Alfred Nobel might be mentioned.[120]

With the introduction of the Cremation Society, further ideological motives and design strategies were introduced regarding funerary architecture and memorials as well as the whole perception of death. The Cremation Society's

---

[116] Bengt Enström, *Kyrkan och Eldbegängelserörelsen i Sverige*, 33-8, 139-48, 353-60.

[117] According to Övden the cultural elite included among others Friedrich Schiller, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, August von Platen, and Esaias Tégner. Övden states that in 1822 the two poets Trelawney and Lord Byron propagated cremation by burning the deceased poet Shelley and Captain Williams. Oscar Övden, *Eldbegängelsens historia i Sverige*, 16-21.

[118] In Great Britain the first person in modern times, a Mrs Pratt, was cremated as early as 1709. In 1752 the baroness Sofie von Bayreut was cremated at the castle of Roswald in Schlesinger. This was the second cremation in modern Western society. The two first cremations in modern times were thus performed on women, which is quite interesting. Oscar Övden, *Eldbegängelsens historia i Sverige*, 17-8.

[119] Oscar Övden, *Eldbegängelsens historia i Sverige*, 30.

[120] In his first will Nobel supported the construction of crematoriums in every large city in Sweden, although he later transferred his support to the natural sciences and literature, states Övden. Alfred Nobel was also one of the founders of the French Cremation Society, *La société pour la propagation de la crémation*. Oscar Övden, *Eldbegängelsens historia i Sverige*, 77.

programme even included newly invented words to make death, disposal and dying more appealing.[121] The Swedish Cremation Society mostly used direct translations from the German. An example of a creative approach to this new vocabulary is the Swedish term *eldbegängelse*, "to commit to the flames" [my translation], which replaced the former term *likbränning*, literally meaning "the burning of corpses" [my translation].[122] Other terms, which never became more than propositions (probably due to their mystic and cultic touch), were *eldvigas*, "to wed to fire" [my translation], and *eldhedra*, "to honour by fire" [my translation]. The latter is Övden's Swedish translation of the German term *Feuerehrung* found in the German physician Paul Mühling's 1936 work *Zukunftswege nordisher Feuerehrung*.[123]

---

[121] Eva Åhrén Snickare, *Döden, kroppen och moderniteten*, 205. We also find important Swedish writers poeticising on the subject of cremation: Verner von Heidenstam, Ellen Key, Karin Boye, and Harry Martinsson, to mention just a few. For a fuller description see Bengt Enström, *Kyrkan och Eldbegängelserörelsen*, 303-20.

[122] [Originally in German: "Leichenverbrennung" and "Feuerbestattung".] Oscar Övden, *Eldbegängelsens historia i Sverige*, 275-6. Bengt Enström, *Kyrkan och Eldbegängelserörelsen*, 303-4. Eva Åhrén Snickare, *Döden, kroppen och moderniteten*, 205.

[123] Bengt Enström, *Kyrkan och Eldbegängelserörelsen*, 304 footnote 6. Enström further points out that the German cultic influences, as expressed in the above-mentioned work by Mühling (inspired by the German architect Hermann Deffke), could be seen as linking cremation to an anthropocentric cult of death, closely related to ideologies harboured by the Nazi regime in Germany. Bengt Enström, *Kyrkan och Eldbegängelserörelsen*, 353-7. However, the Swedish Cremation Society's ideology cannot be connected to Deffke's or Mühling's theories, as noted by Enström, even though Övden from time to time promoted the works of both Deffke and Mühling. Bengt Enström, *Kyrkan och Eldbegängelserörelsen*, 262, 353-4. A more unfortunate issue, revealed by Sten Ingemark, is that Schlyter's energetic propagation for cremation harboured anti-Semitic viewpoints, which evidently harmed the Swedish Cremation Society's reputation even though Schlyter's ideologies clearly were not representative of the Swedish Cremation Society as a whole. Ingemark indicates that Schlyter regarded himself as a reformer and even as a "messiah of cremation". Schlyter even enticed a group of apprentices, to a great extent with the help of the poems of cremation [my translation, originally in Swedish: "eldbegängelsedikter"], more or less connected to cremation, purification and mysticism, that were continuously published in the Swedish Cremation Society's magazine *Ignis*, states Ingemark. Sometimes these poems were just citations of ancient sources, such as the *Poetic Edda*, but at other times new poets were encouraged, such as the Swedish anti-Semite Fredrik Nycander, who was frequently published. According to Ingemark, Schlyter even used the swastika as a symbol of resurrection, and over the door to the Baltic Temple a hedonic symbol was placed, in Swedish called *solkors*, depicting the sun as a circle with an inscribed cross. The solkors was later to become the symbol of Vidkun Quislings' political party *Nasjonal Samling* in Norway. Sten Ingemark, "Staden skulle bli kremeringens Mekka", *Kyrkogården*, 3 (1986): 8. *Ignis: tidskrift för eldbegängelse- och kyrkogårdsfrågor*, medlemsorgan för Svenska eldbegängelseföreningen, 1/1 (1929) – 55/5 (1983) with the following title; *Kyrkogården*.

The subject of architectural spaces built for the Cremation Society's new way of handling the deceased has been dealt with briefly by Snickare and, more thoroughly, by predecessors such as the art historian Ulf G. Johansson and the theologian Bengt Enström.[124] A more recent scholar, the art historian Emelie Karlsmo, is presently working on a PhD thesis on Swedish crematorium chapels, soon to be published and defended at Uppsala University.[125] Johansson describes the first European crematoriums as strongly inspired by the architecture of ancient Greece and Rome, a source of inspiration which came to provide a pattern also for future crematoriums.[126] German crematoriums served as the earliest prototypes for the Swedish constructions and were designed like scenes of Palladian villas and constructed to hide the technical solutions needed for cremation.[127] The first crematorium constructed in accordance with both its technical and ritual functions was, according to Johansson, the Baltic Temple, with Ferdinand Boberg as architect and Carl Milles as sculptor of ornamentations, exhibited as a model crematorium chapel at the Baltic exhibition in Malmö in 1914.[128]

---

[124] Eva Åhrén Snickare, *Döden, kroppen och moderniteten*, 206. Ulf G. Johansson, "De första svenska krematorierna och deras förutsättningar", *Konsthistorisk tidskrift*, 3-4 (1964): 117-26. Bengt Enström, *Kyrkan och Eldbegängelserörelsen*, 324-67.

[125] Previously published by Karlsmo: "Rum för begravning. 1900-talets begravningskapell och krematorier", *Begravning*, Svenskt Gudstjänstliv, 73, Tro och Tanke, 6 (Svenska kyrkans forskningsråd, 1998): 49-85.

[126] Ulf G. Johansson, "De första svenska krematorierna", 117-26.

[127] Ulf G. Johansson, "De första svenska krematorierna", 117-26. Emelie Karlsmo, "Rum för begravning", 49-85.

[128] At the Baltic exhibition in Malmö, in 1914, the Swedish Cremation Society was sponsored by the Swedish Government to exhibit a model crematorium chapel called the Baltic Temple. (The sponsorship was repeated at the Gothenburg exhibition in 1923, and at the Stockholm exhibition in 1930.) At the exhibition in Gothenburg the ceiling of the Cremation Society's exhibition hall was decorated by the painter Isaac Grünewald, and, to attract the public, the famous writer Werner von Heidenstam appeared, thanks to Schlyter. At the exhibition in Malmö, Cremation Societies from various countries exhibited model crematoriums and gardens of remembrance as well as arts and literature associated with death, where the Baltic Temple served as the scene for several lectures and concerts on the subject. Oscar Övden, *Eldbegängelserörelsen*, Studentföreningen Verdandis småskrifter, 326 (Stockholm, 1928), 35-7. According to Ingemark, the opening of the Temple was itself strongly symbolic. Schlyter, who after an apparition had come to regard himself as an apostle of cremation, opened the door to the Baltic Temple after first having nailed onto it a text containing the cremation thesis he had recently formulated together with docent Alf Nyman from Lund, states Ingemark. Sten Ingemark, "Staden skulle bli kremeringens Mekka", 7-8. Sten Ingemark, "Baltiska templet

The architecture of the Baltic Temple was designed to support the mourners in their state of grief and had as its motto "for death – for life" [my translation].[129] From a lowered and dusky ceremonial hall, called "the vaults of death" [my translation], constructed to evoke feelings of grief, the visitors ascended after the funeral ceremony into the brightly lit "hall of life" [my translation], before taking the final step of mourning into the soothing outdoor environment.[130] Behind Boberg's architectural design stands one of the Swedish Cremation Society's most active spokesmen, Gustav Schlyter, with a design programme strongly influenced by his ideological conviction of cremation as some sort of new religion with monistic and pantheistic tendencies.[131] Johansson also points to a very important outcome of the exhibition at the Baltic Temple, namely that it provided a context for the architects Erik Gunnar Asplund and Sigurd Lewerentz to meet and decide upon participation in an architecture competition recently announced, i.e. the competition for the Southern cemetery in Stockholm in 1914, later won by Asplund and Lewerentz with their now famous proposition of the Woodland Cemetery.[132] With the Woodland Cemetery Asplund and Lewerentz created a new kind of funerary space with nature as a symbol of the sacred, handling the task as town planners rather than architects, states

---

väckte sensation vid den stora utställningen i Malmö 1914", *Kyrkogården*, 7 (1994): 26-27. Schlyter further saw the Cremation Temples, such as the Baltic Temple, not only as places of ritual connected to death, but as an alternative to the Church of Sweden, notes Enström, where weddings and baptisms could be performed with the help of new rituals. Another idea of Schlyter's was that death and the burial situation were no longer to be seen as dark, ghastly and depressing. The new way of burial was to instead depict death as light, clean and encouraging. Bengt Enström, *Kyrkan och Eldbegängelserörelsen*, 348, 60, 65.

[129] [Originally in Swedish; "Åt döden – åt lifvet".] Ulf G. Johansson, "De första svenska krematorierna", 121.

[130] [Originally in Swedish; "Dödens hvalf", and "Lifvets sal".] Ulf G. Johansson, "De första svenska krematorierna", 121.

[131] For a further discussion on the connection between the Cremation Society and monistic ideology see: Bengt Enström, *Kyrkan och Eldbegängelserörelsen*, 38-40.

[132] Johansson holds that the written proposal on the Woodland Cemetery project is clearly inspired by previous ideas of a crematorium chapel for the city of Helsingborg with Lewerentz and Torsten Stubelius as architects. Other sources of inspiration are, according to Johansson, the Baltic Temple and the model Garden of Remembrance exhibited in connection with the Baltic Temple designed by the German Friedhofsdirector Georg Hannig. Ulf G. Johansson, "De första svenska krematorierna", 122. See also Sten Ingemark, "Eldbegängelseföreningen fick dubbel start i Helsingborg", *Kyrkogården*, 3 (1986): 5-6.

Ragon.[133] Another novelty is visible in the architectural space of the large crematorium chapel at the Woodland Cemetery. Instead of notions about all-powerful death as opposed to eternal life, two well known themes in the architecture of death, Asplund refers to "the 'biblical' scenery" [my translation].[134] The visual concentration on the catafalque, instead of the altar, as well as the artist Sven Erixon's monumental painting, depicting the circle of life-death-life in nature, can be seen as other important ideological choices.[135]

This close connection between design and ideology can be seen as a core source of inspiration for the Cremation Society.[136] It is quite interesting, as Snickare notes, that the Cremation Society chose to shape their new way of disposal ritually, where they could have chosen a more radical way of enacting the cremation and the following burial. The crematoriums themselves could,

[133] Michel Ragon, *The Space of Death*, 258-260. The French city planner Robert Auzelle has designed several cemeteries integrated with the French landscape, such as Le Parc in Clermont, states Ragon. In these cemeteries Auzelle has strived to replace old symbols of death with modern sculptures and, instead of single graves, Auzelle promotes the old custom of charnel houses. Michel Ragon, *The Space of Death*, 259. One of the earliest known *woodland cemeteries* is the Ohlsdorfer central cemetery in Düsseldorf, Germany, inaugurated in 1877. Kjell Lundquist, "Från beteshage till trädgård", 33. In the US, a similar construction, called the *rural cemetery*, was promoted as early as 1831 with the inauguration of Mount Auburn Cemetery in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Howett states that in the rural cemetery, the landscape itself is the dominant design element and the principal memorial. Catherine Howett, "Living Landscapes for the Dead", 11. However, the concept of woodland cemeteries is most often considered to stem from München Waldfriedhof in Germany, designed by Hans Grässel and inaugurated in 1897. The earliest woodland cemetery in Sweden is probably Karlskoga skogskyrkogård designed in 1908. Maria Westerdahl, *Den Svenska Skogskyrkogården; en bild från norr till söder*, Stad och land, 136 (Alnarp: Movium, 1995), 38. In Denmark we find the woodland cemetery Mariebjerg kirkegård in Lyngby, outside Copenhagen, designed by G. N. Brandt, in 1930-36. Kjell Lundquist, "Från beteshage till trädgård", 33.

[134] [Originally in Swedish: "den 'bibliska' landskapsbilden".] Bengt O. H. Johansson, *Tallum; Gunnar Asplunds & Sigurd Lewerentz skogskyrkogård i Stockholm* (Stockholm: Byggförlaget, 1996), 106.

[135] The idea of replacing the altar with the catafalque dates back to the early German classicistic crematoriums, states Johansson, and was further to become fully executed in the Baltic Temple. Ulf G. Johansson, "De första svenska krematorierna", 119. Even though Asplund never succeeded in replacing the altar with the catafalque altogether, he still made his thoughts clear by visually and spatially concentrating on the catafalque in the large crematorium chapel at the Woodland Cemetery. Bengt O. H. Johansson, *Tallum*, 97-107. For a fuller discussion on art and architecture with naturalistic and pantheistic tendencies in connection to crematorium chapels, see Bengt Enström, *Kyrkan och Eldbegängelserörelsen*, 324-67.

[136] Eva Åhrén Snickare, *Döden, kroppen och moderniteten*, 206.

as Snickare proposes, have been constructed as purely functional and rational spaces for the efficient and hygienic handling of dead bodies. But, since this evidently has not been the case, Snickare declares that we cannot regard cremation solely as a hygienic or rational solution; in this light the cultural, emotional and humanistic motives for cremation seem to have been the most important.[137] Snickare also mentions the clash between the efficient crematoriums constructed in Nazi Germany's concentration camps and the Cremation Society's humanistic aspects of cremation. The fact that our knowledge of these death camps after the Second World War has not seriously affected our view of cremation is mentioned by Snickare as some sort of proof of our notion of cremation, as well as of the ritual spaces connected to it, as essentially different from the industrial handling of cremation in the concentration camps.[138]

> In other words: the same importance was not attached to the technical similarities as to the symbolic, significant differences between these ways of handling the deceased.[139] [My translation]

After the Second World War, equality, collectivism and large-scale production were seen as important means of societal development. The anonymous and collective spreading of ashes thus corresponded well to this new way of thinking, states Snickare.[140] In secular countries, such as Britain and Sweden, cremation has increased tremendously during the second half of the twentieth century and is today the most common way of dealing with the dead body.[141]

---

[137] Eva Åhrén Snickare, *Döden, kroppen och moderniteten*, 206.

[138] Eva Åhrén Snickare, *Döden, kroppen och moderniteten*, 208.

[139] [Originally in Swedish: "Eller annorlunda uttryckt: att de tekniska likheterna tillmätts mindre betydelse än de symboliska, betydelsemättade skillnaderna mellan sätten att hantera de döda."] Eva Åhrén Snickare, *Döden, kroppen och moderniteten*, 208.

[140] Eva Åhrén Snickare, *Döden, kroppen och moderniteten*, 221.

[141] Statistics from 2003 show a cremation percentage as high as 72.12% of all deaths in Sweden. Compared to the year 2002 this is an increase of 2.12%. In areas with a crematorium the percentage was as high as 82.62% and in these areas 47.8% of all deaths were placed in gardens of remembrance. Compared to the year 2002 this is an increase of 1.62% respectively 9.5%. "Statistik 2003", *Kyrkogården*, 3 (2004): 9-15.

In(visible) death

During the twentieth century our conceptions of death and the dead body changed dramatically. Ariés sees this as the period when death became alienated and denied. Sanitised in hospitals and professionally taken care of by funeral directors, it is for Ariés the era of the *invisible death*. This is a notion that has come to grow into one of the most widespread prejudices against modern society's handling of death, disposal and dying.[142] It is, for instance, in this framework that Bauman delivers his analysis of mortality in modernity as "deconstructed" into a never-ending number of mortal illnesses, or causes of death, that can be "avoided".[143] As a result, good health is often turned into a major project in life. Consequently, death is seen as the total failure of a person's life project, states the theologian Jan-Olof Aggedal.[144] Another theologian, Eva Hamberg, goes even further in proposing that for a large part of the Swedish population, the obsession with one's health has replaced the preoccupation with God.[145]

Correspondingly, Certeau speaks of the difference between "kicking of", as in the stopping of a machine, and the "act of dying". In this difference, or rather in the space between kicking-off and the act of dying, Certeau recognises the *possibility* of dying. This, the possibility of dying, is for Certeau at the same

---

[142] See, for instance: Philippe Ariés, *Western Attitudes Toward Death*, and Zygmunt Bauman, *Mortality, Immortality and other Life Strategies* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1992). However, over recent decades a shift is noticeable. According to the register of causes of death, kept by the Swedish National Board of Health and Welfare, the number of hospital deaths has been decreasing since 1989, when 90% of all deaths occurred at hospitals or other kinds of care-giving institutions, such as the specialised housing for elderly in Sweden. *SOU* 2000:6, 1.2.1. According to the National Statistics Office of Sweden, the equivalent statistics for 1996 show that 42% died at hospitals, 31% in specialised forms of housing, 20% in their own home, and 7% in an unknown place, that is the place of death is not specified in the statistics. *SOU* 2000:6, 1.2.1.

[143] Zygmunt Bauman, *Mortality, Immortality and other Life Strategies*, 138-9. An example of this might be the obligatory death certificate. As a consequence, the donation of organs may be seen as a form of compensation for the loss of the crashed machine that is our body, and in a way donation gives at least some meaning to death in that it (temporarily) prolongs life for someone else. Lynn Åkesson, *Mellan levande och döda: föreställningar om kropp och ritual* (Stockholm: Natur och Kultur: Forskningsrådsnämnden, 1997), 56.

[144] Jan-Olof Aggedal, *Griftetalet mellan trostolkning och livstydning*, 93.

[145] Eva M. Hamberg, "Svenska Folkets Gud", *Gud. Sju lundateologer föreläser*, red. Göran Bexell (Stockholm, Stehag: Symposion, 1997), 23-36.

time a possibility of saying something (about death), closely related to the question: "What does it mean to *be*?"[146] According to Certeau, this is an undesirable question in modern society. Hence, death is isolated by "technicians devoted to the defence of health the way others are attached to the defence of law and order or tidiness", and rejected to "one of the technical and secret zones" in society, namely the hospital. Similarly, people of old age are rejected to specialised forms of housing.

> The *immoral* secret of death is deposited in the protected caverns reserved for it by psychoanalysis and religion. It resides in the vast metaphors of astrology, necromancy, or sorcery, languages that are tolerated so long as they constitute areas of obscurantism from which societies of progress "distinguish" themselves.[147]

In opposition to the wide-spread supposition of death as denied and taboo, Åkesson critically asks how something so talked about can at the same time be considered denied and veiled.[148] This is a most valid question, to which, however I do not believe we have a straight answer.[149] An equally valid observation is formulated, for instance, by Certeau who points out that by representing death we participate in the illusion of localising it, thus making it into "*the place where I am not*".[150]

A somewhat similar view comes from the British author Geoffrey Gorer, who suggests that the *pornography* of death is a reaction to our unwillingness to accept death as a natural phenomenon.[151] Snickare also brings up this uneven representation of death but does not conclude that death is considered more unnatural or taboo than it was before. Instead, Snickare believes that our

---

[146] Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, 193.

[147] Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, 194.

[148] Lynn Åkesson, *Mellan levande och döda*, 11.

[149] That is, the fact that death is talked about and represented does not necessarily prove that it is accepted.

[150] Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, 194.

[151] Gorer uses the term *pornography* in this context to stand for activities that have as their goal to produce illusory perceptions of death. As an example he mentions our fascination for violent death as it is presented in thrillers, science fiction, war scenes and the like. Gorer even ranks death as the major taboo during the twentieth century, replacing the former number one: sexuality. Geoffrey Gorer, "The Pornography of Death", *Death, Grief, and Mourning in Contemporary Britain* (London, 1965), 172.

apprehensions of death and the dead body have simply developed and become modernised, just as the rest of our society, which has led our grief, funeral rituals and burial customs to take on new directions.[152] Both Lynn and Snickare declare that in the widespread view of "modern death" [my quotation marks] as rationalised, medicalised, and secularised, often contrasted to supposed natural attitudes towards death in pre-modern society, lies an implicit critique of modern society's way of handling death, which reveals, and even nourishes, a nostalgic dream of pre-modern culture.[153] Similarly, Westerdahl's study on the development of the Swedish woodland cemetery reveals a continuing concern for the placing of a society's deceased in the most valued and appreciated surroundings for the given society.[154] Thus, we might suggest that the hospital in modern society was chosen as such a respected place, considered as worthy of handling our last living moments, and not just selected to function as a secluded container in which to isolate death.

In the last decades of the twentieth century our burial customs have changed at an astonishing rate and there are nowadays a number of more or less creative ways of arranging a burial.[155] Despite the fact that most people do not believe in the resurrection of either the soul or the body our earthly remains and our handling of them seems to have grown ever more important.[156]

---

[152] Eva Åhrén Snickare, *Döden, kroppen och moderniteten*, 227-34.

[153] Lynn Åkesson, *Mellan levande och döda*, 11-5. Eva Åhrén Snickare, *Döden, kroppen och moderniteten*, 229.

[154] In studying the development of the Swedish woodland cemeteries, Westerdahl contrasts the selective perception of nature in agrarian society, where inaccessible forests and woodland are considered potentially dangerous in comparison to the preferred cultivated areas of tamed farmland, with the romantic and idealistic perception of nature in early industrial society. In agrarian society burials took place in the centre of the village, on cultivated land, whereas in early industrial society the conception of uncultivated countryside as pristine, mystical, and worthy of respect, led to the development of woodland cemeteries and the birth of organisations like the Swedish Society for the Conservation of Nature and the Swedish Touring Club. Maria Westerdahl, *Den Svenska Skogskyrkogården*, 30-3.

[155] See, for instance: Agneta Berglund, Birgitta Wallin, *Fem borgerliga begravningar* (Umeå: Drivkraft, 1999). Agneta Berglund, Birgitta Wallin, *Låt människan!: en bok om profana ceremonier från födelse till död* (Skellefteå: Drivkraft, 1993).

[156] However, the supposed secularisation in present day society is not that easily detected or even studied, neither on a societal nor an individual level. To place religious faith on an equal footing with religious praxis can for instance be quite problematic, as is pointed out in Eva M.

> It seems like pure settlers' joy to some. Everyone has to be an individualist and the imagination has no limits. They plant trees and put out statues. It seems as if they want to use the grave as a cult place or an altar.[157] [My translation]

Foucault explains the apparent contradiction in giving the dead body this much attention, even though no-one believes in its resurrection any longer, by stating that the dead body is "the only trace of our existence in the world and in language".[158] Bauman suggest that just like "modernity deconstructed death into a bagful of unpleasant, but tameable, illnesses […] in society that emerged at the far end of the modern era it is the majestic yet distant immortal bliss that is being deconstructed into a sackful of bigger or smaller, but always within-reach, satisfactions".[159]

Whilst impersonalised ways of burial, like memorial groves or gardens of remembrance, were initially steadily increasing in countries which now offer free possession of the cremated remains, such as Britain and Holland, a counter reaction is clearly noticeable, from an institutional to an individual placing of the ashes as private memorials.[160] A similar, though slower, development is also to be found in Sweden, a country which still retains public control over the cremated remains.[161] Another individualised way of

---

Hamberg, "Kristen tro och praxis i Dagens Sverige", *Världsbild och mening; En empirisk studie av livsåskådningar i dagens Sverige*, red. Carl Reinhold Bråkenhielm (Nya Doxa, 2001), 33-65.

[157] [Originally in Swedish: "Det verkar som om rena nybyggarglädjen råder för en del. Alla skall vara individualister och fantasin har inga gränser. Man planterar träd och ställer ut statyer. Det verkar som om man vill använda graven som en kultplats eller ett altare."] Staffan Pettersson, "Garnsvikens begravningsplats", *Kyrkogården*, 7 (2002): 6.

[158] Michel Foucault, "Of Other Spaces", 25.

[159] Zygmunt Bauman, *Mortality, Immortality and other Life Strategies*, 164.

[160] Douglas J. Davies, *Death, Ritual and Belief*, 30.

[161] In Sweden, a country with, by international comparison, a high percentage of cremation, only 0.94% applied for the placing of ashes outside the walls of the cemetery in the year 2000. In 2001 the number of applications had risen to 1.1%, 84.8% of which were to be strewn over water. However, if we compare today's 1,100 applications per year with 300 applications per year ten years ago we see that the restricted strewing of ashes outside the enclosed space of the cemetery is also increasing in Sweden, albeit slowly. "Statistik 2002", *Kyrkogården*, 3 (2003), 9-16. "Landet runt", *Kyrkogården*, 1 (2004), 14. For more substantial information, see the recent Swedish study of cremation and the strewing of ashes made at the Centre for Theology and Religious Studies, Lund University, by Curt Dahlgren and Jan Hermanson, "Kremation och spridning av aska", [Online] *RIT*.

burial which is increasing in popularity in Sweden is the so called "ash grave" [my translation], where ashes are placed individually in specific quarters and the place of burial marked with a petite horizontal plaque. While still being private property [*gravrätt*] the ash graves are maintenance-free for the survivors, since the flat plaques allow cemetery workers to maintain rational upkeep.[162] Similarly, the advantage of gardens of remembrance today, since we are constantly moving between jobs, cities and countries, is not so much their anonymity or collectivism as their low maintenance and lack of ownership.

Spontaneous sacralisation of public space

The long term planning and successive construction of new burial grounds and new ways of burial, with the help of among others scientific, technical and ideological strategies have, as we have seen, been quite successful in institutionalising a consciousness of what a proper space of death should be like. However, ritual activities also have the power of producing places of ritual as well as reinforcing social or cultural identity.[163] It is interesting to note here that spontaneously produced places of ritual often start a process of institutionalisation, which is reminiscent of Certeau's belief that tactics in turn provoke new strategies. Examples of such a process are the

---

[162] [Originally in Swedish: "ask grav".] Bruno Wall, *Gravskick i förändring*, 28, 62-3.

[163] As was recognised at the academic conference *Creating identities: Funeral monuments and public memorials in Europe*, arranged by the art historian Stefanie Knöll at the Museum for Sepulchral Culture in Kassel, Germany. In a conference paper on burial plots, mourning and commemoration among Vilna Jews living in New York, Anna Lipphardt, a PhD-student at the School of Jewish Studies in Potsdam, Germany, shows that Vilna Jews in New York travel to a certain Jewish cemetery in Vilna in order to bring earth from that cemetery and place it on their special Vilna part of a Jewish cemetery in New York. With this private ritual act they reinforce the cultural identity of their group as well as the cultural identity of their place of burial. Anna Lipphardt, "Burial plots, mourning and commemoration among Jews from Vilna in New York". Other conference papers emphasized the public funeral monument as a means among others by which to stress membership to a certain community and as a way of helping this community evolve a corporate identity and, in the long run gain a place in society. The topics of these papers ranged from popular public memorials in Croatia of today, over monument selection in early modern Cornwall, to the identity on early Christian sarcophagi of late antiquity: Sanja Cvetnic, "Follow me: Popular public memorials in Croatia"; Paul Cockerham, "Three into one won't go': monument selection in early modern Cornwall"; Marshall Walker, "Hearing the individual voice: identity on early Christian sarcophagi of late antiquity", *Creating identities: Funeral monuments and public memorials in Europe*, Museum for Sepulchral Culture, Kassel, Germany (2003-10-31 – 2003-11-02). For abstracts see: "Abstracts", [Online] *Creating Identities*, retrieved 27 Oct. 2003, URL <http://www.rodrun.de/creating-identities/Abstracts.pdf>.

institutionalisation of roadside memorials in the US, the sacralisation of a public square in Israel, and the development of Sweden's oldest pet cemetery.

The history of roadside memorials in the US is considered to originate from the old Hispanic custom of constructing *cruses* or *descansos*, meaning resting places, wherever the funeral procession had to stop and rest on its journey between church and the cemetery.[164] The practice of placing roadside memorials where motor vehicle accidents have interrupted the journey of life is thus considered to imitate the old custom of marking the interrupted journey to the cemetery.[165]

Although these roadside memorials were initially a religious hybrid of European Catholic traditions and indigenous Indian customs, as recognised by the cultural geographer Cynthia Henzel, the recent practice of marking the place of death on the site of road accidents has gradually become a secular commemoration of a life lost, states Henzel.[166] Henzel further describes how cruses in North-eastern Mexico were traditionally to be maintained for just a few years and then be moved to the victim's gravesite in the cemetery. However, newer cruses tend to be constructed as permanent memorials, designed like the funeral monuments found in Catholic cemeteries rather than as temporary markers.

> An element of the cultural landscape which once had a spiritual or perhaps even supernatural significance is being replaced with a marker of purely human grief and remembrance. […] Place has thus once again provided the continuity and transition between the old and the new.[167]

Why the practice of placing roadside memorials still seems to be increasing is a question asked by other cultural geographers, such as Kate Hartig and Kevin

---

[164] However, the same practice can be found in Sweden, where the pallbearers up until the mid-nineteenth century superstitiously marked their site of rest, since it was important to know where the dead body had rested. Lars Bondesson, *Seder och bruk vid livets slut* (Stockholm: Verbum Förlag, 1987), 69.

[165] See, for instance: Rudolfo Anaya, Juan Estevan Arellano and Denise Chavez, *Descansos: An Interrupted Journey* (Del Norte, 1995).

[166] Cynthia Henzel, "Cruses in the roadside landscape of north eastern Mexico", *Journal of Cultural Geography*, 11 (1989): 95, 100.

[167] Cynthia Henzel, "Cruses in the roadside landscape", 100, 104.

Dunn. In a survey on roadside memorials in Newcastle, New South Wales, Australia, Hartig and Dunne propose that roadside memorials may be filling a gap in the trend towards gardens of remembrance and plaque-gardens, leaving the survivors with no *personalised space* to visit. The formality and strict requirements of official cemeteries, as regards the regulations on both headstones and decorations, may be an additional cause.

> The accident site can generate greater symbolism than can a plaque-garden. [...] The personalising of the space is possible with roadside memorials, with personal objects and other signifiers incorporated into the site.[168]

However, another probable and more troubling cause is recognised by Hartig and Dunne in that roadside memorials in Newcastle are mostly constructed for young men, lost while speeding or drunk driving. These roadside memorials are held by Hartig and Dunne to continue the specific gender performance of the deceased. Thus, these roadside memorials reproduce, legitimise and consequently maintain the local construction of masculinity circulating among the working class in Newcastle, by functioning as "conservative memorials of youth machismo; of heroic aggression, disregard for safety and egocentrism".[169] Hence, as Hartig and Dunn propose, the roadside memorials in Newcastle need to be read as a serious indication, not just of "a wasteful road toll" or of "societal flaws" but of the "problematic strains of masculinity" produced among the working class in Newcastle.[170]

An additional topic in the survey mentioned above is that motorists passing roadside memorials confirm the memorial's role as a reminder of mortality and the reality of motor vehicle accidents. Correspondingly, in both Australia and the US, roadside memorials are presently being re-used as prevention. In the US, the organisation MADD (Mothers Against Drunk Driving) supports survivors and encourages them to construct and maintain roadside memorials,

---

[168] Kate V. Hartig and Kevin M. Dunn, "Roadside Memorials: Interpreting New Deathscapes in Newcastle, New South Wales", *Australian Geographical Studies*, 36/1 (March 1998): 17.

[169] Kate V. Hartig and Kevin M. Dunn, "Roadside Memorials", 13-5. Something which Kong also points out. Lily Kong, "Cemeteries and Columbaria, Memorials and Mausoleums: Narrative and Interpretation in the Study of Deathscapes in Geography", *Australian Geographical Studies*, 37/1 (1999): 4.

[170] Kate V. Hartig and Kevin M. Dunn, "Roadside Memorials", 5, 19.

even though it is illegal.[171] Juan Rodriguez, a folklore student at the University of Texas-Pan America, states that in Texas the MADD has succeeded in getting support from some of the local judges to punish drivers who have taken another persons life with the task of erecting a roadside memorial over the deceased.[172] An example of the ultimate institutionalisation of roadside memorials are the *road sign* memorials, erected by the US Department of Transportation with texts like "Please don't drink and drive" placed on top of the regular "In memory of".[173]

Malvern, Jerry Whiting.

Memorials by murder sites may also start a process of institutionalisation, as exemplified in a paper on the spontaneous formation of a memorial place in Kikar Malchei Yisrael (King of Israel Square) in Tel Aviv, Israel. The cultural geographer Maoz Azaryahu describes how the ritual activities at the square after the assassination of Israel's Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin formed "a new aesthetics of mourning".[174] Drawing on clichés from popular culture, with

---

[171] "Home", [Online] *MADD Online* (Copyright: Mothers Against Drunk Driving), retrieved 10 May 2004, URL <http://www.madd.org/home/>.

[172] Juan Rodriguez, "Descansos: A tribute of love", [Online] *Lower Rio Grande Valley Multimedia Archive* (Copyright: UT-Pan American, 2000), retrieved 24 May 2004, URL <http://www.panam.edu/dept/lrgvarchive/Descansos.htm>.

[173] Jerry Whiting, "Descansos – roadside memorials for traffic victims", [Online] *Descansos, roadside memorials and crosses*, retrieved 21 May 2004, URL <http://www.jetcityorange.com/descansos/>. Even though the Department of Transportation erects these kinds of road sign memorials, Jerry Whiting holds it as probable that the survivors initiate the effort. Whether the families have to pay for the signs Whiting did not know. Jerry Whiting, "RE: RE: Image of roadside memorial", [Personal e-mail], received 21 May, 2004.

[174] Maoz Azaryahu, "The spontaneous formation of memorial space. The case of Kikar Rabin, Tel Aviv", *Area*, 28/4 (1996): 501-13.

exaggeration, kitsch and naivety as an advantage and a reinforcement of the phenomena as genuine, these popular ritual activities transformed the secular Tel Aviv city square into "a mirror of the nation's soul" even seen as "the new national Mecca", states Azaryahu.[175]

> Embedded into the semiotic texture of the square, these ritual activities had engendered the square as an uninstitutionalised shrine.[176]

With the help of various objects, candles, flowers and even graffiti, things which at another time and place might have been considered litter and even a violation of public order, the square was rendered sacred and suitable as a place for public sentiments. Azaryahu describes how, although the spontaneous memorial objects were later cleaned away, the graffiti on the walls (which was not removed) and the melted wax on the pavement continued to serve as "documents in an amorphous, open-air archive of public mourning".[177]

> Embedded into the local architecture, these remnants further exuded a sacred aura, thereby establishing the square as a memorial to its functioning as a shrine of remembrance.[178]

The spontaneous memorialisations were further institutionalised by a formal renaming of the square as Kikar Yitzhak Rabin (Rabin Square) as well as by the construction of an official monument.

As yet another example of a spontaneously produced place of ritual, later to be institutionalised, the development of the pet cemetery at Kaknäs on the island of Djurgården in Stockholm might be mentioned.[179] Sweden's oldest pet cemetery, the spontaneously developed pet cemetery at Kaknäs is the final

---

[175] Azaryahu here quotes Kaplan A. Sommer, "Kikar Rabin: The new national Mecca", *Jerusalem Post*, 10 November 1995 and Kaplan A. Sommer, "Rabin Square deco: Eyesore or loving tribute", *Jerusalem Post*, 19 January 1996.

[176] Maoz Azaryahu, "The spontaneous formation of memorial space", 501-13.

[177] Maoz Azaryahu, "The spontaneous formation of memorial space", 501-13.

[178] Maoz Azaryahu, "The spontaneous formation of memorial space", 501-13.

[179] For a further discussion on our historically and culturally shifting attitudes towards animals in Western thought, with a focus on the current Swedish society, see Nils Uddenberg, "Vad tänker vi om djuren?", *Världsbild och mening; En empirisk studie av livsåskådningar i dagens Sverige*, red. Carl Reinhold Bråkenhielm (Nya Doxa, 2001), 136-71.

resting place of not only dogs and cats but also the circus horse, Don Juan, as well as several budgerigars, rabbits and turtles. The cemetery's oldest grave belongs to August Blanche's dog, Nero, whose grave was dug up and moved there when the famous writer's residence was torn down in the construction of the main street Valhallavägen in the 1860s. The moving of Nero's grave touched the hearts of many citizens of that time, which led the inhabitants of Stockholm to spontaneously bury their deceased pets as close to the "dog Martyr" Nero as possible. Even though the pet cemetery at Kaknäs was officially declared illegal in the 1940s it has unofficially been in use ever since its start, despite further threats in the 1970s. In 1993 it finally became legal to bury cremated animals at the pet cemetery at Kaknäs and since 1995 the Stockholm Kennel Club has been officially responsible for its upkeep.[180] However, the pet cemetery at Kaknäs has not yet been granted with what we may describe as the final institutionalisation, i.e. an official name, and is still called, quite simply, "the animal cemetery" [my translation].[181]

Interestingly enough, illegal animal burials are quite common in cities that do not have regular pet cemeteries. One example comes from the cemetery at Garnsviken in Sweden, where myriads of small white crosses cover the roadsides leading up to the cemetery's garden of remembrance. These pet burials are illegal but very hard to prevent.[182] In Sweden, the local urban or rural district must be contacted before the burial of a pet, even when the burial is to take place on private property.[183] It is, for instance, forbidden to bury pets on regular cemeteries and even prohibited to buy and use coffins or urns made for humans when burying pets, even though there are no special

---

[180] "Kaknas2", [Online] *STOKK's Hjemmeside* (Copyright: Stockholms Kennelklubb, 1997-2003), retrieved 18 Dec. 2003, URL <http://www.stokk.skk.se/Kaknas2.html>.

[181] [Originally in Swedish: "Djurkyrkogården".]

[182] Says the cemetery's manager Staffan Pettersson. Staffan Pettersson, "Garnsvikens begravningsplats", 5.

[183] Pet burials, as well as other animal burials, are regulated by the European Parliament and the Council of Europe in the regulation *EG* (1774/2002) and by the Swedish Board of Agriculture in the regulation *SJVFS* (1998:34) as well as by the Swedish Code of Environmental Laws found in *Miljöbalken* (1998:808). Correspondingly, it is permitted to bury pets (which are defined as animals that are regularly kept and bred without any intention of ever using them for the production of provisions), provided that the recommendations of the local urban or rural district are followed. Even though a horse may be considered as a pet, at least when it comes to its burial, special permission is required from the county administrative board. For smaller pets, such as cats and dogs, it is sufficient to consult the local urban or rural district.

burial items, except paper boxes, for pets in Sweden.[184] Nonetheless, funeral directors tell of the secret act of placing the cremated remains of pets inside coffins besides their deceased master or mistress, as well as of pet burials on, for instance, family grave lots in regular cemeteries.[185]
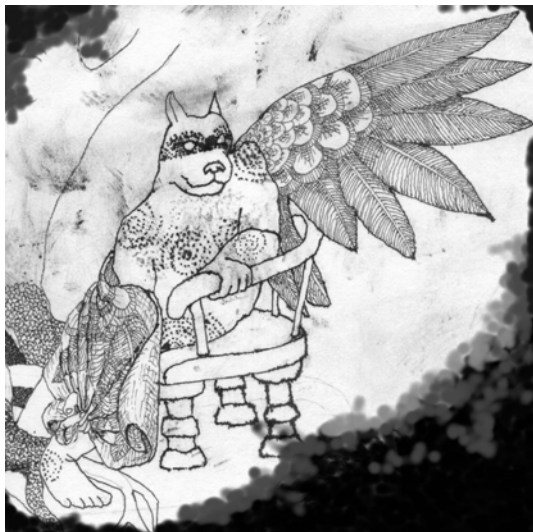
Dogman, Daniel Deardorff.

In a debate called "A heaven for animals?" [my translation] on the website of the Church of Sweden's youth association, the priest Kristina Askolin answers questions on the difference between man and animal and whether animals have a place in the heavens of Christianity. Askolin says that, according to Christianity, animals have no soul and therefore no place in heaven, neither human nor animal.[186] One of the young questioners gives as good as she gets

---

[184] This is, however, not clearly regulated in the Swedish burial law, *Begravningslag* (1990:1144), but is, rather, a practiced interpretation of it. Bengt Erman, *Begravningsrätten i praktiken*, 64. This praxis could also be seen as an internal "law" or policy among cemetery administrations as well as funeral directors. The largest group of funeral parlours in Sweden, FONUS (a group of companies cooperatively owned by a non-governmental organization), has a strict policy forbidding the sale of coffins or urns for the burial of pets.

[185] These secret acts are conducted by the master or mistress of the pet, not by the Funeral directors themselves, even though they might be present and thus can be seen as somewhat involved in the act.

[186] The debate was originally published in 2002-11-01 but it is still accessible in the archive of the website: Kristina Askolin, "Bibelsajtens frågelåda om Bibeln, kristen tro och livsfrågor",

and comes up with a creative solution: "I don't think the animals will come to our heaven, I think they have one of their own, like the horses, they go to Haparanda!"[187] [My translation and slight linguistic correction]

A further example of our conflicting view of animals is to be found in an article on the web version of the *San Francisco Chronicle*, regarding the pet cemetery Pine Knoll Cemetery in Santa Cruz, soon to meet a well-known destiny for gentrified areas.

> Unfortunately for the gentle sleepers at Pine Knoll, the financially troubled Santa Cruz SPCA has just sold the 64-year-old cemetery site, which sits on 1.5 acres. The cemetery will soon be bulldozed to make way for construction of a luxury home.[188]

However, on the Internet it is possible to find several examples of animal heavens as compensation for both a physical burial site and a spiritual place in the eternal heavens of Christianity. Animal lovers frequently use these websites as places of ritual where they can leave memorials in the form of photographs, tell anecdotes and recite poems.[189] The latest victory for pet lovers is the recent possibility of placing death announcements for pets in the newspaper, at least in the newspaper *Norra Skåne* published in the same region as the large and well-functioning pet cemetery of Hessleholm in Sweden. What started out as occasional death announcements for pets,

---

[Online] *Bibelsajten om Bibeln och kristendom* (Copyright: Svenska Kyrkans Unga, EFS, Svenska Baptisternas Ungdomsförbund, Svenska Bibelsällskapet, 2000-2003), retrieved 18 Dec. 2003, URL <http://www.bibelsajten.nu/frageladan/visa_fraga.asp>.

[187] [Originally in Swedish: "Jag toro inte att djuren kommer till vårat himmelrike jag toro dom har ett eget som hästarna dom kommer till haparanda!!!!"] Unfortunately this particular respondent's part of the debate is no longer accessible on the website. It was accessed as follows: Hella, "Djurens Himmel", [Online] *Bibelsajten om Bibeln och kristendom* (Copyright: Svenska Kyrkans Unga, EFS, Svenska Baptisternas Ungdomsförbund, Svenska Bibelsällskapet, 2000-2002), retrieved 2 Nov. 2002, URL <http://www.bibelsajten.nu/diskdjur.htm>.

[188] Maria Alicia Gaura, "Grave situation for pets / Santa Cruz SPCA forced to sell land used for animal cemetery", [Online] *San Francisco Chronicle* (Copyright: San Francisco Chronicle, 2002), retrieved 7 March 2002, URL <http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/c/a/2002/07/03/MN38125.DTL>. SPCA is an organisation for the control of deceased, lost and abandoned pets in Santa Cruz.

[189] "Djurens Himmel", [Online] *Djurens himmel* (Copyright: Pernilla Magnusson, december 1999), retrieved 2 Nov. 2002, URL <http://hem.fyristorg.com/djurens_himmel/index.htm>.

though disguised with humanised names, has now grown to a separate column for deceased pets.[190]

The problem of value judgement

As we have seen, spontaneously produced places of ritual often provoke a process of institutionalisation. Sometimes they are even turned into proper places of ritual, with monuments and memorials arranged according to a given order. In the discussion of the development of a proper space of death a connection between the judgment of taste and moral or causal judgment was revealed. As motives behind these value judgements we may find the urge to maintain or enhance given social, cultural, or religious structures. Sometimes motives like these are immanent in value judgments connected to taste, such as in tasteful versus tasteless, at other times they are disguised as common sense, as in the well known phrase "what would happen if everyone acted like you". Maybe the opposite could also be said to exist, i.e. aesthetic preferences disguised as, for instance, moral, religious or cultural value judgments. An example of the latter may perhaps be found in Pugin's view of mass-produced funeral memorials as irreligious and immoral, compared to artistic or architectural monuments in a Gothic style, or in an example from a recent church antiquary conference, proposing to distribute folders among grave owners with recommendations for certain "appropriate" kinds of vegetation seen as part of our cultural heritage.[191]

When it comes to the condemnation of persona-oriented memorial decorations I propose that there are hidden motives for these value judgements other than aestheticism, religiosity or cultural authenticity. Even though, as Åkesson describes it, personalised memorials may serve as a positive and graspable connection between the symbolic and diabolic reality,[192] the opposite may also be true. Negative experiences of personalised memorials might, for instance, lie implicit in various value judgements and might be explained by what Kristeva calls *abjection*.

---

[190] "Busan är död – även i tidningen", *Aftonbladet*, måndag 19 januari 2004.

[191] *Kyrkoantikvariedagarna*, Länsstyrelsen, Malmö (2003-09-04 – 2003-09-05).

[192] Where *symbolic* reality stands for a feeling of unity and meaning of life whereas *diabolic* reality stands for feelings of disruption and disillusion. Lynn Åkesson, *Mellan levande och döda*, 112-13, 149-50.

Abjection, for Kristeva, is something that is incomprehensibly and confusingly horrible from which one does not cease to try separating. It is "a land of oblivion" that is constantly remembered.[193] The repression of this "forgotten time" can suddenly break through in a moment of revelation, terribly clear in all its ambiguity, when something contradictory to the expected suddenly appears or when the expected is turned upside down, exemplified by Kristeva with an episode where death interferes with what she feels is supposed to save her from death, in this case childhood and science.[194]

> In the dark halls of the museum that is now what remains of Auschwitz, I see a heap of children's shoes, or something like that, something I have already seen elsewhere, under a Christmas tree, for instance, dolls I believe. The abjection of Nazi crime reaches its apex when death, which, in any case, kills me, interferes with what, in my living universe, is supposed to save me from death: childhood, science, among other things.[195]

Certeau presents a similar view, stating that the instantaneous flashes of memory can only find catalysts in spaces that enable unpredictable situations to occur, whereas memory becomes static, and eventually withers away, in autonomous proper places.[196] Following this, if the museum visited by Kristeva had been less provocative, more like, for instance, the exhibitions often found in ordinary anthropological museums, her full comprehension of the Nazi crimes might not have been so acute.

If we now move Kristeva's and Certeau's discussion to the context of persona-oriented memorials, we may well find that standardised and impersonal grave lots for some people enhance emotional control and thus help tame the fear of death, whereas the more unpredictable encounters with roadside memorials or memorial decorations from "the living world", like toys, photographs or personal items, function as catalysts for flashes of memory, hence, revealing

---

[193] Julia Kristeva, *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection*, translated by Leon S. Roudiez (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982), 4.

[194] Julia Kristeva, *Powers of Horror*, 3-4.

[195] Julia Kristeva, *Powers of Horror*, 3.

[196] Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, 87-8.

the ever-present powers of death and turning the space of ordinary life upside down by exposing its temporariness and fragility.

The borders of the cemetary, originally enclosing the churchyard to separate the consecrated earth from the unconsecrated, continues, in current secular and large-scale cemeteries, to keep death in order, inside well-trimmed hedges, straight grids of paths and proper grave lots. Outside there is life – and the protection works both ways.

…in the real world

A not so well disguised form of value judgment, connected to religious experiences rather than persona-oriented memorials, is the leading role of logic and reason over less explainable experiences. As we have seen, religious spokespersons may also be driven by this kind of value judgment, as in the case of a heaven for animals.

In *The elementary forms of religious life* we find a rather philosophical side to Durkheim, where the act of judging religious experience according to the laws of natural science is somewhat questioned. Even though Durkheim is clearly functional concerning the future of religious rites and their purpose in secular societies he subtly justifies the "obscure intuitions of sentiments and sensations" allowed in religion but pushed away by the logic and reason of science.

> [T]he system of religious symbols and rites, the classification of things into sacred and profane – everything that is strictly speaking religious in religion – corresponds to nothing in the real world. Moreover, this grain of truth is also, and even more, a grain of error. For if it is true that the forces of nature and those of consciousness are related, they are also profoundly distinct, and to treat them as the same is to run the danger of profound miscalculations.[197]

Durkheim does not give a fuller answer on how to treat religious experiences other than as social phenomena, but this footnote in a way opens up for a

---

[197] Emile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, 62 footnote.

critique of our often careless handling of that which does not fit into the logic of reason as we now it. [198]

The problem of value judgment related to religious experience is further discussed by Evans-Pritchard, whose work can be seen as leaning more towards the philosophical side of Durkheim than on his functional and sociological theories, of which Evans-Pritchard was rather critical. [199] Evans-Pritchard states that pragmatic explanations cannot resolve questions that are basically existential, moral or social and that sociological theories concerned with models for religious conceptions can only, and at their best, account for the conceptual forms taken by religion, not for its origin, its function, or its meaning. [200] According to Evans-Pritchard, the anthropologist can never really catch the true meaning of a religious conception by studying "exterior actions" such as rites, prayers or sacrifice since "religion is ultimately an interior state". [201] The significance of certain objects or actions lies not in the studied event but in what these objects or actions actually mean to the practicing participants. The whole meaning of religious experience can therefore never be fully described since it lies in the interior awareness of the believer.

●

In the first part of this text we investigated the emergence of an awareness of a proper space of death. During this investigation we noticed that numerous and perpetual illegal acts might actually challenge the given understanding of

---

[198] With the help of the philosopher Immanuel Kant's *Critique of the Power of Judgment* we may suggest that even though concepts such as the soul, God, and freedom can never be speculated on in the field of physical or natural teleology, since they cannot be logically proven by scientific methods, they may nonetheless be treated as well as presupposed in the field of moral teleology. With the help of Kant we may also give Durkheim additional credit, by implying that the consultation of physical or natural laws when dealing with moral issues, and vice versa, only creates illusions, since the respective borders of these fields of knowledge are not maintained. Immanuel Kant, *Kritik av omdömeskraften*, i översättning av Sven-Olof Wallenstein (Stockholm: Thales, 2003), §§ 68, 79 and §§ 86-91 [Original title: *Critik der Urtheilskraft* (Berlin und Libau: Lagarde und Friedrich, 1790)].

[199] Edward Evans-Pritchard, *A History of Anthropological Thought* (London, Boston: Faber and Faber, 1981) 153-69.

[200] Edward Evans-Pritchard, *Theories of primitive religion*, 77.

[201] Edward Evans-Pritchard, *Nuer religion*, v-viii, 321-322.

what this proper space could be. These illegitimate acts were further seen as catalysts for a new round of institutionalisation.

We also recognised that just as our religious beliefs and cultural values change over time so do our burial customs and practices. Recently a shift has been noticed, from an institutional to an individual context, regarding both memorials and places of ritual (and, as we shall se in the third part of this text, also symbols) connected to death. In addition to this we discovered that even though, as Åkesson indicates, personalised memorials may help to provide a positive link between the symbolic and the diabolic reality, the opposite may also be true. For some, standardised or even anonymous places of ritual may function as redemptive tools with which to control the fear of death.

What is crucial, however, for both the strategically and the tactically produced places of ritual, is their function as suitable frameworks in which to express emotions and release inbuilt tensions. In the next chapter we will look more closely at these *sanctioning* places of ritual along with their function in present day society, with the second question as a background: do memorials and places of ritual need to be site specific architectural or artistic constructions or could they be anything, in any place, which by continued existence commemorates a person, action or event?

2
The Ritual Space of Liminality

In Western secular society today most of us still use rituals in order to express, mark, or adapt to important stages of our lives. Rites of passage such as baptisms, weddings and funerals, still seem to have their given place in society even though their rituals may be performed in both religious and profane variants.[202] Common to all rites of passage, though most prominent in religious rituals, are the three stages distinguished by van Gennep in *The Rites of Passage* as: separation, transition, and incorporation.[203] These three stages could theoretically be seen as a typical design of rites of passage containing *preliminal rites* (rites of separation), *liminal rites* (rites of transition) and *postliminal rites* (rites of incorporation).[204] In the stage of separation, sacred space and time are separated from the profane. The stage of transition serves as an in-between area of ambiguity, caught between the sacred and the profane, whereas in the last incorporating stage the ritual subject is reintegrated into profane space and time. During this process the ritual subject is detached from an earlier fixed state of social or cultural conditions, goes on to reach an ambiguous state, by Turner later called *liminality*,[205] after

---

[202] As detected in the recent study by the Swedish sociologist of religion Göran Gustavsson. Göran Gustavsson, *När det sociala kapitalet växlas in*, especially pages 19-24. Durkheim had already come to believe that even though religion in its spiritual sense might be on the decline, religious ritual would still continue to have its given place in future secular society, at least for the purpose of social solidarity. He also believed that the ceremonies used for this purpose might take on ever more secular forms, as in civic rites commemorating national events, such as the cyclic festivals instituted for the commemoration of the principles of the French Revolution. Another example might be political manifestations in the form of rituals, most obvious in celebratory ceremonies performed in dictatorships. This kind of political ceremony does not only strengthen the group through social solidarity it also reinforces the group's shared values and goals, as well as legitimises its inherent power structures with the help of symbols and symbolic actions. Emile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, xxxii-xxxiii, 322-323.

[203] Arnold van Gennep, *The Rites of Passage* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1960), 11 [First published in 1909].

[204] From the Latin word *limin-*, *limen* meaning threshold, probably also akin to the Latin word *limus* meaning transverse. "Limen", [Online] *Merriam-Webster Online* (Copyright: Merriam-Webster, Incorporated, 2004), retrieved 12 May 2004, URL <http://www.merriam-webster.com/cgi-bin/dictionary?book=Dictionary&va=limen&x=15&y=10>.

[205] Victor Turner, *The Forest of Symbols*, 93. In *The Ritual Process* Turner uses the concept of liminality with reference to all cultural phenomena confusing social status and transgressing

which he/she returns to society with a new social position or status. Although these three stages, as recognised by van Gennep, are obligatory in rites of passage, the importance given to each of them may vary from rite to rite.[206]

Van Gennep further believes the sacred and profane to be a single intermingled and fluctuating phenomenon, always defined in relation to its context.

> Sacredness as an attribute is not absolute; it is brought into play by the
> nature of particular situations.[207]

An example of this is persons who, in moving from one place in society to another, might one day see the sacred in something/someone where the day before they saw the profane.[208] An additional use for the rites of passage is therefore, as indicated by van Gennep, their function as deciders or categorisers of what is sacred and profane for a given society at a specific moment and under certain circumstances. The rites of passage thus help the individual and society to cope with the disturbing, and also threatening, fluctuations between sacralisation and desacralisation.

Van Gennep's view of the sacred and the profane as one entwined phenomenon is quite different from Durkheim's view, where the sacred and the profane appear, rather, as a fixed dichotomy.[209] For Durkheim, sacred and profane space and time can never coexist. Neither can negative and positive aspects of rites, although they are seen as closely related by Durkheim in that the one presupposes the other. Durkheim further states that negative rites separate the sacred from the profane by prohibiting certain ways of acting, as well as by separating certain things and places from one another. Negative

---

norms. Victor Turner, *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure* (New York: Aldine de Gruyter, 1997), 95-6 [First published in 1969]. However, in *From Ritual to Theatre* Turner stresses that liminality is a concept basically belonging to liminal rites in pre-industrial society. Victor Turner, *From Ritual to Theatre: The Human Seriousness of Play* (New York: Performing Arts Journal Publications, 1982), 31-2. For similar situations in post-industrial societies Turner launches a new concept called *liminoid rites* and *the liminoid*. I will return to this discussion shortly.

[206] Arnold van Gennep, *The Rites of Passage*, viii.

[207] Arnold van Gennep, *The Rites of Passage*, 12.

[208] Arnold van Gennep, *The Rites of Passage*, 12.

[209] Emile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, see for instance page 38.

rites are by Durkheim further considered to presuppose positive rites in that they allow man to rid himself of all that is profane in him so that man, when purified, may be initiated into sacred space and time by a positive rite to communicate with the sacred.[210]

If we turn back again to van Gennep's trade mark, i.e. the contradictory and liminal stage in rites of passage, we find that this transitional phase is of utmost importance for van Gennep since it may offer an understanding of the details and orders of rites of passage. Van Gennep also points out that the *territorial passage*, such as passing over a threshold, going through a portal or the crossing of streets and squares, is a very important ritual expression when moving from one social position to another.[211] Events like these "are seldom meant as 'symbols'; for the semicivilized the passage is actually a territorial passage."[212] Van Gennep's concept of the transitional phase has also proven itself useful to various other scholars. In the writings of Turner and Douglas the concept is employed in order to understand the intrinsic dangers and taboos, as well as the lasting powers, of rites of passage. Turner calls the ritual subject *the passenger* since he prefers to see the ritual as a progressive

---

[210] Emile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, 230, 243.

[211] Arnold van Gennep, *The Rites of Passage*, 15-25. Van Gennep also refers to the writer H. Clay Trumbull's, *The Threshold Covenant* (1906), 252-57, revealing an identification of the woman with the door in some cultures. Arnold van Gennep, *The Rites of Passage*, 192. Certeau could perhaps also be seen as interested in thresholds. By asking, "to whom does it [the frontier] belong?" Certeau defines the frontier as a kind of third element, or rather an "in-between" or a "space between", in the *spatial story* that belongs to each person's individual pattern of walking in the city. For Certeau, the frontier has a mediating role creating both separation and communication by establishing a border "only by saying what crosses it, having come from the other side". Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, 127.

[212] Arnold van Gennep, *The Rites of Passage*, 192. Similarly, Certeau speaks of the old Roman ritual action of "setting in place", in Latin named *fãs,* producing "a mystical foundation" without which all forms of human action (authorised by human law) are considered uncertain, risky and even fatal. Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, 122-9, referring to Georg Dumézil, *Idées romaines* (Paris: Gallimard, 1969), 61-78, on "Ius feitale". The ritual of founding fãs, which in Rome was carried out by special priests called *féitãles*, was according to Certeau a procession with three stages carried out "before Rome undertook any action with regard to a foreign nation", first performed within Roman territory, secondly on the frontier, and lastly in foreign territory. According to Certeau, the ritual act served as both a repetition and a renewal of the original founding acts, it legitimised the enterprise and it predicted a promise of the forthcoming conquest. Certeau further holds that this ritual action actually created the field necessary for political or military activities to proceed. Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, 124.

movement or a process. When the passenger reaches the transitional and in-between liminal stage of the ritual, Turner states that "they are no longer classified and not yet classified".[213]

> [They] are neither living nor dead from one aspect and both living and dead from another. […] Their condition is one of ambiguity and paradox, a confusion of all the customary categories.[214]

This confusion of categories is what Turner refers to as liminality.[215] Turner also links Douglas' hypothesis, that the unclear and contradictory tends to be regarded as unclean, to the fact that transitional beings (in a state of liminality) in most so-called primitive cultures are regarded as polluted and dangerous to those not yet inoculated by having gone through the same ritual.[216]

A recent example concerning the use of van Gennep's theory of the liminal, along with its further development by Turner into ideas on liminality and anti-structure,[217] is the article by Azaryahu mentioned in the previous part of this text. According to Azaryahu, the spontaneous sacralisations of the square where Yitzhak Rabin was murdered rendered the square a liminal status, evident in that "the boundaries between the popular and the official, the private and the public were blurred to a substantial extent".[218] Anti-structure was also visible, states Azaryahu, manifest in the changes made to the local architecture, which in other circumstances would have been considered a violation of the public order. This special environment could be seen as rendering the square suitable for public mourning because in such a liminal

---

[213] Victor Turner, *The Forest of Symbols*, 96.

[214] Victor Turner, *The Forest of Symbols*, 97.

[215] Victor Turner, *The Forest of Symbols*, 93. Victor Turner, *The Ritual Process*, 95-6.

[216] Mary Douglas, *Purity and danger: an analysis of concepts of pollution and taboo* (London: Rutledge & Kegan Paul, 1976), 5 [First published in 1966]. Victor Turner, *The forest of symbols*, 97.

[217] Turner's term anti-structure is used in relation to both liminal and liminoid rituals and, as we shall see, also in relation to communitas. Victor Turner, *From Ritual to Theatre*, 32, 44. I will return to this discussion shortly.

[218] Maoz Azaryahu, "The spontaneous formation of memorial space", 501-13.

or anti-structural environment the certain modality of social relationships which Turner calls *communitas* has free reign.[219]

Communitas

According to Turner, communitas may emerge in liminality as well as in other cultural phenomena, confusing categories and transgressing norms, i.e. wherever social structure is not.[220] The sphere of *anti-structure* is for Turner a domain similar to what Marx calls the the *superstructural*, although anti-structure, states Turner, is a creative domain independent of "productive social labour" serving as a critical source in society, rather than as a mystification or falsification of structure.[221]

When in a state of liminality, fleeting in and out of social time, space and structure, Turner suggests that the passenger recognises the social bond that is left behind at the same time as he/she recognises the structural ties which will bring him/her to a new social position. This feeling of immediate revelation, which has both an existential and a potential quality, has the power of evoking feelings of belonging to others going (or having gone) through the same liminal stage. This immediate feeling of enlightened bonding is what Turner calls communitas. According to Turner, it is important to note the difference between the cognitive qualities of *structure*, in being a model for thinking about the ordering of one's public life rooted in the past as well as reaching into the future with the help of laws or customs, and the immediacy or "the now" of communitas.[222]

Turner further declares that in the highly structured Western societies of today the search for communitas has elevated the underdog into an enviable position, since a lack of social status is concomitant with independence from

---

[219] In order to distinguish this modality of social relationships from an "area of common living" Turner uses the Latin term *communitas* instead of community. Victor Turner, *The Ritual Process*, 96. Turner later distinguishes between three forms of communitas, which may all be connected to both liminal and liminoid phenomena: Spontaneous communitas, Ideological communitas, and Normative communitas. Victor Turner, *From Ritual to Theatre*, 47-50.

[220] According to Turner communitas has the power of emerging either by slipping through the interstices of social structure, as in liminality, or by acting on the edges of structure, i.e. in marginality, or by coming from below structure. Victor Turner, *The Ritual Process*, 126.

[221] Victor Turner, *From Ritual to Theatre*, 32-3.

[222] Victor Turner, *The Ritual Process*, 113.

social restrictions, customs and norms. This is reminiscent of the way in which Certeau's tactic acts constantly escape the law of the proper place since they are not defined or identified by it.[223] In Turner's case, exemplified by the tendency in Western society to romanticise marginal people, countries or social groups by making them symbolise what Turner calls "the moral value of communitas" as opposed to corrupt political or economical powers.[224] In the highly structured societies of today groups of people even tend to seek the low and the marginal in order to act out the transgression of social norms and receive communitas. For Turner this expresses itself in the society of his time with initiation-like acts such as Prince Philip's decision to send his son, the heir to the British throne, to a bush school in Australia in order to learn to "rough it".[225] Initiation-like acts connected to both the Swedish *gymnasium* and the University, consisting of drunkenness and humiliation, might be other examples, as well as the whole concept of bachelor and bachelorette parties.

For Turner communitas and structure share a dialectical relationship, extremely important for society at large since the exaggeration of structure tends to lead to reactions, perhaps similar to what Certeau would call tactics, but referred to by Turner as "pathological manifestations of communitas", outside or against the laws of society. By way of example, Turner mentions "hippies", "teeny-boppers" and other subcultural groups.[226] However, spontaneous communitas, as opposed to the juridical and political character of structure, can never be maintained for very long, states Turner, since communitas inevitably develops into norm-governed relationships. (We might perhaps even compare this development with the institutionalisation of tactic acts mentioned in the previous chapter.) Just as the exaggeration of structure is negative for society as a whole, the exaggeration of communitas is not healthy either, states Turner, since it tends to be followed by despotism

---

[223] Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, 29.

[224] Victor Turner, *The Ritual Process*, 110. See also: Lars-Henrik Ståhl, "*(-)* Den utpekande gesten", *Tre texter om förskjutningens estetik*, akademisk avhandling för avläggande av doktorsexamen vid tekniska fakulteten vid Lunds Universitet, Sektionen för arkitektur, Avdelningen för formlära (Lund: KF-Sigma, 1996), especially pages 9-28 discussing the mythology of the margin.

[225] Victor Turner, *The Ritual Process*, 97.

[226] Victor Turner, *The Ritual Process*, 112.

and an "overbureaucratisation" of society, as is the case in societies with major religious or political movements.

> For individuals and groups, social life is a type of dialectical process that involves successive experience of high and low, communitas and structure, homogeneity and differentiation, equality and inequality.[227]

Liminality and Communitas as fields of micro-politics

Before moving on, I believe it is important to recognise the negative side of the two concepts liminality and communitas. It might for instance be worth examining them from the perspective of those who never get a chance to choose whether to attend a certain event or not. In circumstances like these Bourdieu believes the rites of passage are better described as rites of legitimation, or quite frankly *rites of institution*, with an essential effect of separating those who have undergone them, not from those who have not, but rather from those who never will undergo them, "and thereby instituting a lasting difference between those to whom the rite pertains and those to whom it does not pertain".[228] Instead of focusing on the process or transition in rites of passage, Bourdieu suggests we should focus on the line we pass over, or, more specifically, what this line separates. Bourdieu views the wedding in a Durkheimian fashion, i.e. as a rite safeguarding, consecrating, and legitimising the social order of a society (in Bourdieu's case, the difference between the sexes) by socially instituting them through "an act of constitution", i.e. the wedding ceremony.[229] The present difficulty for homosexual couples in Sweden to perform a regular church wedding ceremony, and not just a juridical act on the stairs of the church or a profane wedding ceremony, may be critically viewed as an exclusion from such an act of constitution. This exclusion could perhaps further be viewed as an act of constitution in itself, socially instituting a difference between heterosexual and homosexual love.

---

[227] Victor Turner, *The Ritual Process*, 97.

[228] Pierre Bourdieu, "Rites of Institution", *Language and Symbolic Power*, ed. John B. Thompson, translated by Gina Raymond and Matthew Adamson (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991), 117.

[229] Pierre Bourdieu, *Language and Symbolic Power*, 117-27.

It is from this perspective easy to agree with Bourdieu's discrediting of both van Gennep's and Turner's work on rites of passage as a mere naming or describing of a social phenomenon, as well as with the growing critique of Turner's perhaps idealistic concepts liminality and communitas as utopic spheres of homogeneity, unity and anti-structure, whereas they really are "fields of micro-politics which may herald 'new power divisions'".[230] I thus agree that Turner tends to tone down the political structures inherent also in cultural activities. However, he does so quite openly, occasionally criticising in particular "political anthropologists". A striking example here is his naive view of "prophets and artists" as "liminal and marginal people" striving to rid themselves of social norms by being "edgemen" who produce art and religion rather than legal and political structures.[231]

Liminoid events and their places

If we now return to the earlier discussion on rites of passage we find that Turner believes liminal rituals to have been regarded as sacred work in so-called primitive society. These ritual acts were even mandated by society, states Turner, and a distinction was therefore drawn between profane and sacred work.[232] The sacred work of performing liminal rituals was further carried out in sacred places of concealment, since the sacred had to be protected from profanation or defilement and the profane had to be protected from dangerous contact with divinity.[233] When studying liminal-like events in post-industrial and secular Western societies of today, Turner notices that a similar distinction is drawn although now between work, play and leisure,

---

[230] Graham St John, "Alternative Cultural Heterotopia and the Liminoid Body: Beyond Turner at ConFest", *Australian Journal of Anthropology*, 12/1 (2001): 47-67. In this precise critique St. John quotes the social anthropologist Richard Werbner, *Ritual Passage Sacred Journey: The Process and Organization of Religious Movement* (Washington: Smithsonian Institute Press, 1989), 295.

[231] Victor Turner, *The Ritual Process*, 128.

[232] Victor Turner, *From Ritual to Theatre*, 30-3. However, as Turner also recognises, both profane and sacred work may include elements of play. These playful elements are, however, intrinsically connected with the work in question. In addressing Durkheim we find that he holds this division, between sacred intervals of religious activities and profane seasons of work, as the source of the category *time*. The category *space* is consequently seen by Durkheim as a product of our division between sacred and profane districts. Emile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, 11-4.

[233] Victor Turner, *The Forest of Symbols*, 98.

with play having elements of leisure, rather than between profane and sacred work.[234] In a similar way Foucault discusses certain oppositions "nurtured by the hidden presence of the sacred", which our present day society has not yet dared to break down, such as private space versus public space, family space versus social space, cultural space versus useful space, and "between the space of leisure and that of work."[235]

In order to secure the meaning of whatever liminal phenomena (such as liminal myths and liminal rituals) that are left in post-industrial Western society, Turner invents the concept of *liminoid* phenomena,[236] seen by Turner as events "generated by and following the industrial revolution".[237] Turner further believes that liminoid phenomena resemble, although they are not identical with, primitive liminal phenomena, from which they especially differ in five respects,[238] which are, in summary, as follows:

1.   Liminal phenomena are predominant in pre-industrial and agrarian societies whereas liminoid phenomena are produced by the industrial revolution.

2.   Liminal phenomena tend to be collective cyclic phenomena enforced by socio-cultural necessity. Liminoid phenomena are, on the other hand, characteristically individual productions, although with collective "mass

---

[234] Victor Turner, *From Ritual to Theatre*, 33.

[235] Michel Foucault, "Of Other Spaces", 23.

[236] Victor Turner, *From Ritual to Theatre*, 20-60. The suffix -oid in liminoid is taken from the Greek word *eidos* meaning form, declared by Turner to mean "like" or "resembling", in that liminoid rituals resemble liminal rituals without being identical to them. Victor Turner, *From Ritual to Theatre*, 32.

[237] Victor Turner, *From Ritual to Theatre*, 53.

[238] Victor Turner, *From Ritual to Theatre*, 53-5. Somewhat related to Turners distinction between liminal and liminoid events is Certeau's way of first comparing and then separating what he calls spatial stories from the ancient ritual of founding fãs performed by féitãles. For Certeau there is no spatiality that is not organised by delimitations, such as, for instance, the determination of frontiers. Certeau further holds that the spatial stories of each individual's walking through space (in Certeau's example city-space) founds space, similar to the way féitãles founds fãs. According to Certeau, space is founded by the authorisation of existing spatial limits either by transcending these limits, putting them in opposition to each other or by displacing them. Certeau then differentiates spatial stories from féitãles in that spatial stories found fãs in a fragmented, miniaturised, and polyvalent way whereas féitãles found fãs in a unique and whole, on a national scale, and specialised way. Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, 115-31, especially page 125.

effects", continuously generated in space and time set apart for leisure activities.

3. Liminal phenomena are integrated into the social process whereas liminoid phenomena develop apart from the main economic and political processes; they are "plural, fragmentary and experimental in character".

4. Liminal phenomena and their symbols have a common intellectual and emotional meaning for the members of a given social or cultural group. Liminoid phenomena and their symbols are more idiosyncratic, generated by specific individuals, groups or institutions.

5. Liminal phenomena tend to be vital for the function of a society's social structure. Liminoid phenomena, on the contrary, often serve as social critique or even, states Turner, as revolutionary manifestos.

Turner further assigns the liminoid to the sphere of anti-structure, where liminoid events have the possibility of generating new modes of living, "from utopias to programs", which in the long run may influence those in "mainstream social and political roles".[239] As examples of such liminoid activities Turner mentions experimental and theoretical science as well as art and play. As examples of permanent liminoid settings Turner gives us universities, institutes and colleges, but also bars, certain cafés and social clubs, art galleries, theatres and concert halls as well as sports arenas and golf courses. For Turner these are privileged *neutral spaces* set aside from productive social labour where experiments and "all kinds of freewheeling" are allowed to take place.[240]

A somewhat more critical view of the relationship between the space of work and play/leisure comes from Lefebvre. In speaking of space as being divided up into specialised areas as well as into areas prohibited for this or that group, Lefebvre further subdivides space into spaces for work and leisure, as well as into daytime and night-time spaces.[241] On one level, Lefebvre regards the

---

[239] Victor Turner, *From Ritual to Theatre*, 33.

[240] Victor Turner, *From Ritual to Theatre*, 33, 55.

[241] Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, 319-20. This since, according to Lefebvre, the body, sex, and pleasure are not granted any existence, neither mental nor social, until after dark, when the prohibitions of daytime are somehow lifted. However, Lefebvre reveals that sex and other kinds of physical pleasure are allowed free reign when identified with leisure, at least

space of leisure in the same way as Turner does, i.e. as a counter force to the space of labour or even as a critique *of* the space of labour. In Lefebvre's case, the space of leisure enables the transgression of divisions such as social and mental, sensory and intellectual, the everyday and the festival, work and play. On another level, what first seemed to have escaped the control of the established order later reveals itself for Lefebvre as a "complete illusion".[242] The space of leisure is for Lefebvre "as alienated and alienating as labour; as much an agent of co-optation as it is itself co-opted; and both an assimilative and an assimilated part of the 'system' (mode of production)".[243]

> The space of leisure bridges the gap between traditional spaces with their monumentality and their localizations based on work and its demands, and potential spaces of enjoyment and joy; in consequence this space is the very epitome of contradictory space. This is where the existing mode of production produces both its worst and its best – parasitic outgrowths on the one hand and exuberant new branches on the other – as prodigal of monstrosities as of promises (that it cannot keep).[244]

If we return to Turner's, again, perhaps idealistic view of liminal and liminoid events, we nevertheless find that his work has proven itself useful in studies on how alternative lifestyle events embody space,[245] as well as in studies on the symbolic use of certain value laden places.[246] As we saw earlier, persons seeking

in places especially selected for the purpose, such as holiday resorts, ski slopes or sunny beaches. Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, 58, 310, 320, 354, 383-5.

[242] This complete illusion could be seen as characteristic of what Lefebvre calls *contradictory space*, which for Lefebvre is a space where quantity stands against quality, in the same way that exchange-value may be set up against use-value, private against public space, and so on. Instead of being a space of consumption, contradictory space is a consumption of space, exemplified by Lefebvre with holiday resorts and leisure spaces consuming "natural spaces". This consumption of natural space inevitably leads to investment, exploitation and urbanisation, and thus to the opposite of that which was initially sought for, namely the space of nature, states Lefebvre. Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, 292-351.

[243] Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, 383.

[244] Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, 385.

[245] See for instance: Graham St John, "Alternative Cultural Heterotopia and the Liminoid Body" and Kevin Hetherington, *The Geography of the Other: Lifestyle, Performance and Identity*, PhD thesis number DX183194 (Lancaster University, 1993), 89-106.

[246] See for instance: Rob Shields, *Places on the Margin: Alternative Geographies of modernity* (London: Routledge, 1991).

a new lifestyle or another way of living, i.e. persons involved in liminoid acts of transgression, tend to seek that which symbolises a different set of values in comparison to the norms of the rest of society. By stepping outside the field of given norms, acts of transgression may be performed which in the long run might challenge given power relations inherent in customary values and beliefs.[247] Therefore, liminoid events are sometimes enacted in places that once had liminal symbolic value, values that over time have become out of date and therefore seem eccentric and perhaps appealing. An example of such a reused liminal place is Stonehenge, figuring as a liminal place for New Age travellers in Hetherington's PhD thesis.[248] Other works important for studies like these are Lefebvre's description of what he calls the reuse of repressed and scattered *heterotopical* places, containing a "ferment of sacred and accursed",[249] perhaps from within what Lefebvre describes as *representational space*,[250] as well as Foucault's notion of *heterotopias*, dealing with places different from yet related to the rest of society, which I will discuss further shortly.[251]

---

[247] Kevin Hetherington, *The Geography of the Other*, 93-8.

[248] Kevin Hetherington, *The Geography of the Other*, 191-3.

[249] Lefebvre holds that the secular and *abstract space* of market economy was helped in its accumulation process by the repression of the earlier so dominant and *absolute space* of Christianity in the name of the Logos, Cosmos and the Law; in other words, with the help of logic and reason, systematic order and prescribed rules. However, the dominant space of Christianity did not disappear altogether, states Lefebvre. It was rather transformed into dominated and scattered heterotopical places. Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, 163-4, 263, 294, 366. It is important to note here, since this text deals mainly with places of ritual connected to death, that for Lefebvre the space of death is still part of absolute space. Not only because of "the space of death's absolute power over the living", but because for Lefebvre tombs and funerary monuments are full of both political and religious content, i.e. of absolute power as well as absolute knowledge, although, as Lefebvre ironically admits, "it must be said for [Christian] cemeteries that they do democratize immortality". We might on the other hand wonder what Lefebvre would say about the secular and in some case even privately owned profit-oriented cemeteries of today. I would suggest that he would have considered this types of cemetery as part of abstract space or maybe even contradictory space. Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, 235, 242.

[250] Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, 163, 229-91. Representational space is for Lefebvre a space linked to the hidden or clandestine side of social life as well as to art. Representational space is every society's dominated space and it is thus passively experienced, although the imagination seeks to change and appropriate it by overlaying physical space, making symbolic use of its objects. Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, especially pages 26, 33, 38-46. I will return to this discussion in the chapter *Liminality and heterotopia*.

[251] Yet another description, which feels at least somewhat related to the other places mentioned, is what Certeau describes as opaque and stubborn places, lingering on beneath "the fabricating

It is also important to note that Turner's concept of liminoid events may not only be used to shed light on transgressive action but also to explain more ordinary events. We may for instance look at what is left of the rites of passage in present day society and find that a secular wedding may be enacted in a playful and profit-oriented wedding chapel in Las Vegas as well as on the beach, and that rites of initiation or transition from childhood to adolescence are replaced by events such as getting a driver's license or being able to buy alcohol in liquor stores. Some of our new burial customs, like the strewing of ashes in a setting specific for the deceased's persona, might be other examples. Another recent phenomenon, connected to our mythologisation of liminal places, might be the *morbid tourism* to accident and murder sites as well as to cemeteries and single graves. Whether this be to Ground Zero in New York, the murder site of the Swedish Prime Minister Olof Palme in Stockholm, princes Diana's "death tunnel" in Paris, or the staircase in Miami Beach where Gianni Versace was shot; morbid tourism is a growing, international, and wide-spread phenomenon.[252] An example of a liminoid ritual enacted in a space which once had, and to some extent still holds, symbolic power is the wedding ceremony performed at Kockum's old dry dock in Malmö harbour, offered as the first prize in a contest held by the local newspaper *Sydsvenskan*.[253]

Heterotopias and the order of things

As was stated earlier, some scholars regard liminal and liminoid places as somewhat similar to what Foucault calls heterotopias. As used by Foucault, the notion of heterotopia is, however, (at least initially) both a linguistic and a spatial concept. The original meaning of the word is to be found in a medical context and stems from the word *heterotopy*, which means a displacement of position or misplacement.[254] In pathology the term *heterotopia* means the

---

and universal writing of technology". Certeau further declares: "The revolutions of history, economic mutations, demographic mixtures lie in layers within it, and remain there, hidden in customs, rites, and spatial practices." Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, 201.

[252] Thomas Blom, "Morbid tourism - a postmodern market niche with an example from Althorp", *Norwegian Journal of Geography*, 54/1 (March 2000): 29-36.

[253] "Hymnens band knöts i sand", *Sydsvenskan*, söndag 8 juni 2003, Malmö C4.

[254] "Heterotopy", [Online] *OED Online*, second edition 1989, eds. J. A. Simpson and E. S. C. Weiner. (Copyright: Oxford University Press), retrieved 13 Jun. 2003, URL <http://dictionary.oed.com/cgi/entry/00105569>.

occurrence of a tumour in a locality where the elements of which this tumour is composed do not normally exist. An example might be a skin tumour, made of skin epithelium, appearing in the lung epithelium.[255]

> Tumours are abnormal only because they occur in a locality in which
> their elements do not normally exist (Heterotopia).[256]

What we are dealing with, then, is a set of relations between time, space and the displaced, which on another occasion and in a different position might well be correctly situated, in the same way that dirt in Douglas' notion is essentially things misplaced.[257]

In evolutionary biology the true hereditary evolution of a species is modified by random changes in the development of the individual living being. These changes can occur in time, *heterochrony*, or space, *heterotopy*, and they modify the embryo through its adaptation to the changed conditions of its existence.[258] It is tempting to compare Erikson's view of ritualisation, as a link between the development of the individual and the evolution of the human species,[259] and Hetherington's view of the heterotopia, as relations between people, sites and situations in time and space, which in the long run might modify the boundaries and social orderings of space,[260] to the concept of heterochrony and heterotopy in evolutionary biology.

In the preface to *The Order of Things: An archaeology of the human sciences*, Foucault discusses in what way categories and hierarchies of things come to pass and how at a certain time and place an order of things arises. He is particularly interested in the pure experience of order and its modes of being, which he sees in every culture between the "ordering codes" and the

---

[255] Sigurd F. Lax, "'Heterotopia' from a biological and medical point of view", *Other Spaces. The Affair of the Heterotopia,* HDA, Dokumente zur Architectur, 10 (1998): 114-123.

[256] "Heterotopy", [Online] *OED Online*.

[257] Mary Douglas, *Purity and danger*, 5.

[258] "Heterotopy", [Online] *OED Online*.

[259] See the chapter *Between individual and society* in this text.

[260] Kevin Hetherington, *The Badlands of Modernity; Heterotopia & Social Ordering* (London and New York: Routledge, 1997), 68-9. I will discuss Hetherington's view of the heterotopia in the next chapter.

reflections upon order itself.[261] Foucault is therefore amused by a "certain Chinese encyclopaedia", found in an essay by Jorge Luis Borges, which Foucault feels breaks up "the thought that bears the stamp of our age and our geography", i.e. contemporary Western thought. This Chinese encyclopaedia[262] appears to Foucault to be breaking up:

> all the ordered surfaces and all the planes with which we are accustomed to tame the wild profusion of existing things, and continuing long afterwards to disturb and threaten with collapse our age-old distinction between Same and the Other.[263]

The most fascinating thing about this unfamiliar ordering system seems to Foucault to be the very possibility of thinking in this way, a possibility that at the same time reveals the limitation of "our" taxonomies. Foucault moves on to find out exactly what it is that makes this encyclopaedia so "impossible". He decides that it is neither the monstrosity of the fabulous animals nor the unusual juxtapositions; it is the short distance, created by the alphabetical series (a, b, c, d,) linking each category to all the others at the same time as it separates the categories from, as well as juxtaposes them to, each other that is impossible.

Even though Foucault is quite amused by the encyclopaedia's unusual classification system he is also disturbed by the thought of the space, or *common locus*, that would allow these anomalous entities to assemble. In the end, the "monstrous quality" that Foucault sees in Borges' listing derives not so much from the close proximity of the categories, nor their unusual juxtapositions, as from the fact that the common ground on which these categories could be divided, grouped and ordered, is simply not at hand.[264]

---

[261] Michel Foucault, "Preface", *The Order of Things: An archaeology of the human sciences*, English translation by Tavistock/Routledge (London: Taylor & Francis Ltd, 2001), xxiii [Original title: *Les Mots et les choses* (Editions Gallimard, 1966)].

[262] In which it is written that all animals can be divided into: (a) belonging to the Emperor, (b) embalmed, (c) tame, (d) sucking pigs, (e) sirens, (f) fabulous, (g) stray dogs, (h) included in the present classification, (i) frenzied, (j) innumerable, (k) drawn with a fine camel-hair brush, (l) et cetera, (m) having just broke the water pitcher, (n) those that from a long way off look like flies. Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things*, xvi, referring to Jorge Luis Borges, "The analytical Language of John Wilkins", *Other Inquisitions* (Austin: Texas University Press, 1988), 103.

[263] Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things*, xvi.

[264] Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things*, xviii.

Spaces allowing both fables and discourse, and thus affording Foucault consolation, although they have no real locality, are utopias. Another, though disturbing, option is heterotopias, which Foucault feels secretly undermine language because "they make it possible to name this *and* that" Hence they make it impossible to separate words and things from each other as well as to juxtapose them.

> [Heterotopias] desiccate speech, stop words in their tracks, contests the very possibility of grammar as its source; they dissolve our myths and sterilize the lyricism of our sentences.[265]

After having postulated these rejected alternatives, Foucault finally finds an actual "site of space" in a precise region that in the "Western dream world" serves, according to Foucault, as a "reservoir of utopias", namely China. The Chinese encyclopaedia quoted by Borges thus leads Foucault, first

> to a kind of thought without space, to words and categories that lack all life and place, but are rooted in a ceremonial space, overburdened with complex figures, with tangled paths, strange places, secret passages, and unexpected communications.[266]

– and later to a culture "devoted to the ordering of space", which, however does not order things into categories possible for "us" to "name, speak and think", a journey one might say is in line with Turner's conception of the powers of the weak, making Foucault mythologise and romanticise Chinese culture. However, Foucault is not interested in the fundamental ordering codes of a certain culture, nor in scientific or philosophical theories explaining why order exists in general; he is interested in what lies between these two poles, namely the fact *that* order exists.[267]

Foucault's interest in the fact that order exists is also evident in a 1967 Paris lecture analysing spatial heterotopias, arranged for a group of Architects.[268] As

---

[265] Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things*, xix.

[266] Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things*, xx.

[267] Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things*, xxii.

[268] Transcribed into text in 1984 as "Des Espaces Autres" when published in the French journal *Architecture-Mouvement-Continué* and later translated into the English by Jay Miskowiec as "Of Other Spaces" when published 1986 in the journal *Diacritics*. The backbiters of Foucault's concept of spatial heterotopia are probably as numerous as his admirers. Many, like the

in the before-mentioned pretext, circling around linguistic utopias and heterotopias, Foucault's lecture uses the concept of spatial heterotopia to reflect, juxtapose, contrast to, and thus reveal, our random and relative grounds of (in this case spatial) ordering.[269] Foucault further attempts to devise a terminology for and a description of these spaces in order to be able to study them.[270]

According to Foucault's description there are in every society/culture certain spaces that, despite their difference and seclusion from the given society, or maybe because of this, have the characteristic notion of being in relation to all other societal spaces but in such a way as to "suspect, neutralise or invert the set of relations that they happen to designate, mirror, or reflect".[271] In general there exist two main categories, declares Foucault: *crisis heterotopias* and *heterotopias of deviation.* Crisis heterotopias are sacred, privileged or forbidden places concealing individuals in transitory moments of their life, like boarding schools, military services and honeymoon hotels. In so-called primitive societies these are places where adolescents, menstruating women, pregnant women and the elderly are kept aside. The other category, heterotopias of deviation, consists of places where deviant individuals are concealed, places such as rest homes, psychiatric hospitals, or prisons.

Foucault further holds that an existing heterotopia can change its role while retaining its specific function within a given society or culture, if the society or culture in which it exists changes direction. As an example of a space with this kind of transformability Foucault mentions the Western cemetery, which

---

philosopher Edward Casey, criticize Foucault's principles for not being consistent enough. Edward Casey, *The Fate of Place*, 300. Others, like the architect Mary McLeod, regard Foucault's work on heterotopias to be narrow-minded, culturally as well as socially. Mary McLeod, "Everyday and 'Other' Spaces", *Architecture and Feminism*, Eds. Debra Coleman, Elizabeth Danze & Carol Henderson (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1996). I will not go into any specific critique here, but agree with among others the geographer Edward Soja that the looseness of Foucault's discussion probably stems from the fact that it was written and presented as a lecture. Edward W. Soja, *Thirdspace*, 154.

[269] Michael Foucault, "Of Other Spaces", 24.

[270] A description that is reduced to five or perhaps six principles, at least if we count the last remark. Since it is to me unclear which ideas are remarks and which are principles I choose not to number them.

[271] Michael Foucault, "Of Other Spaces", 24.

according to Foucault has continued to function "heterotopically" even though it's spatial, cultural, and religious status has changed over time.

Another characteristic feature of the heterotopia is, for Foucault, that it can juxtapose several different incompatible objects, places, or worlds of thought, in one single space, exemplified by Foucault with phenomena such as the theatre, the cinema, gardens, zoos, and figurative rugs.

Correspondingly, Foucault considers the heterotopia to host perceptions of, and relationships to, time different from the ordinary and everyday pace of time. That is, heterotopias may be oriented either towards the eternal: as cemeteries, museums, and libraries, or towards the temporal: as fairgrounds, vacation villages, and festivals. These two ways of relating to alternative notions of time open onto what Foucault "for the sake of symmetry" calls *heterochrony*.[272] Foucault then ties the full capacity of heterotopias to the situation when one of these alternative notions of time runs counter to the ordinary pace of time. Once again Foucault mentions the Western cemetery as a highly heterotopic place since for the individual the cemetery starts with such a heterochrony, in that the loss of life and lived time runs counter to the cemetery's "quasi-eternity" of permanent dissolution.

Finally, Foucault states that heterotopias are not as easily accessible as, for instance, a public square, since heterotopias consist of a system of enclosure as well as openness. As examples of such intricate systems of semi-permeability Foucault mentions prisons, which have a compulsory entrance, and churches or saunas that require the individual to surrender to rituals of purification before entry.

At the end of the text Foucault emphasises "the last trait of heterotopias", a trait which may even be seen as the heart of the matter in that it concerns the the twofold function of heterotopias in society. Firstly, heterotopias have the ability to create a *space of illusion*. In mirroring all other spaces while at the same time contrasting to them the heterotopia may, like the Chinese encyclopaedia, present all other spaces as even more illusive in revealing their random and relative grounds of ordering. As an example Foucault mentions "those famous brothels of which we are now deprived". Secondly, the heterotopias may appear as *spaces of compensation*, by presenting a space that

---

[272] Michael Foucault, "Of Other Spaces", 26.

seems as perfectly ordered as our ordinary spaces might seem disordered. Foucault suggests that certain colonies may have functioned in this compensative way in providing a seemingly perfect and well-arranged geographical space as well as regulating religion, law, and daily life. Following this we may perhaps view the colonies' outwardly perfect way of organising space and life as twofold "compensative". In implying that the colonised country's original way of life is primitive and unorganized, the colonising country lures the inhabitants, and also other countries, to approve of colonisation in order to retain continued mastery over the colonised country.

Liminality and heterotopia

In a chapter called *Heterotopia and the Revenge of the Sacred* Hetherington, in his PhD thesis, argues that Foucault's concept of heterotopias and Turner's notion of liminal places are one and the same thing, founded on the dualism between sacred and profane.[273] An additional reference for Hetherington in this matter is the sociologist Rob Shields' studies of liminality in spaces of modern consumption and pleasure, referred to by Shields as *marginal places*.[274] In the same work, Hetherington also refers to Lefebvre's notion of representational spaces, which he finds are not sites in the way Foucault's heterotopias are architectural or geographical sites, but rather situations which he feels encourage resistance and criticism of dominating ways of living,

---

[273] Kevin Hetherington, *The Geography of the Other*, 89-106. According to Hetherington, and as we have seen also Turner, *marginal* people tend to seek out such liminal places in order to perform acts of transgression in the production of a new lifestyle, identity or other way of being. Kevin Hetherington, *The Geography of the Other*, 90. Victor Turner, *The Ritual Process*, 112. More in line with Foucault than Turner is Hetherington's view of how people with other behaviour, in respect to certain societal or cultural norms, are transported to certain spaces of *otherness* in order to make the deviant behaviour harmless through putting it in an equally deviating place. Hetherington uses here the word transported after having presented it with reference to the historical background of prisoner transports from Britain to Australia, "perhaps one of the best examples of Britain's heterotopia during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries". Kevin Hetherington, *The Geography of the Other*, 90-1. Foucault is also evident when Hetherington states that this procedure also works in reverse, i.e. that people transported to these other spaces tend to become stained with otherness. Kevin Hetherington, *The Geography of the Other*, 90-1. These two views can also be found in Michel Foucault, *The order of things*, xxvi.

[274] Kevin Hetherington, *The Badlands of Modernity*, 24-8. Rob Shields, *Places on the Margin*, 29-65.

sometimes through making use of "perhaps heterotopic" places left behind in the production of space.

> Representational spaces involve making use of places, like heterotopia that have been left behind by the fragmentation produced by the tensions within a contradictory space. The use of such ambivalent sites offers a vantage point from which the production of space can be made visible and be critically viewed.[275]

In a later work, *The Badlands of Modernity; Heterotopia & Social Ordering*, the previously mentioned analysis of liminality and heterotopia is considered too narrow, largely due to what Hetherington describes as the post modern valorization of margins and difference, which has created a romance of transgression and resistance to social orders, linked among others to the concepts of representational space and liminality.[276] Hetherington touches on another cause for concern in his thesis, namely that the use of Lefebvre's concept of representational space could be seen as quite limited, since Lefebvre's main interest lies in the resistance against capitalist society.[277] An additional issue is Hetherington's reconsideration of liminality as representing mainly *structure* while a heterotopia also concerns *process*. As such,

---

[275] Kevin Hetherington, *The Geography of the Other*, 117.

[276] Kevin Hetherington, *The Badlands of Modernity*, see especially pages 20-38, 51-54, 69-71. Similar criticism can be found in McLeod's essay "Everyday and 'Other' Spaces", in which McLeod handles questions like: Who and what deserves the epithet "other"? Can something completely ordinary and everyday at the same time be something extraordinary? Also interesting is McLeod's analysis of the post-modern intellectual's preoccupation with "other" places, marginality and difference, raising the question: What if this interest is nothing more than an expression of a quest for identity and status as avant-garde? The cause for McLeod's concern has, however, not so much to do with heterotopias per se as with a wish to reveal the imaginative and creative powers in ordinary milieus and architecture, such as public parks, playgrounds and shopping malls, places which, although they seem ordinary, both add something extra and serve as hotbeds for dreams and imagination. An additional concern for McLeod is to emphasise the sensual and emotional value of space, a viewpoint that is related to the architect Deborah Fausch critique of ocularcentricity in Western patriarchal culture and philosophy as well as to Lefebvre's vision of "a space of enjoyment" or "an architecture of pleasure and joy". Mary McLeod, "Everyday and 'Other' Spaces". Deborah Fausch, "The knowledge of the body and the presence of history", *Architecture and Feminism*, eds. Debra Coleman, Elizabeth Danze & Carol Henderson (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1996). Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, 379-80.

[277] Kevin Hetherington, *The Geography of the Other*, 117-8. Kevin Hetherington, *The Badlands of Modernity*, 70.

heterotopias embody not only structure but also the uncertainties and unintended consequences of a process, consequences that Hetherington believes in the long run might change ideas and social orderings.[278] Instead of seeing heterotopias as originating from a dualism between the sacred and the profane, Hetherington believes that heterotopias are both produced and sometimes reused by utopian ordering processes, which, however, instead of creating utopias end up creating "strange other places defined by their difference to all that surrounds them".[279] The utopian ordering processes develop in these other places which are ambivalent and uncertain "either because they are new and as-yet unknown or because they are impossible archaic representations of former modes of social order that have become obsolete", states Hetherington.[280] As historical examples of such "other places" where utopias may be enacted, Hetherington gives us the Palais Royal during the French Revolution, the development of the Masonic lodge in Britain from the late seventeenth century to the eighteenth, and the early factories of the Industrial Revolution.[281]

Heterotopia and heterotopoid

Hetherington's view of utopian ordering processes seems in essence very much like Turner's liminoid phenomena, which, as we have seen, have the capacity of producing all sorts of ways of living, "from utopias to programs", possibly influencing those in "mainstream social and political roles".[282] Following this, what Hetherington speaks of is perhaps the production and reproduction of *heterotopoids* instead of heterotopias, with reference to Turner's distinction between liminal and liminoid phenomena.

Liminal events are, as we have seen, often performed in sacred places of concealment, since the sacred has to be protected from profanation or

---

[278] Kevin Hetherington, *The Badlands of Modernity*, 68-9. A reconsideration that to me seems in line with aforementioned modification of the two concepts liminality and communitas, that is, liminality and communitas as fields of micro politics, which may herald new power divisions, rather than as homogeneous spheres of anti-structure. Graham St John, "Alternative Cultural Heterotopia and the Liminoid Body", 47-67.

[279] Kevin Hetherington, *The Badlands of Modernity*, 68.

[280] Kevin Hetherington, *The Badlands of Modernity*, 68.

[281] Kevin Hetherington, *The Badlands of Modernity*, see especially chapters 1, 5 and 6.

[282] Victor Turner, *From Ritual to Theatre*, 33.

defilement and the profane has to be protected from any dangerous contact with divinity. This kind of emplacement or exclusion seems to me to go quite well with some of the heterotopias exemplified by Foucault, especially those which he claims exist in so-called primitive societies. Other and more modern heterotopias exemplified by Foucault are museums, prisons and rest homes, as well as cinemas and boarding schools.

What I find interesting is that Turner reveals liminal and liminoid events as existing alongside each other in present day society, even though the liminal events, which linger on, are seldom more than remnants of former liminal rituals.[283] If we apply Turner's ideas to the discussion above, heterotopias and heterotopoid may thus exist alongside each other. An example of this may be the Western cemetery, which exists as a cultural and historical vestige of a former liminal place of ritual when tied to an intra-urban churchyard, whereas the extra-urban park-like cemetery is, rather, a result of a liminoid utopian ordering process produced alongside with the Industrial Revolution.

Interstructural domains

A function that both heterotopias and heterotopoids, if we may use this investigational term here, seem to have common is their regulating function. One might say that these phenomena, by their very existence, support order and structure by serving as safety valves in society through which inbuilt tensions or unwanted substances may be securely released. Heterotopias and heterotopoids may thus perhaps be seen as *interstructural* rather than anti-structural domains.

The cemetery, the prison, and the brothel are all categorised as heterotopias by Foucault. As such they disarm polluting, dangerous or deviant behaviour or states in producing order through difference. Phenomena such as the garden, the figurative rug and the cinema both reflect and tame otherwise untamed dreams in gathering separate events or worlds of thought in one single sanctioning place, whereas museums and travelling fairs give free reign to accumulated and fleeting time respectively, both different from (and perhaps threatening to?) our normal relationship to the pace of time. The ship, for Foucault the heterotopia *par excellence*, appears to me as a floating

---

[283] Victor Turner, *From Ritual to Theatre*, 55.

prison or reformatory where young mischievous boys are sent to become real men. On another level, one could of course mythologise and romanticise the boat in the same way as Prince Philip did with the Australian bush school, and see it as a place where one might learn to "rough it". Following this line of thought, it is also tempting to draw on the fact that the harbour served for a long time as the rare legitimate place for male homosexual encounters, as well as a place for casual romance for otherwise socially controlled women. Thus the sailor, in the heart of both women and men, may still stand for masculinity and casual romance and as a symbol of freedom, eroticism and exoticism. Following Turner, the heterotopia may appear as a mythologised place to which persons with dreams of a new identity and a different way of living are drawn to enact their utopic ideas. This mythologisation may perhaps also explain why the concept of the heterotopia, as well as liminality and communitas, has allured such a large numbers of scholars from various disciplines and for so many reasons.

In relation to this it might be interesting to examine whether these phenomena might eventually lose their mystical shine by being theoretically investigated and thoroughly pinpointed. A closely related question, tied to the design of physical heterotopia and heterotopoid in present day society, concerns their function as safety valves. If heterotopia and heterotopoid become too well integrated in a given ordering system, or simply too properly arranged, will they then loose this function and thus give rise to sudden outbreaks in opposition to the orders of society?

The cemetery; from emplacement to setting

We now return once more to the treatise of the cemetery. With the former discussion as a background we may view the production of what I have called a proper space of death as a utopian ordering process, striving to fulfil a hygienic, technical, and in some parts "aesthetic" programme. By various territorial and conceptual strategies, a proper space of death was institutionalised and an awareness of its characteristics was established. We may also view the cemetery, in both its heterotopic and its heterotopoid form, as an interstructural regulator in society. In order to disarm the dead body most cultures and societies have used various rituals of purification and transition since the dead body has been considered a threat to the orders and structures of society. Rites of passage, such as rituals connected to burial,

allow for the corpse to go through a purifying preliminal phase, an ambiguous liminal phase, and a reintegrating postliminal phase in which the corpse is let back into society when confined to the secure burial plot inside the cemetery's borders.

The sliding scale of the deteriorating human body, from subject to object to dissolution, seems to be a common denominator in the history of ideas connected to the corpse.[284] For Kristeva the dead body could be categorized as an *abject*, the abject being something that is neither subject nor object and therefore excluded from, as well as threatening, the symbolic order and its mutually confirming subject/object relations.[285] The fear of such subject/object confusions, threatening the given orders of our existence, could be seen as repeatedly exploited in horror movies as the fear of the living dead, or in television sit-com's such as the American show The Addams family with cousin It and the Thing. Both It and Thing escape the ordinary subject/object labelling in that cousin It is a heap of hair and Thing just a separate hand, even though both are unmistakably living individuals they have object related names. This makes them frightening and abject-like since they are neither subjects nor objects (or maybe both) and as such they disturb the notion of identity, system and order. This subject/object uncertainty also reveals itself in our illogical fear of undergoing the process of natural decay

---

[284] Snickare discusses the unsightly and unhygienic corpse as a modern Western concept in, *Döden, kroppen och moderniteten*, 227-34. Robert Hertz shows that for some people (especially a large cultural group of riverside people in south-eastern Borneo) the putrefaction of the dead body is not seen as unsightly since it is considered a necessary process in order for the soul to detach itself from the flesh. The process of decay is thus followed with great enthusiasm, even though the corpse itself is considered polluted, contagious, and taboo. However, in this example the notion of pollution does not derive from hygienic considerations, proven by Hertz by the fact that the dead body of an insignificant person does not appear as dangerous to the rest of the group whilst the body of a departed chief is considered a disaster for the whole of society. Robert Hertz, *Death and The right hand*, 27-43.

[285] Julia Kristeva, *Powers of Horror*, 3-4. Kristeva further argues that the notion of abjection is coextensive with social and symbolic orders, on an individual as well as a collective level. It is a universal phenomenon constituted in the wake of man's social and symbolic ordering of life and what is considered abjection therefore varies from one symbolic or social context to another. Kristeva additionally suggests that abjection accompanies all religious structures and although it always refers to the exclusion of a substance it determines different forms in different religions: it appears as a rite of defilement and pollution in paganism and as exclusion, taboo or transgression in monotheistic religions, as in the threatening other (or otherness) integrated in Christianity. The various means of purifying the abject thus runs trough the history of religion. Julia Kristeva, *Powers of Horror*, 17.

and when confronted with the thought of ourselves as corpses. With the slogan "Being dead doesn't mean you can't have friends over!" the US website *SeeMeRot.com* offers relatives and the general public to watch the subject/object dissolution online via a "live coffin cam" in the head section of a coffin "six feet under".[286] But since corpses in the US are preserved by embalming there is not much too see, and maybe that is the whole point. Hence, Huntington and Metcalf suggest that in the US the embalming and viewing of the dead "as asleep" during the funeral ceremony can be seen as a form of fulfilment of the deceased's social person.[287]

The same kind of fulfilment, though interpreted in a British environment, is, according to Davies, to be found in the noticeable shift towards a personal placing of the cremated remains in a specific setting connected to the deceased's private life. An interesting point noted by Davies is that the set of rites dealing with the "wet" symbolic medium of the body, such as the funeral service in a church or in a crematorium chapel, focus on the past in confirming the deceased's identity and social status whereas the rites concerned with the "dry" symbolic medium of cremated remains are less restricted and have thus undergone major changes.[288] In the light of what has been said it would be interesting to view memorials by accident or murder sites as light versions of regular cemeteries, not only because they escape institutional regulations as well as aesthetically judgmental visitors but also due to the fact that the deceased's body is not placed directly below the memorial, which might be a source of relief.

The reintroduction of cremation could also be said to have opened up the enclosed space of death to various other ways of burial, such as the anonymous placing of ashes in gardens of remembrance or the strewing of

---

[286] "Live Coffin Cam", [Online] *SeeMeRot.com* (Copyright: SeeMeRot.com, 2003), retrieved 13 Feb. 2004, URL <http://www.seemerot.com/>.

[287] Peter Metcalf and Richard Huntington, *Celebrations of Death*, 210.

[288] Douglas J. Davies, *Death, Ritual and Belief*, 31. Snickare mentions the crematorium itself as a symbol of what she sees as two typically modern aspects of the perception of death: the hygienic and the aesthetic, which according to Snickare are really one and the same. Eva Åhrén Snickare, *Döden, kroppen och moderniteten*, 206. Inside the crematorium the two aspects meet in the transformation of the unsightly and unclean corpse into an acceptable substance such as the dry and clean ashes. "There the body is cleansed by fire". [My translation, originally in Swedish: "Där renas kroppen av eld".] Eva Åhrén Snickare, *Döden, kroppen och moderniteten*, 222.

ashes over land or at sea, as well as the more rare practice of launching ashes into space and orbit.[289] These "placeless" burials run, in a way, counter to the cult of visiting and caring for a grave. Interestingly enough, the same kind of development, i.e. from a cult of single emplacements to a more spacious memorial setting, is also evident in countries which have a comparatively low rate of cremations, such as the US.[290] In *Geography and religion: trends and prospects* Kong discusses an article by J. B. Jackson which points to the loss of significance of the grave as a *monument* commemorating the individual.[291] In the US for instance it is the entire setting of the cemetery, not the single grave itself, which inspires emotions. Jackson states, "One is tempted to see in this monumentalizing of an entire landscape a peculiar American trait, a peculiar American way of interpreting events in terms of their environment."[292] However, Foucault declares in a similar way: "Our epoch is one in which space takes for us the form of relations among sites" as opposed to medieval space which was "the space of emplacement".[293] The same kind of monumentalising of a setting can also be found in Sweden, where during the 1960s the American *lawn cemeteries*, with easy maintenance, mowed lawns, became the leading model of cemetery construction. This development led to the destruction of old cemeteries with the loss of local, cultural and communal identity as a result, when the old stone slabs, hill shaped graves and wrought iron grave fences were eliminated to enhance rational upkeep. Cemeteries built during the second half of the twentieth century show influences from society's emphasis on rationality, efficiency and standardised large-scale production, and it is within this framework that Jackson pessimistically concludes: "The cemetery in consequence has lost its meaning both to the individual and to the community, and what has taken its place it

---

[289] See the company Celestis, USA, which offers burials in space to people from all over the world. "Celestis Home Page", [Online] *Celestis homepage* (Copyright: Celestis Inc., 1994-2004), retrieved 5 Feb. 2004, URL <http://www.celestis.com/>.

[290] The cremation statistics from 2002 shows that in the US 27.78% out of all corpses are cremated which could be compared to Sweden's 70.0% in 2002, and Great Britain's 71.90% also in 2002. "Statistik 2003", *Kyrkogården*, 3 (2004): 9-15.

[291] Lily Kong, "Geography and religion; trends and prospects", *Progress in Human Geography*, 14/3 (1990): 363.

[292] J. B. Jackson, "From Monument to Place", 25.

[293] Michel Foucault, "Of Other Spaces", 22-3.

would be hard to say."[294] But, as landscape architect Bruno Wall notices, there are two different options when approaching these efficient cemeteries: they can be handled in a routine fashion with an emphasis on functionality, or one can focus on the spatial, artistic and architectural freedom that these lawn cemeteries actually can offer.[295] Kong, as well as Howett, draws a similar conclusion, stating that changes in our cultural and historical values might be fruitfully employed as a creative approach in design strategies concerning cemetery construction.[296] Instead of designing single-use cemeteries Kong and Howett states that a multiple-use approach would be an advantage with urban cemeteries playing a role in providing open space, as a sanctuary for wildlife, or in the provision of human recreation space.[297]

> We need to rethink the design premises of today's cemeteries. We need more options for the disposition of our bodies after death that reflects the economic, ecological, and social realities of this last quarter of the twentieth century. Only then will our burial places be reinvested with significance within the landscape of the living.[298]

The latest fashion in cemetery building is, according to Wall, the *landscape cemetery*, a diffuse term which often refers to constructions that have the cultural landscape as a source of inspiration.[299] They are either built into the cultural landscape or they imitate it in shaping space and terrain in a "natural" way. The landscape cemetery is usually very easy to maintain since cremation allows areas of enclosed fields, meadows, groves, and woodland to be used as burial grounds.[300] An example of such a construction is the Swedish cemetery at Berthåga, close to Uppsala, designed by the landscape architects

---

[294] J. B. Jackson, "From Monument to Place", 26.

[295] Bruno Wall, *Gravskick i förändring*, 8-9.

[296] Kong draws her conclusion in agreement with an earlier statement of Howett found in Catherine Howett, "Living Landscapes for the Dead", 14-7. Lily Kong, "Geography and religion", 363.

[297] Lily Kong, "Geography and religion", 363, drawing on Catherine Howett, "Living Landscapes for the Dead", 14-7, something which also seems in line with Turner's liminoid events performed in areas set apart for leisure.

[298] Catherine Howett, "Living Landscapes for the Dead", 9-10.

[299] Bruno Wall, *Gravskick i förändring*, 8-9. J. B. Jackson, "From Monument to Place", 25.

[300] Bruno Wall, *Gravskick i förändring*, 8-9.

Monica Sandberg and Nils Odén.[301] The cemetery at Berthåga offers several different places of ritual for various religious beliefs and alternative ideologies. An example of the latter is the "urn forest" [my translation], where urns are placed according to the signs of the Zodiac. Another feature is the outdoor "tree church" [my translation], made of trees planted so as to form the outline of the Uppsala Cathedral.[302] In this tree church burial ceremonies as well as weddings and baptisms are enacted. When constructing the cemetery at Berthåga, Odén and Sandberg strived to reconstruct the countryside of the Uppland area as it once was and with it the lost wildlife of old meadows and farmlands. The burial grounds are also constructed as ecologically as possible. They even have their own entomologist, Nils Ryrholm, placing out endangered or extinct species of insects in the growing fields of herbs, flowers and grasses.[303]

As Wall notices, the landscape cemetery is, conceptually, a further step away from the old churchyard cemetery. Consequently, it might be important to work with symbols that signify the use of the space so that the cemetery differs from an ordinary park as well as detaches itself from the surrounding landscape.[304] Another challenge is the elimination of religious symbols in burial chapels and burial grounds that are to be used by people with different religious beliefs. The symbolic and spiritual character of the place is therefore left to be designed with the immediate surroundings at hand, and not with the help of well established sacred symbols. This can obviously be seen as quite a challenge but, as Howett says:

> We cannot assume that our increased mobility and our secularized, urbanized culture have robbed us of all sense of place and that we cannot, therefore, invest landscapes with heightened meaning or symbolic resonance.[305]

---

[301] Marianne Silén, "Berthåga – hela tillvarons trädgård", *Byggindustrin*, 25 (2002): 13-5.

[302] [Originally in Swedish: "Urnskogen" and "Trädkyrkan".] Marianne Silén, "Berthåga – hela tillvarons trädgård", 13-5.

[303] Marianne Silén, "Berthåga – hela tillvarons trädgård", 14.

[304] Bruno Wall, *Gravskick i förändring*, 9.

[305] Catherine Howett, "Living Landscapes for the Dead", 17.

What is important to note, and what Foucault was suggesting, is that an existing heterotopia is dynamic in that it can modulate its role in a given society or culture, while retaining its specific function, when that society or culture changes direction. However, it is also important to recognise that burial traditions have a built-in resistance towards rapid development which has much do to with the fact that in a state of grief we tend to want what is familiar, secure and close at hand. Another prominent factor is our wish to honour and venerate the dead and we tend to do so by using well established burial methods and approved design strategies for fear of "doing the wrong thing" and thus disgracing the deceased. Our views of life after death, the relations between the living and the dead, and our supposed fear of the unknown, are other possible factors. We thus need to keep this built-in resistance in mind while still acknowledging the cemetery of today as a cultural phenomenon and an ever-changing place of ritual (whether connected to liminal rituals or liminoid events), an approach that might help our cemeteries to function actively as the sacred spaces they should be.

●

In the second part of this text we noticed that both pre-industrial and post-industrial society seem to have the need to order that which appears threatening to given societal structures. The performance of liminal rituals, considered by Turner as sacred work, was further found to contain elements of both the sacred and the profane, something which Durkheim, van Gennep, and Turner spoke of as threatening, at least for societies built on a religious world view. The places used for the sacred work of performing these contradictory rituals therefore tended to be sacred places of concealment, for the protection of both the place of ritual and society itself from unwanted defilement. We further found that liminal-like events in post-industrial secular society were termed liminoid phenomena by Turner in order to separate them from liminal phenomena. This, since liminoid phenomena contain a division between work and play/leisure rather than between profane and sacred work. Consequently, liminoid events are concealed by being placed in areas set apart for leisure, states Turner. Turner further sees in these events a possibility of generating new modes of living, "from utopias to programs".

We further looked into some recent criticism of Turner's work, where the two concepts liminality and communitas were seen as fields of micro-politics rather than spheres of anti-structure. Correspondingly, Bourdieu emphasised the liminal stage in rites of passage as a line that separates rather than as a line to be traversed. This line thus institutes a lasting difference between those who have crossed it and those who will never be able to cross it. When criticising Turners ideas we also found Lefebvre's work useful, especially in recognising the space of leisure, bridging the gap between work and play, as illusory and contradictory in that the space of leisure is as alienated and alienating as the space of labour and to a great extent also part of the "system" or mode of production.

We then moved on to discuss Foucault's concept of heterotopia, which was first seen by Hetherington to be similar to Turner's concept of liminal places. Hetherington later singled out the heterotopia as being more likely produced by utopian ordering processes than by sacred concealments, a turn that to me seems similar to Turner's distinction between liminal and liminoid phenomena. In this discussion, I suggested that it might be possible to divide Foucault's heterotopias into heterotopia, produced by liminal events, and heterotopoid, produced by liminoid events. Both phenomena may, however, be seen as having an interstructural and a "safety valve" function for society.

As was mentioned earlier, Turner believes that the over-structured society provokes "pathological manifestations of communitas" against the orders of society. If we move this inquiry to the context of the cemetery, we might pose the following questions: Is the cemetery ordering itself towards extinction by the exaggeration of structure and, if so, do roadside memorials and the personal placing of ashes function as tactic outbursts of communitas? Another idea is that roadside memorials, and memorials at the sites of murders, terrorist acts or other catastrophes, are associated with extraordinary events that the specific landscapes, buildings or artefacts have unintentionally been part of. Privately placed ashes, on the other hand, provide a rather constructed and intentional relation between body, place and memorial. Then again, both these situations express the relationship between body, place and memorial as crucial. This leads us to the third and last question for this text: What factors might be involved in the transportation of the presence of an absent person to a place or a thing? In the next chapter we will explore

this question with the help of the study of tropes as well as with Frazer's two laws of magic. Lastly, we will encounter Levinas notion of touch and the caress as the phenomenological origin of religious ritual and kerygmatic language. With this encounter we will finally be closing in on the presence of the absent.

3
The Transportation of Meaning

The kind of precise knowledge gained in the study of physical nature (such as mathematical logic, for example) may be hard to attain in the disciplines of the humanities. The human sciences give us a different kind of knowledge which is not comparable to that attained in the natural sciences, but it is as valuable and as important.[306] Scholars of the humanities also need a different set of typological tools than those employed by natural scientists. The study of *tropes*, with its historical roots in the rhetoric of Aristotle and the philosophy of Giambattista Vico is one such tool.

The study of tropes is often used for the purpose of identifying the transportation of an expression, word, or idea from one context to another. Aristotle distinguishes between *metaphor* and *simile* by the assertion that a metaphor identifies or substitutes something, whereas a simile simply compares one thing to another. This distinction is further used by Aristotle as a rhetorical device.[307] In the philosophy of Giambattista Vico four major tropes are distinguished, from which Vico believes all figures of speech to be derived, namely: *metaphor*, *metonymy*, *synecdoche* and *irony*.[308] Vico further

---

[306] As emphasised by Hayden White in *Tropics of Discourse: Essays in Cultural Criticism* (Baltimore & London: the Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987), 22.

[307] Christof Rapp, "Aristotle's Rhetoric", [Online] *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, summer 2002 edition, ed. Edward N. Zalta (Copyright: Christof Rapp, 2002), retrieved 21 Nov. 2003, URL <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2002/entries/aristotle-rhetoric/>. However, some of the examples that Aristotle offered when explaining the constitution of metaphors would now be regarded as metonymy or synecdoche.

[308] Where, roughly speaking, a *metaphor* is a figurative expression built on similarity, referring to something that it does not literally denote, a *metonymy* replaces a word denoting an object, action, institution etc with a word or phrase denoting a closely related property or thing. The association involved in metonymy is typically built on contiguity rather than similarity, therefore metonymy is often contrasted with metaphor in linguistics and literary theory. A *synecdoche* replaces the name of a given thing with the name of a part of this thing; it can also make the whole stand for a specific part. In Vossius *Elementa rhetorica*, metonymy and synecdoche are described as having six ways each in which they may be constructed. Some of these ways are quite similar, making it sometimes difficult to distinguish metonymy from synecdoche and vice versa. The difference between metonymy and synecdoche could therefore be seen as quite debatable. According to White, the metonymy reduces the whole to an essential part or aspect while the synecdoche integrates the whole with a quality symbolised by a characteristic part. White also cites Kenneth Burke, who argues that metonymic usage is reductive, while synecdochic is representative. On the other hand, George Lakoff and Mark

uses these tropes as a basis for his theory of the four stages of development in all human civilization: the metaphoric "age of the gods", the metonymic "age of heroes", the synecdochic "age of men" and the ironic "age of decadence and dissolution", as expressed in his great work *Principii di una scienza nuova d'intorno alla natura delle nazioni,* often referred to as *New Science*.[309] In *New Science* Vico postulates his science (or knowledge) in opposition to the philosophy of Descartes with its focus on "the simple elements of thought", innate in the mind, from which all knowledge may be derived prior to experience by the use of deductive rules. Vico states that when evaluating, for instance, sense and psychological experiences (including the human sciences) by the rules of mathematical logic man deceives himself by using "man as the measure of all things". Vico continues his criticism, stating that whenever man comes across things that do not fit into his world of thought he tries to judge them by what is familiar and close at hand instead of trying to figure out how they came to be and what they are as products of human action, both socially and culturally.[310]

A more recent scholar with an interest in tropes is the historian of philosophy and literature Hayden White, who appears to tread in the footsteps of Vico in

Johnson, as well as Jakobson, see synecdoche as one kind of metonymy among others; a synecdoche being the kind of metonymy where part stands for whole. Hayden White, *Tropics of Discourse*, 73, referring to: Kenneth Burke, *A Grammar of Motives* (Berkley and Los Angeles, 1969), 505-510. George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Metaphors we live by* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), 36. Roman Jakobson, "Two aspects of language", 90-96. Finally, the trope *irony* stands for self reflection and a questioning of or even distrust in the possibility of all the other tropes. Gerhardus Johannes Vossius, *Elementa rhetorica eller retorikens grunder*, Meddelanden, Litteraturvetenskapliga institutionen, Göteborgs universitet, 5, översatt och utgiven av Stina Hansson (Göteborg: Litteraturvetenskapliga institutionen, Göteborgs Universitet, 1990), 23-24.

[309] Timothy Costelloe, "Giambattista Vico", [Online] *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, summer 2002 edition, ed. Edward N. Zalta (Copyright: Timothy Costelloe, 2003) retrieved 21 Nov. 2003, URL <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2003/entries/vico/>. The third edition of *New Science* has recently been published in paperback in Penguin Classics. Giambattista Vico, *New Science; Principles of the New Science concerning the Common Nature of Nations*, third edition, edited and translated by David Marsh (UK: Penguin Books Ltd, 1999) [Third edition first published in 1744].

[310] Vico separates *scienza* (knowledge) from *conzienza* (consciousness) where the former is seen as universal and objective and the latter as particular and subjective. These two views of the world are matched by the pair *il vero* (the true) and *il certo* (the certain) so that il vero/scienza and il certo/conzienza constitute in turn the experience of philosophy and philology. The combination of these two fields makes up the new science of Vico. Timothy Costelloe, "Giambattista Vico", [Online] *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*.

focusing on the impossibility of achieving "properly scientific knowledge" in the disciplines of the humanities. In *Tropics of Discourse: Essays in Cultural Criticism* White therefore searches for a typology of discourse (with the aim of reaching a typology of human consciousness) based on *tropology* rather than specific content or logic.[311] The theory of tropes is used here to stress the function of tropes as signs of stages in the evolution of consciousness much in the same way that Vico uses them as signs of stages in the development of human civilizations. With theories of different kinds of consciousness, from the psychologist Jean Piaget's study of the child's cognitive development (sensorimotor, representational, operational and logical) and Freud's interpretation of dreams (condensation, displacement, representation and secondary revision) to Marx's study of the development of a socialist consciousness (elementary, extended, generalised and absurd), White shows that the theory of tropes could serve as the common concept for all of these.[312] It seems as if White ultimately views tropology as a tool with which to break up dualisms such as science/art, thought/imagination and reality/fiction, but also as a means by which to show that each given period of time, with its adherent culture and science, is always caught up in its own measuring system with its supportive language.[313]

Also important for the area under discussion are cognitive linguists such as George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, who stress both the cognitive role of metaphors and their roots in human conceptual constructions. Lakoff and Johnson propose that because many of our important concepts remain abstract to us, such as among others the emotions, ideas, and time, we need to grasp them with the help of other concepts that are easier for us to understand, such as spatial orientations and material objects. This has already been noted by Durkheim, although with reference to religious objects and social thought, who says that "in order to express our own ideas to ourselves we need to anchor them in material things that symbolize them".[314] Or, as

---

[311] Hayden White, *Tropics of Discourse*, 22.

[312] Other writers who are felt by White to work in a tropological way are Foucault (especially in *The Archaeology of Knowledge, The Order of Things* and *The Birth of the Clinic*) and the German philosopher Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel in his *Science of Logic* [Original title: *Wissenschaft der Logik* (Nürnberg, 1812-16)]. Hayden White, *Tropics of Discourse*, 260 footnote.

[313] Hayden White, *Tropics of Discourse*, 22.

[314] Emile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, 173.

Lakoff and Johnson suggest: "metaphors allow us to understand one domain of experience in terms of another".[315]

In the following I will look into the use of some of these tropes in relation to ritual activity, places of ritual, and memorials. It might in this context be interesting to investigate the difference between the terms *metaphor* and *metonymy*. In the introduction to this text Jakobson was mentioned as a scholar focusing on metaphor and metonymy as two competing semantic branches in the development of communicative expressions, with regard to verbal language as well as non-verbal symbols and sequences in both dreams and magic rites.[316] Another scholar briefly presented in the introduction was Leach, who focuses on the confusion of metaphoric and metonymic associations in all forms of human communication, which will be further dealt with shortly. Although Leach is far from the most well-known author in the field of anthropology, not to mention semiotics, I have chosen to use his work on the supposed connection between the pairs symbol/sign and metaphor/metonymy simply because it is this particular work that has inspired my interest in the matter.

A communication dyad

In *Culture and Communication: The logic by which symbols are connected* Leach presents a tool for the analysis of structures in communicative events.[317] In introducing the use of structuralist analysis in social anthropology Leach presents a schema over a communication dyad (i.e. message-bearing entity A conveys information about message B), based on Mulder and Hervey's theory of the linguistic sign, in which symbol and sign are contrasted sub-sets of

---

[315] George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Metaphors we live by*, 115.

[316] Jakobson even believes that the selection, combining and ranking of metaphoric and metonymic associations is present in the way in which an individual exhibits his/her own personal style through verbal preferences. These kinds of verbal preferences are also to be found in "verbal art" such as poetry, oral traditions, lyrics and literature as well as in non-linguistic sign systems such as painting and "the art of the cinema". Roman Jakobson, "Two aspects of language", 90-96.

[317] Originally trained in mathematics and mechanical engineering at Cambridge and later educated in anthropology from a functionalist perspective by Malinowski, the British social anthropologist Edmund Leach was at a rather late stage in his career when he adopted the structuralist view of Lévi-Strauss. Thomas J. Barfield, ed. [Online] *The Dictionary of Anthropology* (Cambridge: Mass Blackwell Publishers, 2000), 280-281, retrieved 21 Nov. 2003, URL <http://emedia.netlibrary.com/reader/reader.asp?product_id=48680>.

index.[318] Other direct sources of inspiration for Leach are the linguist Ferdinand de Saussure, the aforementioned Jakobson, as well as the literary critic Roland Barthes.[319]

Leach starts by distinguishing between three aspects of human behaviour which are never completely separable but nonetheless distinguishable: *natural biological activities of the human body*, such as the heartbeat, breathing and so on, *technical actions*, such as chopping down a tree or making a meal, in other words actions "which serve to alter the physical state of the world out there", and *expressive actions*, such as speech and gestures but also more complex actions such as exchanging wedding rings or putting on a certain type of clothes, actions "which either simply say[s] something about the state of the world as it is, or else purport to alter it by metaphysical means".[320] The ritual, described by Sonesson as an act which cannot change the world materially although it may change our interpretation of the world, thus reveals itself as an expressive action in this framework.[321]

Leach's starting point is that all communicative events are two-fold in at least two senses. Firstly, there must always be a sender who produces the expressive action and a receiver (or rather a potential receiver) who interprets the action. Secondly, the expressive action itself also contains two aspects: the action itself and the message "which is encoded by the sender and decoded by the receiver".[322] From this starting point Leach's terminology is presented in a schema with a main distinction between the terms *index* and *signal*.[323] Leach holds that in a signal the relation between "the message bearing entity" and "the message" is mechanical and automatic. The message bearing entity triggers the message and they are both simply two aspects of the same thing. In an indexical relation the message bearing entity indicates the message: "Signals are causal; indices descriptive".[324] Under these two general classes

---

[318] See the *Appendix* in this text.

[319] Edmund Leach, *Culture and Communication: The Logic by Which Symbols are Connected* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976), 10.

[320] Edmund Leach, *Culture and Communication*, 9.

[321] Göran Sonesson, "Action becoming Art", 110.

[322] Edmund Leach, *Culture and Communication*, 11.

[323] See the *Appendix* in this text.

[324] Edmund Leach, *Culture and Communication*, 12.

several contrasted sub-sets are listed, although all of them descend from the branch of index.

This more or less follows Mulder and Hervey's approach to communication-systems among which verbal language is but one of many.[325] For Mulder and Hervey anything that has information-value is an *index* and the abstract information-value of this index is its *denotation*. Neither the index nor its denotation exist as index and denotation outside their mutual relationship.

> An index is a "form that has denotation", and a denotation is the "information-value of a form".[326]

With reference to Mulder and Hervey, we may demonstrate the relationship between index and denotation as follows, where **R** illustrates the relator in the relationship.[327]

Index **R** Denotation
[328]

If the relation between the index and its denotation is natural Mulder and Hervey call the message bearing entity a *natural index*, if it is built on

---

[325] Mulder and Hervey state that in order for something to qualify as a communication-system it must contain at least two entities by which information is conveyed. In systems that contain only two entities one of them may be the mere absence of the other, as in a warning lamp on a machine which conveys one message when flashing red and another when not flashing red. Just as all languages require outside information in order to to be correctly understood other communication-systems, however simple, also need some kind of prior understanding to be interpreted correctly. For something to become a message there needs to be a sender, making use of the information-value and maybe also the context at hand, and a receiver who tries to interpret the information-value in the given context and find the hidden message. Mulder and Hervey clearly state that this procedure only affects the interpretation of the information-value, not the information-value itself. J. W. F. Mulder & S. G. J. Hervey, *Theory of the Linguistic Sign*, Janua Linguarum: Series minor, 136 (The Hague: Mouton, 1972): 13-18.

[326] J. W. F. Mulder and S. G. J. Hervey, *Theory of the Linguistic Sign*, 15.

[327] Within an index, Mulder and Hervey follow Saussure in distinguishing between the *signifying* and the *signified* (which Mulder and Hervey call *expression* and *content*), considered to be two aspects of the same thing. See also Ferdinand de Saussure, *Kurs i allmän lingvistik*, i översättning av Anders Löfqvist (Paris: Bo Cavefors Bokförlag, 1970), 96, 101 [Original title: *Cours de Linguistique Générale* (Lausanne: Payot, 1916)].

[328] J. W. F. Mulder and S. G. J. Hervey, *Theory of the Linguistic Sign*, 15.

convention they call it a *signum*.[329] All communication systems containing signa qualify as semiotic systems for Mulder and Hervey, since: "A 'semiotic system' is 'any system of CONVENTIONS for communication'".[330] Mulder and Hervey then make a distinction between *signs*, which are signa whose information value is wholly dependent on a fixed and conventional relation to be correctly interpreted, and *symbols* which are signa whose information value is not wholly dependent on a fixed relation but rather on an occasionally conventional relation, needing a separate definition for each separate occasion in order to relate.[331]

> Through the distinction of SIGN and SYMBOL a rough division is indicated between what would clearly seem to be two types of "conventional element with both form and meaning".[332]

With reference to the previous discussion we might state that Mulder and Hervey regard a signum as a sign if the relation between index and denotation is fixed and conventional. If, on the other hand, the relation between index and denotation needs a separate occasional definition in order to relate, Mulder and Hervey regard the signum as a symbol.

---

[329] A natural index, as opposed to a conventional one, only requires our knowledge of certain natural phenomena, their laws or causal relations, for its correct interpretation, state Mulder and Hervey who exemplify their thoughts with lightning as an index of thunder and the whistle of a water kettle as an index of boiling water. Following this, in order to make a distinction between natural indices and signa, the only relevant thing is whether the relation between index and denotation is natural or conventional, not whether the index itself is a natural phenomenon or not. According to Mulder and Hervey the natural index may also be divided into *symptomatic index*, where the index itself is a natural phenomena (smoke as an index of fire) and *signalling devices*, where the index is an artificial device (as in the whistling of a water kettle). The same classification could be made for signum, i.e. the index as a *natural phenomenon* (sunrise meaning "time to attack") and the index as an *artificial device* (a white flag meaning "surrender"). Jan W. F. Mulder & Sándor G. J. Hervey, "Index and Signum", *Semiotica*, 4 (1971): 330.

[330] J. W. F. Mulder and S. G. J. Hervey, *Theory of the Linguistic Sign*, 18, referring to J. W. F. Mulder, *Sets and Relations in Phonology* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968), 10.

[331] This division could be seen as being in line with Saussure, who holds that the nature of symbols is never wholly arbitrary since it implies motivation of some sort whereas the nature of signs is wholly arbitrary, depending on fixed habitual conventions. Ferdinand de Saussure, *Kurs i allmän lingvistik*, 96, 101.

[332] Jan W. F. Mulder and Sándor G. J. Hervey, "Index and Signum", 324.

Mulder and Hervey then further divide the category of symbols into *proper symbols* and *nonce-symbols*, corresponding to Leach's *standardised symbols* and *nonce-symbols*. Proper symbols (or standardised symbols) may seem like signs since the relation between index and denotation is habitual and to some extent conventional. An example given by Mulder and Hervey is the convention that names like John, Peter, Paul etc. usually denote males, whereas Mary, Jane, Julia etc. are known to denote females. The relation between the index as nonce-symbol (a better term might be temporary or perhaps *intrapersonal* symbol) and its denotation is conversely wholly arbitrary and depends totally on the whim of the sender. In order for a receiver to correctly interpret the message of a nonce-symbol he/she is totally dependent on outside information being properly provided by the sender. Without any explanation from the sender the message will not reach the receiver since the background knowledge is simply not there.

Thus far, Leach's communication dyad more or less follows Mulder and Hervey's classification system. Leach then goes one step further in dividing the category of standardised symbols (or proper symbols, as Mulder and Hervey call them) into *conventional but wholly arbitrary symbols*, such as the snake as a symbol of evil, and *icons*, like models, maps and portraits, where the relation between the message bearing entity and the message is built upon planned resemblance. Leach further states that "[t]his is a normal usage" and refers to the anthropologist Raymond Firth's work: *Symbols; Public and Private,* although Leach clearly states elsewhere in his text that his over-all aim is to be seen as compatible with the general position of Douglas and Turner and "clearly distinguished from the position of Firth (1973)".[333] This dismissal is mainly due to the fact that Firth partly follows the philosopher Charles Sanders Peirce in making the sign into a box category.[334] Another cause for

---

[333] Edmund Leach, *Culture and Communication*, 10, 15, 96.

[334] A box category that Firth however subdivides into index, signal, icon and symbol, whereas Peirce subdivides the box category sign into three trichotomies of which the second one contains index, icon and symbol. Raymond Firth, *Symbols; Public and Private* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1973), 75. Charles Sanders Peirce, *The essential Peirce: Selected philosophical writings*, vol 2, 1893-1913 (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998), 289-299. It is important to note here that Peirce's view of the sign as a box-category divided into three trichotomies of which the second one contains icons, indices and symbols, is very different from Leach's inspirational source, namely Mulder and Hervey's view of the index with its contrasted sub-sets of which one contains symbol and sign. Peirce's view of the symbol as a sign mainly

concern is Firth's handling of various symbolic usages by dividing them into categories and discussing them separately from each other.

Persona-oriented and growing symbols

What I find interesting is that Mulder and Hervey as well as Leach touch upon the message bearing entity of the nonce-symbol. Even though Mulder and Hervey stress that as long as the nonce-symbol has not been defined (publicly) it is just a form without any information value. Thus as long as the nonce-symbol is not supplied with a definite meaning it is not a symbol at all.[335] A similar way of seeing it comes from Leach who states that the aim of public symbolism is communication whilst *private symbolism* is rather concerned with expression.[336] Firth states that *private symbols* must be able to be communicated in order to become public symbols since a symbolic form with a meaning "which stays completely locked up in the artist's private world" is not an object of art "in any socially significant sense".[337] To me it would seem that the intrapersonal nonce-symbol opens up for the possibility of inventing new symbols which, over time and with enough promotion, might become interpersonal symbols. In other words, even public symbols may at some point start off as individual expressions.

Another interesting case is symbols that become diluted over time and finally lose their meaning and become "extinct". Sometimes these symbols are slowly transformed, or even intentionally reused, as symbols of something else. A current example of such a transformation is the cross as a symbol of the Christian faith, which, according to Dahlgren, over the last hundred years has transformed into a symbol of death, at least in the context of newspaper death announcements.[338] Further examples of reused or invented symbols can be

---

constituted by "general laws" (i.e. habits and conventions) also differs from Mulder and Hervey's Saussureian notion of the symbol as dependent on motivation and occasional conventions and the sign as wholly arbitrary and totally dependent on fixed conventions.

[335] J. W. F. Mulder and S. G. J. Hervey, *Theory of the Linguistic Sign*, 23. Jan W. F. Mulder and Sándor G. J. Hervey, "Index and Signum", 337.

[336] Edmund Leach, "Magical Hair", 147-164.

[337] Raymond Firth, *Symbols; Public and Private*, 215-16.

[338] In the introduction to his work the sociologist Curt Dahlgren presents the history of death announcements, in which he dates the appearance of the Christian cross in Swedish death announcements to the end of the nineteenth century. Initially the use of the cross and other symbols was rare and occasional. It was not until between the 1940s and 1950s that the cross

found in Dahlgren's research on the individualisation of death announcements, a medium in which the use of persona-oriented symbols seems to have grown at an incredible rate.[339] Hence it is nowadays more common to have a symbol that characterises the deceased's persona, in relating to the deceased's hobby, profession or personal interests, than to symbolise either death, religious faith or political interests.[340] Dahlgren even predicts that the increasing use of personalised symbols, along with alternative symbols of Christian faith, might in the future leave us with no symbol left for life's "grand finale".[341]

A humourous comment on the use of alternative symbols of the Christian faith can be found in the comic section of the Christian magazine *Amos*, called "Cupid's arrows – fun that stings" [my translation].[342] In this section, a "workgroup from the Church of Sweden" proposes a new symbol for the Christian faith instead of the "pessimistic and hostile cross", namely a smiley.

☺

---

came to completely dominate the death announcements until the end of the 1970s. This is seen by Dahlgren as a shift from the cross as a symbol of the Christian faith to the cross as a symbol of death. Curt Dahlgren, *När döden skiljer oss åt*, 27.

[339] The first symbol to seriously conquer the cross appeared in 1976, in a local newspaper in Östersund, and was the symbol of the political party *Socialdemokraterna*, i.e. a rose. In 1978, 85% of the death announcements in *Göteborgs-Posten* used a cross, 1% lacked symbols and 14% used the rose as a symbol. However, the appearance of the rose did not serve as a major breakthrough for other non-clerical symbols until the national paper *Dagens Nyheter* published a death announcement, on New Years Eve in 1977, with a flower as a persona-oriented symbol. Curt Dahlgren, *När döden skiljer oss åt*, 13.

[340] Out of 562 death announcements in the newspaper *Dagens Nyheter* in the year 1999, 0.5% lacked symbols, 20.6% had a regular cross, 0.5% a cross with the inscribed figure of Jesus, 7.5% other kinds of crosses, 0.2% order decorations, 27.9% various sorts of birds, 24.9% flowers, axes, trees, and other scenes from nature, 12.6% were strictly persona-oriented symbols, with new symbols such as sports planes, fingerprints and children's drawings, 1.4% angels, teddy bears, the Swedish cartoon character Bamse the bear, and the like, 0.2% Christian symbols other than the cross, 0.7% mosaic symbols, 0.2% the social democrat's rose and 2.7% assorted kinds of symbols. In those cases where the deceased's Christian faith was declared a tendency towards "explanatory crosses", such as, for instance, the outline of a cross with the contour of Jesus inside, was detected. For the whole survey in its proper context see Curt Dahlgren, *När döden skiljer oss åt*, 127.

[341] Curt Dahlgren, *När döden skiljer oss åt*, 28.

[342] [Originally in Swedish: "Amos pilar – skoj som sticks".] *Amos; magasinet för livsfrågor och Kristen tro*, 6 (2003): 25.

In the same spirit, we may perhaps here take the opportunity to consider a new symbol for death as well by proposing a "sadly".

☹

Apart from mirroring our religious, cultural, and societal changes over time, the study of death announcements and our use of the symbols in them shows an interesting increase in the belief of persona-oriented or "private" symbols, meaningful only to the closest circle of family and friends. This development is perhaps somewhat confirmed by the noticeable shift from an institutional to an individual perception of death. Perhaps it may also be tied to the shift from liminal rituals, where symbols have a common intellectual and emotional meaning, to liminoid events, where symbols are generated by specific individuals or groups, as noticed by Turner. In a rather speculative manner we might perhaps also see the introduction of graphic symbols in death announcements as somehow connected to the focus on the architecture and design of cemeteries and funeral monuments during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The transformation of the cross, from a symbol of the Christian faith to a symbol of death, and its dilution towards extinction when replaced by other symbols of the Christian faith but not replaced by other symbols of death, is also quite interesting when viewed in a semiotic perspective. A belief in the symbol as a growing or changing entity can, for instance, be found in the *semeiotics* of Peirce.[343]

Similarity and contiguity

If we now return to Leach's elaboration on Mulder and Hervey's theory we find another interesting discussion, namely Leach's proposition about the distinction between symbol/sign being similar to the distinction between metaphor/metonymy.[344] What Leach refers to here is not the mere equation of

---

[343] Peirce suggests that once a symbol is developed the meaning of it grows, it becomes established and it inevitably transforms over time. Charles Sanders Peirce, *The essential Peirce*, vol 2, 10. The semeiotics of Peirce stems largely from the theory of signs, *Grammatica Speculativa*, by the Franciscan John Duns Scotus and its further development by the theologian John of St. Thomas. Parthenius Minges, "Blessed John Duns Scotus", [Online] *The Catholic Encyclopaedia*, transcribed by Rick McCarty (Copyright: K. Knight, 2003), retrieved 25 March 2004, URL <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/05194a.htm>.

[344] Leach actually goes even further in comparing the distinction between harmony/melody and that between Saussure's concepts paradigmatic association/syntagmatic chain to those between

these pairs of terms in relation to one another; it is the distinction in itself that is analytically important,[345] a distinction that Leach illustrates by referring to the way in which *similarity* differs from *contiguity*.

Leach starts his elaboration by agreeing with Mulder and Hervey that the identity of an index is always context dependent.

> The identity of an index, natural or conventional, sign or symbol, proper symbol or nonce-symbol, depends on its distinctive function in respect to the other elements in the system, and consequently on the system it belongs to itself.[346]

Following this, the distinction between symbol and sign is thus dependent on the framework in which the index in question is operating. As an example of this, Leach presents the letters of the Roman alphabet which may be seen as symbols when used in mathematics but as signs when used in Roman language. In this latter context, any freestanding letter is by itself meaningless but in combination with other letters they can be made to represent words in a language.[347] Consequently, Leach suggests that a signum is a sign when there is a fixed convention-bound relation between index and denotation, something which we have seen reference to in Mulder and Hervey. However, Leach then adds his own interpretation by suggesting that the relationship is conventional due to the fact that index and denotation belong to what Leach

---

symbol/sign and between metaphor/metonymy as distinctions that are almost the same. According to Saussure, a syntagm always builds upon at least two words existing in series; this he calls a *syntagmatic chain*. Saussure also distinguishes another kind of meaning-bearing connection called *paradigmatic association*, which takes place in our mind outside the actual speech or the written text. Paradigmatic associations exist between sets of words that are potentially interchangeable in any particular syntagm. Paradigmatic associations are therefore not built upon linearity but on our memory or knowledge of language, much in the same way as visual signs are not built upon linearity but on our memory or knowledge of them. Ferdinand de Saussure, *Kurs i allmän lingvistik*, 155-59.

[345] Leach Edmund, *Culture and Communication*, 15.

[346] J. W. F. Mulder and S. G. J. Hervey, *Theory of the Linguistic Sign*, 18. Jan W. F. Mulder and Sándor G. J. Hervey, "Index and Signum", 324-38.

[347] This can also be seen as the core of Saussure's structuralism, where a verbal sign becomes meaningful only when contrasted with other signs in a system of signs. Ferdinand de Saussure, *Kurs i allmän lingvistik*, 133-7.

calls the same *cultural context* (although *domain* might be a better term).[348] Leach therefore regards sign relations as built on contiguity. Correspondingly a signum is, for Leach, a symbol when there is no previously given relation between index and denotation, since they belong to two different cultural contexts (or domains). The relation between index and denotation is in this latter case built on what Leach calls arbitrary "assertions of similarity".

It is important to note here that Leach does not only deal with concepts that describe objects or events but also with concepts describing concepts. An example of this is the opposition white/black which may be used to denote oppositions such as bride/widow, good/bad or pure/contaminated.[349] This is perhaps also why Leach feels the need to use tropes to demonstrate the transportation of meaning at work in his examples of sign and symbol relations. Hence, a conventional contiguous relation between index and denotation is referred to by Leach as *metonymic*, in reference to the trope metonymy, while a relation built on occasional definitions or "assertions of similarity", as Leach calls them, is consequently referred to as *metaphoric*.[350] If we were to use the mathematical symbols $\in$ (meaning "element of") and $\notin$ (meaning "not an element of"), and "domain *a*" in reference to a given domain (or cultural context as Leach would call it), we may perhaps illustrate Leach's distinction as follows.

> **Metaphoric relation**
> Index $\in$ Domain *a* **R** Denotation $\notin$ Domain *a*
>
> **Metonymic relation**
> Index $\in$ Domain *a* **R** Denotation $\in$ Domain *a*

---

[348] In cognitive linguistics a similar emphasis on the metaphor being built on the transformation of meanings from one domain to another can be found. Consequently, metonymy is defined in this context as building on associations within the same domain. René Dirven, "Conversion as a Conceptual Metonymy of Basic Event Schemata", [Online] *The Metaphor and Metonymy Group*, abstracts, retrieved 21 June, 2004, URL <http://www.psyc.leeds.ac.uk/cgi-bin/search/metaphorAbstracts/abstract.pl?DirvenR02>.

[349] Leach Edmund, *Culture and Communication*, 19. Similar examples of this kind of reasoning can be found in George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Metaphors we live by.*

[350] Leach Edmund, *Culture and Communication*, 13-6.

Leach then steers onto a new path by stating that insofar as a metaphoric relation, between index and denotation, becomes stabilised by convention or habitual use it has the possibility of turning metonymic, transforming the arbitrary symbol into a conventional sign,[351] since "[a]ny arbitrary association which is used over and over again begins in the end to appear intrinsic".[352] Leach also speaks of other situations, such as in "poetic and religious utterances", where the "code switching" between symbol and sign persuades one to believe "that metaphoric non-sense is really metonymic sense".

A similar kind of poetic "code switching" is described by Mulder and Hervey as the act of borrowing a sign to use as a symbol, such as "calling one's wife 'little pigeon'", or using a proper symbol as a nonce-symbol, such as "calling an ashtray Johnny". In these examples one has transferred a mere form from one system to another, state Mulder and Hervey, and thus changed its identity as an index.[353]

As an example of unintentional transfers of meaning Jakobson's study of two types of aphasic disturbance, which he calls *similarity disorder* and *contiguity*

---

[351] A somewhat related issue is also discussed in George Lakoff and Mark Turner's *More than Cool Reason: A Field Guide to Poetic Metaphor*, in which Lakoff and Turner attack what they regard as a long-lasting myth, i.e. the view of poetic language as different from "ordinary" language in its vast use of special devices such as metaphor and metonymy. Our use of, for instance, metaphors as tools in everyday language is just as widespread, states Lakoff and Turner. Although this is so common that we tend to use metaphors unconsciously and almost automatically. Thus the widespread *dead metaphor theory*, i.e. the belief in conventionalised metaphors as no longer functioning metaphorically and therefore being "dead", is hereby rejected. For Lakoff and Turner it is important to distinguish between *conventional metaphors* "which are part of our live conceptual system" and *historical metaphors* "that have long since died out". George Lakoff and Mark Turner, *More than Cool Reason: A Field Guide to Poetic Metaphor* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), 128-9.

[352] There is an interesting resemblance between Leach's belief in the transformation of a symbol into a sign by means of habit and convention, and Peirce's view of the symbol as a convention-bound sign developing out of other signs, particularly from likenesses or from mixed signs having the qualities of likenesses, at least if we discard the terms symbol and sign and focus solely on the process: from similarity to conventionality. Charles Sanders Peirce, *The essential Peirce*, vol 2, 10.

[353] J. W. F. Mulder and S. G. J. Hervey, *Theory of the Linguistic Sign*, 18. However, Mulder and Hervey do not seem to believe, as Leach does, that a symbol may be borrowed and used as a wholly fixed conventional sign, or that a nonce-symbol may be used as a proper symbol, since they claim that "such conventions, relating 'John' to 'an ashtray', as terms, do not exist in English, or indeed, to our knowledge, in any language". Jan W. F. Mulder and Sándor G. J. Hervey, "Index and Signum", 337.

disorder, may be given. According to Jakobson, the major deficiency in similarity disorder lies in the selection of words and in the substitution of one word for another, while the act of combining words and retaining contexture are stabile. In contiguity disorder, the act of combining words and retaining contexture is dysfunctional whereas the act of selection and substitution is relatively functional. Jakobson calls the former the metonymic way and the latter the metaphoric way.

> Of the two polar figures of speech, metaphor and metonymy, the latter, based on contiguity, is widely employed by aphasiacs whose selective capacities have been affected. *Fork* is substituted for *knife*, *table* for *lamp*, *smoke* for *pipe*, *eat* for *toaster*.[354]

As a further example of similarity disorder, or the metonymic way, Jakobson quotes a case study from H. Head's *Aphasia and Kindred Disorders of Speech*, where a patient is asked for the name of the colour black. "When he failed to recall the name for 'black', he described it as 'What you do for the dead'; this he shortened to 'dead'".[355] As an example of contiguity disorder Jakobson mentions a passage from H. Jackson's article *Notes on the physiology and pathology of language*, stating that a person with a contiguity disorder says what a thing is by describing what it is like, such as "spyglass" instead of "microscope" or "fire" instead of "gaslight".[356] Jackson calls these kinds of expression quasi-metaphoric because, in contradistinction to rhetoric or poetic metaphors, they do not deliberately present a transfer of meaning from one word to another. In the same fashion, we might describe the metonymic way as the use of quasi-metonymic expressions.

If we now return to Leach and his proposed characteristic ambiguity between metaphoric and metonymic associations in human communication, we find that Leach turns to anthropological analyses of magic and sorcery in order to exemplify his thoughts. A forerunner in the study of magic and religion in anthropology is Frazer, who distinguishes between different categories and

---

[354] Roman Jakobson, "Two aspects of language", 83.

[355] Roman Jakobson, "Two aspects of language", 83, quoting H. Head, *Aphasia and Kindred Disorders of Speech*, I (New York, 1926), 198.

[356] Roman Jakobson, "Two aspects of language", 86, quoting H. Jackson's article "Notes on the physiology and pathology of language", *Brain*, XXXVIII (1915): 125.

levels of magic.[357] What is particularly interesting for this text is Frazer's treatise of what he calls *sympathetic magic*, which is magic that "assumes that things act on each other at a distance through a secret sympathy".[358] Frazer further divides the category of sympathetic magic into two branches; *homeopathic magic*, depending on the "law of similarity", and *contagious magic*, depending on the "law of contact".[359]

> Homeopathic magic commits the mistake of assuming that things which resemble each other are the same: contagious magic commits the mistake of assuming that things which have once been in contact with each other are always in contact.[360]

The distinction between Frazer's two laws of magic is, according to Jakobson and, later, Leach, essentially the same as that between metaphoric and metonymic associations, in that these are based on either similarity or contiguity.[361]

Frazer further holds the main logical mistake in magic performances to be the confusion of expressive acts with technical acts.[362] According to Leach, most anthropologists have abandoned this view. The main mistake in the logic of magic performances is more generally viewed as the interpretation of an index

---

[357] For instance *theoretical magic* ("magic as a pseudo-science") and *practical magic* ("magic as a pseudo-art"), where practical magic has two subgroups: *positive magic* (sorcery) and *negative magic* (taboo). Sympathetic magic in its pure form is, according to Frazer, similar to science in its belief in the order and uniformity of nature, hence it is theoretical magic; in its practical form, i.e. regarded as a tool, it is practical magic. James George Frazer, [Online] *The Golden Bough; A Study in Magic and Religion* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 26, 33, 45, retrieved 21 Apr. 2004, URL <http://www.netlibrary.com/Reader/> [First abridged edition published as hardback in New York: Macmillan, 1922].

[358] James George Frazer, [Online] *The Golden Bough*, 27.

[359] James George Frazer, [Online] *The Golden Bough*, 26.

[360] James George Frazer, [Online] *The Golden Bough*, 27.

[361] Roman Jakobson, "Two aspects of language", 95. Edmund Leach, *Culture and Communication*, 29. It might be important to repeat Leach's words in agreeing that there is a similarity between the homeopathic magic/contagious magic distinction and the metaphor/metonymy distinction, exemplified as the distinction between similarity/contiguity. Having said this we further need to stress that it is the distinction in itself that is methodologically important, not the mere equation of these pairs of terms with one another, an equation that to me seems quite inadequate. However, I agree upon the distinction between similarity and contiguity as a possible substitute for either of the pairs mentioned.

[362] James George Frazer, [Online] *The Golden Bough*, 45-59.

as a signal, that is magical acts are indices whereas the sorcerer treats them as signals. Another mistake in the logic of magic is the confusion of metaphoric and metonymic associations, states Leach, since the performer of magic "plays around with iconic symbols (which depend upon metaphor) and signs (which depend upon metonymy)".[363] As was mentioned earlier, Leach considers such "code switching" to be quite effective in convincing the viewer or hearer that "metaphoric non sense" really is "metonymic sense".

The confusion of metaphoric and metonymic associations, as well as the misinterpretation of index as signal, is further exemplified by Leach with the story of a voodoo sorcerer destroying a piece of hair taken from a victim's head. The sorcerer takes the single hair to stand for the whole of the victim and he further believes that the destruction of this piece of hair will lead to the destruction of the victim.

> In summary the sorcerer makes a triple error. He first mistakes a metaphoric symbol (i.e. the verbal label "this is the hair of X") for a metonymic sign. He then goes on to treat the imputed sign as if it were a natural index, and finally he interprets the supposed natural index as a signal capable of triggering off automatic consequences at a distance.[364]

Leach admits that as long as the hair is still growing on the victims head, i.e. when still in its "proper context", it is "indeed a 'metonymic sign for X' in a genuine sense". But once the hair is separated from this proper context – the victims head – the label "this is the hair of X" becomes a metonymic sign for the category *hair* but a metaphoric symbol for the victim *X*, states Leach.[365]

> If we distinguish a single man from a crowd of men and give him a name *John* that usage is symbolic, but when we use the word *pig* to denote all animals of a particular type wherever they occur, we are using the word pig as a sign. But what then are we doing if we apply the word *pig* to a policeman? Clearly symbolism is coming in again.[366]

---

[363] Edmund Leach, *Culture and Communication*, 30.

[364] Edmund Leach, *Culture and Communication*, 31. For a fuller discussion on "magical hair" see also Edmund Leach, "Magical Hair", 147-164.

[365] Edmund Leach, *Culture and Communication*, 31.

[366] Edmund Leach, *Culture and Communication*, 20.

But, as Leach stated earlier, if the metaphoric relation were to become stabilised by convention or habitual use it would have the possibility of turning metonymic. The code switching between symbol and sign was further mentioned by Leach as a trick for causing one to experience a metaphoric relation as metonymic. As was also previously mentioned, Mulder and Hervey believe that the identity of an index, whether "natural or conventional, sign or symbol, proper symbol or nonce-symbol" depends on the function of the index in respect to other elements in the system, as well as to the system itself. Following this, is it not possible then that the sorcerer actually sees the hair *of* X *as* X, with the help of self persuasion, as well as habit and convention, perhaps due to the specific cultural context in which the curse is about to take place?

The signs of death

It is tempting here to enter a few sidetracks. Firstly, we may recall the DNA analyses frequently used in for instance criminal investigations, where a single hair *technically* can be seen to stand as part for whole in conveying exactly the same genetic information about any part of X and about X as a whole.

A second thought would be the way a larger part, such as an arm or the head of X, which could easily be identified with X as a whole, might evoke a metonymic association to X (and not just be seen as a sign for arms or heads in general), at least to someone well acquainted with X. We might draw this line of thinking even further in speculating on the dead body of X which, without the life of X, may be considered a sign for dead bodies instead of a sign for X, at least in a morgue and to a mortician. This line of thought touches upon the current reluctance, which in most cases is connected to actual prohibition, to bury or spread cremated remains outside the borders of cemeteries. Hygienically and technically there would seem to be no problem since cremated remains in the form of ashes are as pure as any burnt material. But despite this, there is a convention, perhaps in the form of an implicit commitment, inherent in this prohibition, since the cremated remains are considered to have a metonymic relation to the deceased rather than being seen as a sign for ashes among other ashes.

Our ambivalence towards the dead body is further described by the theologian Anna Davidsson Bremborg in her PhD-thesis, *Occupation: Funeral*

Director: On stigma, Dead Bodies, Rites and Professionalisation, where the author notices the significance of the dead body as a carrier of the deceased's identity.[367] In her field work among funeral directors Davidsson Bremborg experiences the importance, for the survivors, of dressing the deceased in certain familiar clothes and of combing the deceased's hair in the right personal hairstyle. The contrast between the family's concern for the deceased's visual identity and their actual fear of touching the dead body seems to be a common experience for funeral directors.[368] If we were to use Leach's argument here we may perhaps suggest that the relation between the denotation (this is X) and the index (X's dead body) do not appear contiguous and metonymic outside X's personal framework and without the familiar looks of X. In the impersonal milieu of, for instance, a morgue, the deceased's dead body gives instead an impression of being just one dead body among others, perhaps recognised as the body *of* X, but not necessarily referred to *as* X.

A parallel might be drawn to Kristeva's reflection that the dead body does not signify death but merely shows us the improper or unclean side of life that we constantly try to reject in order to live.[369] The corpse, which is "neither sign nor matter", is filth that turns into defilement.[370] In the presence of what Kristeva calls signified death (which she exemplifies with for instance medical radiographs) we can understand, react or accept, but the corpse "seen without God and outside of science", in other words without a proper cultural context, is utter abjection: "It is death infecting life." The dead body as a sign of death does not function in isolation; for Kristeva it needs the *specific setting* of religion or science to convey the right information.

As an example of a recent expression of belief in "contagious magic", i.e. the belief in things once in contact with each other as everlastingly in contact, the Australian roadside memorials mentioned earlier might be given. In their survey Hartig and Dunn describe how the local electricity company's

---

[367] Anna Davidsson Bremborg, *Yrke: begravningsentreprenör. Om utanförskap, döda kroppar, riter och professionalisering*, Lund studies in Sociology of Religion 2, red. Curt Dahlgren (Lund: Studentlitteratur AB, 2002), 66.

[368] Anna Davidsson Bremborg, *Yrke: begravningsentreprenör*, 66.

[369] Julia Kristeva, *Powers of Horror*, 3-4.

[370] Julia Kristeva, *Powers of Horror*, 73.

replacement of a transmission pole, against which a young man was killed in a motor vehicle accident, upset the deceased's family to such an extent that they were finally allowed to take home a section of the replaced pole against which their son had died. Even though the survivors obviously knew that the pole was just a pole this did not cancel the fact that it was here, against this material thing, and on this exact spot, that life had left the body of a young human being.[371] Thus, the roadside memorial "not only commemorates the place of the victim's death but also marks the place of their last living moments".[372]

What is interesting here is that hospitals, where people die in large numbers every day, do not seem to be surrounded by this commemorative aura. We do not connect for instance a hospital bed with the contagious magic of an accident site. There are probably several reasons for this neutral position of the hospital. One might be that death is somehow tamed by being taken care of in an appropriate and secure environment. Another reason might be our fear of dying alone as well as the survivors' guilt and sorrow at not having "been there" to comfort and say good-bye. Finally, the site that has witnessed violent and sudden death does possess a certain power and horror of its own.

On the other hand, just as we cannot detect the emotional values that another person attaches to certain items or places, the existential value of roadside memorials, placed outside the well-known surroundings of a cemetery, might be difficult for us to recognise and, in some cases, even to grasp. Memorials by accident or murder sites are often, at least at some point in time, "cleaned up" by persons unaware or maybe even disrespectful of their great value and deep meaning. Even though the memorial artefacts placed on these sites should function as an indication of veneration and grief, the profane and everyday setting of an accident or murder site somehow escapes the ethical codes active in a cemetery.

---

[371] Similarly, to realize and to accept that a dead body is really nothing but another dead body without the essence of a living individual might work well on a technical level. On an emotional, existential or moral level it is however something quite different.

[372] Kate V. Hartig and Kevin M. Dunn, "Roadside Memorials", 10.

Representation and fetishism

Another discussion, somewhat related to that of memorials by accidents or murder sites, is how the fetishisation of a place or a thing often tends to be regarded as bad in one way or another.[373] This debate reaches far back, maybe even as far as Thomas Aquinas who, with the aim of defending the use of religious images, distinguishes between venerating *iconolatry* and worshiping *idolatry*.[374] In *Summa Theologica* Aquinas states that veneration must not take the form of divine worship and although primarily directed to material things, such as relics and icons, veneration ought not to rest in these things but look beyond them to the saints which they commemorate.[375] By making this distinction we might say that Aquinas promotes the veneration of

---

[373] An interesting explanation of the "badness" connected to idolatry can be found in the philosophy of Kant, which describes idolatry as the illusion of being able to please God by other means than through moral disposition. Thus, in practicing idolatry one envisages the nature of God's will in an anthropomorphic way, states Kant. Immanuel Kant, *Kritik av omdömeskraften*, § 89.

[374] According to *Merriam-Webster Online*, the word *idol* derives from Old French *idole*, from Late Latin *idolum*, from Greek *eidolon* meaning image or idol which is akin to Greek *eidos* meaning form. The original development of the word idol in Greek is, according to *OED Online*, "appearance, phantom, unsubstantial form, image in water or a mirror, mental image, fancy, material image or statue". In Jewish and Christian use the term idol later came to stand for "an image or similitude of a deity or divinity, used as an object of worship", which was finally used to represent an "image of a false god". *Fetish*, according to *Merriam-Webster Online*, derives from French *fétiche*, from Portuguese *feitiço* meaning artificial, false, from Latin *facticius* meaning factitious. According to *OED Online* a fetish, as opposed to an idol, is a material object that in itself is regarded with superstitious trust or reverence, not seen as an image, symbol, or occasional residence of a deity. "Idol", [Online] *Merriam-Webster Online* (Copyright: Merriam-Webster, Incorporated, 2004), retrieved 12 May 2004, URL <http://www.merriam-webster.com/cgi-bin/dictionary?book=Dictionary&va=idol&x=24&y=14>. "Idol, n.", [Online] *OED Online*, second edition 1989, eds. J. A. Simpson and E. S. C. Weiner (Copyright: Oxford University Press), retrieved 12 May. 2004, URL <http://dictionary.oed.com/cgi/entry/00111326>. "Fetish", [Online] *Merriam-Webster Online* (Copyright: Merriam-Webster, Incorporated, 2004), retrieved 12 May 2004, URL <http://www.merriam-webster.com/cgi-bin/dictionary?book=Dictionary&va=fetish&x=20&y=14>. "Fetish, n.", [Online] *OED Online*, second edition 1989, eds. J. A. Simpson and E. S. C. Weiner (Copyright: Oxford University Press), retrieved 13 Jun. 2003, URL <http://dictionary.oed.com/cgi/entry/00084062>.

[375] Herbert Thurston, "Relics", [Online] *The Catholic Encyclopaedia*, transcribed by Michael C. Tinkler. (Copyright: K. Knight, 2003), retrieved 21 Nov. 2003, URL <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/12734a.htm>. With reference to: Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, III:38:6.

representations and condemns the worship of *fetishes*.[376] Aquinas' thoughts may perhaps be graphically displayed as follows.

> **Iconolatry**
> Human → Relic → Saint
>
> **Idolatry**
> Human → Relic/Saint
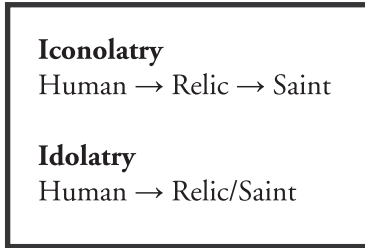
Turning for a moment to Frazer's two laws of magic, we find that the "magic" at work in the example with the relic depends on the law of contact, both in iconolatry and in idolatry. If we were to exchange the relic for an icon the "magic" at work would instead depend on the law of similarity.

Returning again to Aquinas' distinction it is quite interesting to note that historically there seems to have been a tendency for iconolatry to continuously slip into idolatry. This tendency is especially noticeable in what is often called popular belief.

> In the case of the Nails with which Jesus Christ was crucified, we can point to definite instances in which that which was at first venerated as having touched the original came later to be honoured as the original itself.[377]

---

[376] Later the Protestant reformation in Christianity came to neglect Aquinas' distinction and condemned both phenomena alike as "images" of God. According to the *Catholic Encyclopaedia* the successors of the Protestant reformation have gradually loosened up on this total rejection. I quote: "Calvinists keep the rule of admitting no statues, not even a cross, fairly exactly still. Lutherans have statues and crucifixes. In Anglican churches one may find any principle at work, from that of a bare cross to a perfect plethora of statues and pictures." As an example of contemporary Catholic teaching on this subject four points from the *Catechism of Christian Doctrine*, used in England by command of the Catholic bishops, might be cited: "[1] It is forbidden to give divine honour or worship to the angels and saints for this belongs to God alone. [2] We should pay to the angels and saints an inferior honour or worship, for this is due to them as the servants and special friends of God. [3] We should give to relics, crucifixes and holy pictures a relative honour, as they relate to Christ and his saints and are memorials of them. [4] We do not pray to relics or images, for they can neither see nor hear nor help us." Adrian Fortescue, "Veneration of Images", [Online] *The Catholic Encyclopaedia*, transcribed by Tomas Hancil (Copyright: K. Knight, 2003), retrieved 28 May, 2004, URL <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/07664a.htm>.

[377] Herbert Thurston, "Relics", [Online] *The Catholic Encyclopaedia*.

The same thing is said to have happened to the Eucharist, at least in popular belief. In his studies on the history of Christian thought Godefridius J. C. Snoek states: "From being an 'action' the Eucharist became an 'object'".[378]

> Just as a bone from the physical remains of the saint, in popular belief, *was* in fact the saint himself, so the Eucharist, believed to be the physical and spiritual presence of Christ, constituted the ultimate, the most precious, of all relics.[379]

As we saw in the previous chapter, Leach launched the possibility of a metaphoric relation turning metonymic by persuasion as well as due to habit and convention. Perhaps these factors may also be seen as relevant in the case of iconolatry becoming idolatry. If we set aside habit and convention and focus on persuasion, we find that even the early theologian and philosopher John Calvin explored and expressed the value of self-persuasion in his ideas on religious faith.[380] Calvin seems to me quite radical when he proposes that the reception of religious experiences depends on our faith which is in turn dependent on our self-assurance or self-persuasion.

> The "seeing" has to be transformed by a "persuading" and the entertainment of "a confident assurance". Christ offers himself, but our faith receives; the Spirit makes the offering effective, but our faith makes the reception of that effectivity possible.[381]

If we turn instead to a sociological and relatively recent perspective, in a chapter called *The illusio and the work of art as fetish* by Bourdieu, we find

---

[378] Godefridius J. C. Snoek, *Medieval Piety from Relics to the Eucharist; A process of mutual interaction* (Leiden, New York, Köln: E. J. Brill, 1995), 4, quoting N. Mitchell; "how did the eucharist action become a eucharist object?" N. Mitchell, *Cult and Controversy: The Worship of the Eucharist Outside Mass* (New York, 1982), 4.

[379] Godefridius J. C. Snoek, *Medieval Piety from Relics to the Eucharist*, 359, referring to Lionel Rothkrug, "Popular religion and Holy Shrines", *Religion and the People 800-1700*, ed. James Obelkevich (Chapel Hill: North Carolina Press, 1979), 36.

[380] As Graham Ward notices in *Cities of God* (London: Routledge, 2000), 166. John (commonly called Jean) Calvin's family name was originally Cauvin, Latinised as Calvinus. William Barry, "John Calvin", [Online] *The Catholic Encyclopaedia*, transcribed by Tomas Hancil (Copyright: K. Knight, 2003), retrieved 12 Aug., 2004, URL <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/03195b.htm>.

[381] Graham Ward, *Cities of God*, 166, referring to Jean Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, vols 1 and 2, translated by John Allen (Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Christian Education, 1936) [Original title: *Instituio Christianae Religionis*, 1559].

that Bourdieu presents the value of a work of art as produced not by the individual artist but by the field of production, in that the field of production produces a belief in the creative powers of the artist, which further generates a belief in the value of the work that is dependent on the artist's "touch" (signature or brand name). This suggests that it is the persuasion of the rules of the game as well as the acceptance of these that actually consecrates the hand which makes the object touched by this hand sacred.[382]

If we consult Frazer's two laws of magic once more, although this time focusing on the belief in these magic laws, we may perhaps suggest that it is the ultimate *faith* in contagious magic, along with a *belief* in magic (in this case voodoo sorcery), that eventually makes the sorcerer experience what Leach calls a metaphoric relation as metonymic. Consequently, it is the ultimate faith in homeopathic magic, along with religious belief (in this case what we may call "popular Catholicism"), that makes the partakers of the Holy Communion receive the wine and bread as the *presence* of Christ and not as a mere representation of Christ.

As I mentioned in the introduction to this text, fetishisation is often regarded with aversion and the term *fetish* has consequently been used in various theoretical works regarding economically, politically or morally corrupt phenomena.[383] My question is, may we regard fetishisation (as exemplified

---

[382] Pierre Bourdieu, *The rules of art: genesis and structure of the literary field,* translated by Susan Emanuel (Cambridge: Polity press, 1996), 230 [Original title: *Les Règles de l'art* (Editions du Sail, 1992)]. A related example might be Marilyn Monroe's white halterneck dress, which depends on a cultural context that is familiar with the movie scene in which it was worn. The value and meaning of the dress also depend on our collective belief in Marilyn Monroe as a "sacred" idol and, further, on a belief in the actual bodily contact of the dress with Marilyn, without which it would be just another piece of clothing.

[383] Another version of fetishism can be found in *Capital: a critique of political economy,* where Marx explains how the products of labour become commodities in capitalist economies. Here Marx unveils the origin of the commodity as deriving from the exchange-value of labour products rather than from their use-value, and based on social relations between things rather than on social relations between workers. This is what Marx calls the fetishisation of labour products, a mystical value inseparable from the production of commodities. Karl Marx, *Capital*, vol. I, 163-77. In the context of psychology, such as in the works of Freud, fetishisation is often said to break up the uniqueness of the other into various parts some of which, such as feet or hair, become the focus of objectification while the other is experienced as a series of objects instead of as a whole person. Material fetishes, such as high healed shoes or lacquer clothes, in a way replace the other altogether by turning the thing into the main erotic mediator or reflector. Sigmund Freud, *Föreläsningar. Orientering i psykoanalysen*, del 1, 283.

earlier in this text) as an objectification of an abstract meaning? And, if so, does this necessarily mean that the abstract meaning is wholly replaced by the given object? It might be that an objectified meaning is more accessible than an abstract concept, but this does not automatically mean that the abstract concept is replaced by the objectified meaning altogether. Somehow the different values attached to representation and fetishism are reminiscent of the conflict between "logic and reason" and "imagination and superstition" or, as Snoek noticed, between ecclesiastical culture and folkloric culture.[384] It may perhaps also be useful to view Leach's disapproval of the sorcerer's belief against this background, as a clash between high culture and so-called primitive culture. It might even be fruitful to view the lesser status of the roadside memorial, as compared to the cemetery, in this manner, even though there are other, and perhaps more important, ways in which the roadside memorial differs from the cemetery. Nonetheless it is quite apparent that communicating with a place or a thing tends to be seen as "mystical" and regarded with suspicion.

To at least partly restore the value of objectified meanings we might at last return to Durkheim, since for Durkheim such objectifications, where a material thing supports an abstract idea, are characteristic of what he calls external collective representations. What is experienced is not a delirium, states Durkheim, since the ideas objectified in this manner are solidly grounded "not in material things onto which they are grafted, but in the nature of society".[385] Hence, although the moral force felt by the worshipper does not come from the idol that is worshipped, it is nonetheless external to him, states Durkheim, and this externality is felt by the worshipper. Durkheim further states that without such objectified meanings *social feelings,* such as solidarity, morality and loyalty, would not last very long. As Durkheim so poetically puts it, outside a given collective framework such feelings linger on only in the form of memories that gradually fade away. Therefore we must not regard things with superimposed meanings as "mere

---

[384] Godefridius J. C. Snoek, *Medieval Piety from Relics to the Eucharist*, 367.

[385] Emile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, 173. It is however important to note that Durkheim distuinguishes between magic and religion. For Durkheim religion is a strictly collective phenomenon whereas magic is relatively dispersed, exemplified by Durkheim with: "*A church of magic does not exist.*" Emile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, 43-4.

artifice" declares Durkheim, since social life is possible only thanks to such embodied representations.[386]

The presence of the absent

To further reinstate the status of embodied representations the social anthropologist Peter Brown's interpretation of the religious notion of *praesentia*[387] as a social encounter with the presence of the absent might be mentioned.[388] A similar focus, though with an emphasis on the moral encounter with the presence of the absent, is to be found in Levinas' paper *Language and proximity*, which traces the phenomenological grounds of religious ritual and kerygmatic language back to the touch and the caress.[389]

From a belief in the ideal Kerygma as proximity between speakers, rather than a mere manifestation of being and truth, Levinas moves on to explore what he calls *contact*: "Whatever be the message transmitted by speech, the speaking is contact."[390] For Levinas this contact is something other than mere cognition and should rather be understood as care, tenderness and responsibility.

> In contact the things are near, but are so in a quite different sense from the sense in which they are rough, heavy, black, agreeable, or even existing or nonexisting.[391]

However, Levinas makes us aware of the fact that there is always a possibility for this contact to turn into information and identification. The recognition of for instance a surface as rough may easily transform the event of touching into an act of knowing. For contact to go beyond this state the sensible is

---

[386] Emile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, 176-7.

[387] Linked to the way Christ is held to be present in the Eucharist as well as to the way saints are held to be present in holy relics and sacred places.

[388] Peter Robert Lamont Brown, *The cult of the saints*, 88. The Australian roadside memorials mentioned earlier might perhaps be given as profane examples of such encounters. See also Kevin Hetherington, "Spatial Textures: Place, Touch and Praesentia", [Online] *Department of Sociology at Lancaster University*, On-line Publications (Copyright: Kevin Hetherington & Lancaster University, 2002), retrieved 1 Apr. 2004, URL <http://www.comp.lancs.ac.uk/sociology/papers/hetherington-spatial-textures.pdf>.

[389] Emmanuel Levinas, "Language and proximity", *Collected Philosophical Papers*, translated by Alphonso Lingis (Dordrecht/Boston/Lancaster: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1987), 116.

[390] Emmanuel Levinas, "Language and proximity", 115.

[391] Emmanuel Levinas, "Language and proximity", 118.

needed, declares Levinas, for without the sensible the feel of the concrete is just immediacy or language. Nevertheless, before recognising something as rough, heavy, black, agreeable, existing, or nonexistent, and to some extent also during this recognition, Levinas holds that the touch is also, and always, pure approach and "a proximity that is not reducible to the experience of proximity".[392] Therefore Levinas believes that the immediacy of the sensible should be seen as an event of this kind of proximity, and not of knowledge, and it must therefore be interpreted as *touch* first of all.

Following this, the proximity between speakers (as in the proclamation of the ideal Kerygma mentioned earlier) should not be understood as some kind of spatial contiguity, states Levinas, nor as a relationship between a subject and an object united by a "synthesis of understanding". For Levinas, the proximity between the speakers is rather an intentionality that has turned ethical.[393] The exact point when an intentionality turns ethical is described by Levinas as when approach breaks through our consciousness. To approach, or *to neighbour* as Levinas calls it, is thus something other than the knowing or consciousness one can have of approaching another person, just as proximity differs from our recognition of a surface as rough. An idea or a value judgement about a thing or a person may be given intuitively, states Levinas, but for us to go beyond this idea or value, in other words to reach the relationship of proximity, the sensible is needed. Here, the sensed is, for Levinas, a form of tenderness that exists "between the face and the nudity of the skin",[394] turning cognition and knowledge into an ethical relationship, the given into a neighbour, and representation into contact. The catalyst for this approach, which breaks through our conscious approach and transforms our intentions into ethics, might be explained as the recognition of the other as a mortal human being akin to our self. Thus, for Levinas, proximity beyond

---

[392] Emmanuel Levinas, "Language and proximity", 118. In *OED Online* proximity is explained as the fact, condition, or position of being near or close by; nearness, neighbourhood: a) in space b) in abstract relations, as kinship (usually in the phrase proximity of blood); affinity of nature, nearness in time, etc. "Proximity", [Online] *OED Online*, second edition 1989, eds. J. A. Simpson and E. S. C. Weiner. (Copyright: Oxford University Press), retrieved 12 Jun. 2003, URL <http://dictionary.oed.com/cgi/entry/00191204>.

[393] An ethical relationship is to be understood here as something which makes one person meaningful to, and of concern to, an other.

[394] Emmanuel Levinas, "Language and proximity", 118, 125.

intentionality is a relationship with the neighbour in a moral sense of the term.

In approaching the other Levinas finds that *the caress* is a form of proximity that does not become an intention of something, even though the caress as well as any other expressive gesture has the possibility of becoming a bearer of messages. Levinas further describes the caress as a unity of approach and proximity, in which proximity is also always an absence, an absence that is really the very presence of infinity. The softness of the skin caressed is for Levinas the divergence between presentation and the presence of infinity. This elegant turn, the feeling of the touched as the divergence between presentation and the presence of the absence, an absence that is really the very presence of infinity, seems to me very close to the religious notion of praesentia, even though Levinas states that "in reality" it is only in the approach of another person (when neighbouring), i.e. "in the ethical relationship with the real", that the relationship of proximity which the sensible establishes can be felt, since "the proximity of things is poetry". However, Levinas later modifies this thought by declaring that things with "a reference to the other" retain their capacity for the sensible. This includes places trampled by beings, things held by beings (including images or fragments of things held as well as the context in which these fragments enter), "the signs of language" (spoken as well as written), vestiges and relics, in short all things that are invested with the sensible via the human: "Over all things beginning with the human face and skin, tenderness spreads. Cognition turns into proximity, into the purely sensible."[395]

> The poetry of the world is inseparable from proximity par excellence, or the proximity of a neighbour par excellence. And it is as though by reference to their origin in the other, a reference that would obtain as an a priori structure of the sensible, that certain cold and "mineral" contacts are only privately congealed into pure information or pure reports.[396]

Levinas also reinstates the approach as the very relationship itself, and not as the thematization of a previous relationship.

---

[395] Emmanuel Levinas, "Language and proximity", 119.

[396] Emmanuel Levinas, "Language and proximity", 119.

> The trace in which a face is ordered is not reducible to a sign for the simple reason that a sign and its relationship with the signified are already thematized. But an approach is not the thematization of any relationship; it is this very relationship.[397]

If we think once more of the belief in things which once were in contact with a human as always being in contact, Levinas' notion of the touch, investing things with the sensible via the human, turning knowledge and cognition into proximity, is both confirming and comforting. To further see proximity as a relationship with the neighbour in a moral sense of the term is also reassuring, especially in defining roadside memorials as sacred places, despite their secular setting, and in acknowledging our cemeteries as sacred grounds, not necessarily as enclosed sanctified spaces in a religious sense, but necessarily as sacred grounds in a *moral* sense, because they commemorate the death of hundreds of neighbours and therefore command a certain reverence.

●

We have in the last part of this text used the study of tropes for the purpose of examining possible factors involved in the association of a person with a place or a thing. Initially, we examined the symbol/sign distinction with the help of Leach and his interpretation of Mulder and Hervey's theory of the linguistic sign. In this discussion the division between symbol/sign was seen by Leach as similar to the division between metaphor/metonymy in that it distinguishes between similarity and contiguity. Frazer's two laws of magic, homeopathic and contagious, were also considered by both Jakobson and, later, Leach to distinguish between similarity and contiguity. The difference between metaphoric and metonymic relations was further held by Leach to be constantly confused in various forms of human communication. For Leach this confusion was most apparent in the code switching between symbol and sign found in poetic and religious utterances. A further example of such code switching was presented by Leach in the form of a voodoo sorcerer who, according to Leach, illogically believed that metaphoric non-sense really made metonymic sense.

We then discussed the wide-spread denunciation of fetishism, first by viewing Aquinas' condemnation of idolatry in favour of iconolatry as similar to the

---

[397] Emmanuel Levinas, "Language and proximity", 124.

conflict between ecclesiastical culture and folkloric culture, then by considering Leach's description of how a sorcerer mistakes a metaphoric relation for a metonymic as somewhat related to an evaluative distinction between high culture and so-called primitive culture. We concluded that it might be the ultimate belief in the laws of similarity and contact, possibly along with additional variants of faith, which actually transforms iconolatry into idolatry and allows the sorcerer to experience a metaphoric relation as metonymic. Perhaps a confidence in something similar to these "laws" may even be seen as a factor in the association of an absent person with a place or a thing.

Lastly, we strived to reinstate the value of embodied representations, first with the help of Durkheim and then with Levinas. In following Durkheim we saw that embodied representations may be held to maintain social life, something which might encourage a revision of the hegemonic view of embodied representations as mere artifice. In following Levinas we found that things touched may be held to provide a social or moral encounter with the presence of the absent, a notion which could further be seen as crucial for recognising memorials and places of ritual as sacred grounds, not necessarily in a religious but inevitably in a moral sense of the term.

4
Summary

In the introduction to this text I posed some questions which were triggered by my interest in the matters discussed. These questions were as follows.

1. Do standardised or even anonymous burial sites embrace the individual's need for identity, remembrance and homage?

2. Do memorials and places of ritual need to be site specific architectural or artistic constructions or could they be anything, in any place, which by continued existence commemorates a person, action or event?

3. What factors are involved in the association of a person with a place or a thing?

As previously mentioned, these questions should not be seen as clear-cut enquiries demanding clear-cut answers, and they have therefore not been dealt with in a straightforward manner. Nonetheless, I hope that the text has provided some answers, however un-straightforward and inconclusive these may be.

In the first part of this text we examined the possibility of a symbiotic process, operating between individual and society, in which manners, values and ideologies were seen as mediated via the institutional practices of the society to the individuals and their societal situation. The ritual was held as one mediator in this process, passing on social facts or structures of expectation through ritual activities in various kinds of public and private institutions. We then followed the institutionalisation of a proper space of death by studying how hygienic, technological and aesthetic strategies created an awareness of what a proper space of death should be like, physically as well as ideologically. We additionally recognised that more spontaneous ritual activities also have the power of altering manners, values and beliefs, something which may eventually modify the proper space of death. Some researchers even speak of a shift from an institutional to an individual perception of death, affecting symbols, memorials and places of ritual connected to death and commemoration.

In the second part of the text we recognised society's constant urge to order that which seems threatening to, or does not fit into, its given structure. It was further suggested that liminal rituals and their heterotopias, as well as liminoid rituals and what we for investigative reasons have called heterotopoids, by offering a secure release of inbuilt tensions and by maintaining "order through difference", might function as interstructural safety valves in society. By their very existence, these two phenomena were considered to support order and structure. However, we saw that if a society appears too keen on order spontaneous outbursts of "disorder", or prospects of other orders, were likely to emerge. Hence, if the proper space of death, in which the cemetery may be held as an interstructural safety valve, is too efficient in its regulation and ordering it may run the risk of being abandoned for other alternative places of ritual.

In the third part of this text we noticed that the pattern of associations that enables us to link the presence of an absent person to a certain place or thing may be related to that which is discernable in certain religious acts, such as the belief in praesentia connected to holy relics and the Eucharist, as well as in magical acts connected to sorcery and taboo, since, in all these phenomena, the belief in a link of contiguity, or a situation of proximity, between an absent person and a place or thing, could be seen as crucial. Finally in part three we followed Levinas in tracing the phenomenological grounds of religious ritual and kerygmatic language back in history to the touch and the caress. We then recognised that things touched could morally be seen as invested with the sensible via the human, turning intentionality into the ethical, and knowledge and cognition into proximity, a recognition, which might help us identify memorials and cemeteries as sacred places that demand a certain reverence. Because of their commemoration of life and death cemeteries and memorials might also function as triggers for existential questions in everyday life, a function that it was my overall aim to acknowledge.

Another of my aims has been to stress the transformability of the cemetery in that it can alter its role in society, while retaining its specific function, if the society or culture in which it exists changes direction. From the expansion of the earlier, enclosed cemetery to the strewing of ashes over land or sea, from an institutional to an individual context, and from a monocultural to a

multicultural setting. To acknowledge the cemetery of today as a cultural phenomenon and an ever-changing place of ritual may also provide an approach to the design strategies of cemetery construction, an approach that in the long run might help our cemeteries to function actively, as the sacred spaces they should be.

The conscious application of this approach in the design of memorials and places of ritual is something that I would like to investigate further. Another possible topic for future investigation is the cognitive quality of memorials and places of rituals, looking more closely at the factors that enable us to associate an abstract concept with a place or a thing and at the way we embody space through ritual activity.

Appendix

Edmund Leach's communication dyad.[398]

```
┌─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│ COMMUNICATION DYAD                                       │
│ Message-bearing entity A conveys information about message B │
└─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘

┌──────────────────┐        ┌──────────────────────────┐
│ INDEX            │        │ SIGNAL                   │
│ A indicates B    │        │ A causes B by trigger response │
└──────────────────┘        └──────────────────────────┘
                                        Mainly metonymy

┌──────────────────────┐    ┌──────────────────────────────────┐
│ SIGNUM               │    │ NATURAL INDEX                    │
│ A stands for B as a  │    │ A associated with B by nature,   │
│ result of arbitrary  │    │ but selected as an index of B by │
│ human choice         │    │ human choice (smoke as an index  │
└──────────────────────┘    │ of fire)                         │
                            └──────────────────────────────────┘

┌──────────────────────┐    ┌──────────────────────────────────┐
│ SYMBOL               │    │ SIGN                             │
│ A stands for B by    │    │ A stands for B as part for whole │
│ arbitrary association│    │ (metonymy)                       │
└──────────────────────┘    └──────────────────────────────────┘

┌──────────────────────┐    ┌──────────────────────────────────┐
│ STANDARDISED SYMBOL  │    │ NONCE SYMBOL                     │
│ Association between  │    │ Private symbols. Association      │
│ A and B arbitrary    │    │ between A and B arbitrary and     │
│ but habitual         │    │ depending on the sender          │
└──────────────────────┘    └──────────────────────────────────┘
                                        Mainly metaphor

┌──────────────────────┐    ┌──────────────────────────────────┐
│ CONVENTIONAL BUT     │    │ ICON                             │
│ WHOLLY ARBITRARY     │    │ Association between A and B one of │
│ SYMBOLS              │    │ planned resemblance (models, maps, │
│ (The serpent as a    │    │ portraits)                       │
│ symbol of evil)      │    │                                  │
└──────────────────────┘    └──────────────────────────────────┘
```

---

[398] Edmund Leach, *Culture and Communication*, 12.

Bibliography

Printed and Online sources

Aftonbladet, "Busan är död – även i tidningen", måndag 19 januari 2004.

Aggedal, Jan-Olof. *Griftetalet mellan trostolkning och livstydning: en pastoralteologisk studie*, Bibliotheca theologiae practicae, 71. Lund: Arcus, 2003.

Amos; magasinet för livsfrågor och Kristen tro, "Amos pilar – skoj som sticks", nr 6 (2003): 25.

Ariés, Philippe. *Western Attitudes Toward Death, from the Middle Ages to the Present*, translated by Patricia M. Ranum. London and New York: Marion Boyars, 1976.

Ariés, Philippe. *The Hour of Death*, translated by Helen Weaver. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1983. [First published in Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1977.]

Askolin, Kristina. "Bibelsajtens frågelåda om Bibeln, kristen tro och livsfrågor". [Online] *Bibelsajten om Bibeln och kristendom* (Copyright: Svenska Kyrkans Unga, EFS, Svenska Baptisternas Ungdomsförbund, Svenska Bibelsällskapet, 2000-2002), retrieved 18 Dec. 2003, URL <http://www.bibelsajten.nu/frageladan/visa_fraga.asp>.

Asplund, Johan. *Rivaler och syndabockar*. Göteborg: Korpen, 1989.

Asplund, Gunnar & Gregor Paulsson. *Acceptera*, faksimilupplaga. Stockholm: Tiden, 1980. [First published in Stockholm: Tiden, 1931.]

Azaryahu, Maoz. "The spontaneous formation of memorial space. The case of Kikar Rabin, Tel Aviv". *Area*, 28/4 (1996): 501-13.

Barfield, Thomas J., ed. [Online] *The Dictionary of Anthropology* (Cambridge: Mass Blackwell Publishers, 2000), retrieved 21 Nov. 2003, URL <http://www.netlibrary.com/Reader/>. [First published as hardback in Malden, MA & Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1997.]

Barry, William. "John Calvin". [Online] *The Catholic Encyclopaedia*, transcribed by Tomas Hancil (Copyright: K. Knight, 2003), retrieved 12 Aug, 2004, URL <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/03195b.htm>.

Bauman, Zygmunt. *Mortality, Immortality and other Life Strategies*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 1992.

Begravningslag (1990:1144).

Bell, Catherine. *Ritual; Perspectives and Dimensions*. New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997.

Blom, Thomas. "Morbid tourism - a postmodern market niche with an example from Althorp". *Norwegian Journal of Geography*, 54/1 (March 2000): 29-36.

Bondesson, Lars. *Seder och bruk vid livets slut*. Stockholm: Verbum Förlag, 1987.

Boullée, Étienne-Louis. "Architecture, essay on art". *Boullée and visionary architecture*, ed. Helene Rosenau. London, 1976.

Bourdieu, Pierre. *Language and Symbolic Power*, ed. John B. Thompson, translated by Gina Raymond and Matthew Adamson. Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991.

Bourdieu, Pierre. *The rules of art: genesis and structure of the literary field*, translated by Susan Emanuel. Cambridge: Polity press, 1996. [Original title: *Les Règles de l'art*. Editions du Sail, 1992.]

Brown, Peter. *The cult of the saints: its rise and function in Latin Christianity*. London: The University of Chicago Press, 1981.

Casey, Edward S. *Remembrance: A Phenomenological Study*, second edition. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2000. [First edition published in 1987.]

Casey, Edward S. *The Fate of Place: A Philosophical History*. Berkley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1998.

Celestis Home Page [Online], "Celestis Home Page" (Copyright: Celestis Inc, 1994-2004), retrieved 5 Feb. 2004, URL <http://www.celestis.com/>.

Certeau, Michel de. *The Practice of Everyday Life*, new edition, translated by Steven Rendall. Berkeley and Los Angeles, California: University of California Press, 2002. [First published in 1984, printed as paperback in 1988.]

Cockerham, Paul. "Three into one won't go': monument selection in early modern Cornwall". [Online] *Creating Identities*, abstracts, retrieved 27 Oct. 2003, URL <http://www.rodrun.de/creating-identities/Abstracts.pdf>.

Costelloe, Timothy. "Giambattista Vico". [Online] *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, summer 2002 edition, ed. Edward N. Zalta (Copyright: Timothy Costelloe, 2003), retrieved 21 Nov. 2003, URL <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2003/entries/vico/>.

Cvetnic, Sanja. "Follow me: Popular public memorials in Croatia". [Online] *Creating Identities*, abstracts, retrieved 27 Oct. 2003, URL <http://www.rodrun.de/creating-identities/Abstracts.pdf>.

Dahlgren, Curt. *När döden skiljer oss åt… Anonymitet och individualisering I dödsannonser: 1945-1999*. Stockholm: Databokförlaget AB, 2000.

Dahlgren, Curt & Jan Hermanson. "Kremation och spridning av aska: förändrade begravningsseder i Sverige under sent 1990-tal?". [Online] *RIT religionsvetenskaplig internettidskrift*, 6/2003 (Copyright: Curt Dahlgren, Jan Hermanson & CTR, Lund University), retrieved 30 March 2004, URL <http://www.teol.lu.se/rit6/artiklar/jh1.pdf>.

Davidsson, Bremborg Anna. *Yrke: begravningsentreprenör. Om utanförskap, döda kroppar, riter och professionalisering*, Lund Studies in Sociology of Religion, Lund University, ed. Curt Dahlgren. Lund: Studentlitteratur AB, 2002.

Davies, Douglas J. *Death, Ritual and Belief: The Rhetoric of Funerary Rites*, second edition. London, New York: Continuum, 2002. [First edition published in 1997.]

Dirven, René. "Conversion as a Conceptual Metonymy of Basic Event Schemata". [Online] *The Metaphor and Metonymy Group*, abstracts, retrieved 21 June, 2004, URL <http://www.psyc.leeds.ac.uk/cgi-bin/search/metaphorAbstracts/abstract.pl?DirvenR02>.

Djurens himmel [Online], "Djurens himmel" (Copyright: Pernilla Magnusson, december 1999), retrieved 2 Nov. 2002, URL <http://hem.fyristorg.com/djurens_himmel/index.htm>.

Douglas, Mary. *Purity and danger: an analysis of concepts of pollution and taboo*. London: Rutledge & Kegan Paul, 1976. [First published in 1966.]

Durkheim, Emile. *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*. New York: Free Press, 1965. [First published in 1912.]

EG (1774/2002).

Enström, Bengt. *Kyrkan och Eldbegängelserörelsen i Sverige 1882-1962*, akademisk avhandling, Teologiska fakulteten, Uppsala universitet. Lund: Berlingska Boktryckeriet, 1964.

Erikson, Erik. "Ontogeny of Ritualization in Man". *Psychoanalysis – a general psychology: essays in honour of Heinz Hartmann*, ed. Rudolf M. Loewenstein. New York: International Universities Press, 1966.

Erman, Bengt. *Begravningsrätten i praktiken, reviderad upplaga*. Stockholm: Verbum Förlag AB, 2001.

Evans-Pritchard, Edward. *Nuer religion*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1974. [First published in 1956.]

Evans-Pritchard, Edward. *Theories of primitive religion*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965.

Evans-Pritchard, Edward. *A History of Anthropological Thought*. London, Boston: Faber and Faber, 1981.

Fausch, Deborah. "The knowledge of the body and the presence of history". *Architecture and Feminism*, eds. Debra Coleman, Elizabeth Danze & Carol Henderson. New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1996.

Firth, Raymond. *Symbols; Public and Private*. London: Allen & Unwin, 1973.

Fortescue, Adrian. "Veneration of Images". [Online] *The Catholic Encyclopaedia*, transcribed by Tomas Hancil (Copyright: K. Knight, 2003), retrieved 28 May, 2004, URL <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/07664a.htm>.

Foucault, Michel. *The Order of Things: An archaeology of the human sciences*, English translation by Tavistock/Routledge. London: Taylor & Francis Ltd, 2001. [Original title: *Les Mots et les choses*. Editions Gallimard, 1966.]

Foucault, Michel. "Of Other Spaces". *Diacritics*, spring, translation by Jay Miskowiec (1986): 22-7. [Original title: "Des Espaces Autres". *Architecture-Mouvement-Continué*, 5 (1984): 46-9.]

Frazer, James George. [Online] *The Golden Bough; A Study in Magic and Religion* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 1998) retrieved 21 Apr. 2004, URL <http://www.netlibrary.com/Reader/>. [First abridged edition published as hardback in New York: Macmillan, 1922.]

Freud, Sigmund. *Föreläsningar. Orientering i psykoanalysen*, del 1, i översättning av Assar Asker. Stockholm: Natur och Kultur, 1996. [Original title: *Vorlesungen zur Einführung in die Psychoanalyse* (1899) and *Neue Folge der Vorlesungen zur Einführung in die Psychoanalyse* (1933).]

Friesen, Otto von. "Kremering - ett arv från franska revolutionen". *Folket i Bild – Kulturfront*, 19 (1982): 10-11.

Gaura, Maria Alicia. "Grave situation for pets / Santa Cruz SPCA forced to sell land used for animal cemetery". [Online] *San Francisco Chronicle* (Copyright: San Francisco Chronicle, 2002), retrieved 7 March 2002, URL <http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/c/a/2002/07/03/MN38125.DTL>.

Gennep, Arnold van. *The Rites of Passage*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1960. [First published in 1909.]

Gorer, Geoffrey. "The Pornography of Death". *Death, Grief, and Mourning in Contemporary Britain*. London, 1965.

Gustavsson, Göran. *När det sociala kapitalet växlas in: om begravningar och deltagandet i begravningar*, Lund studies in Sociology of Religion, 4. Centrum för Teologi och Religionsvetenskap, Lund University: Arken bokhandel, 2003.

Hamberg, Eva M. "Svenska Folkets Gud". *Gud. Sju lundateologer föreläser*, red. Göran Bexell. Stockholm, Stehag: Symposion, 1997.

Hamberg, Eva M. "Kristen tro och praxis i Dagens Sverige". *Världsbild och mening; En empirisk studie av livsåskådningar i dagens Sverige*, red. Carl Reinhold Bråkenhielm. Nya Doxa, 2001.

Hartig, Kate V. and Kevin M. Dunn. "Roadside Memorials: Interpreting New Deathscapes in Newcastle, New South Wales". *Australian Geographical Studies*, 36/1 (March 1998): 5-20.

Hella. "Djurens Himmel". [Online] *Bibelsajten om Bibeln och kristendom* (Copyright: Svenska Kyrkans Unga, EFS, Svenska Baptisternas Ungdomsförbund, Svenska Bibelsällskapet, 2000-2002), retrieved 2 Nov. 2002, URL <http://www.bibelsajten.nu/diskdjur.htm>.

Henzel, Cynthia. "Cruses in the roadside landscape of north eastern Mexico". *Journal of Cultural Geography*, 11 (1989): 93-106.

Hertz, Robert. *Death and The right hand*, translated by Rodney and Claudia Needham, with an introduction by Edward Evans-Pritchard. Aberdeen: Cohen and West, 1960. [Originally published in *L'Année Sociologique*, 1907, and *Revue Philosophique*, 1909.]

Hetherington, Kevin. *The Geography of the Other; Lifestyle, Performance and Identity*, PhD thesis number DX183194. Lancaster University, 1993.

Hetherington, Kevin. *The Badlands of Modernity; Heterotopia & Social Ordering*. London and New York: Routledge, 1997.

Hetherington, Kevin. "Spatial Textures: Place, Touch and Praesentia". [Online] *Department of Sociology at Lancaster University*, On-line Publications (Copyright: Kevin Hetherington & Lancaster University, 2002), retrieved 1 Apr. 2004, URL <http://www.comp.lancs.ac.uk/sociology/papers/hetherington-spatial-textures.pdf>

Howett, Catherine. "Living Landscapes for the Dead". *Landscape*, 21 (1977): 9-17.

Hume, David. *Of the delicacy of taste and passion: Of tragedy; Of the standard of taste*, Kurslitteratur, Institutionen för estetik, Uppsala universitet, 22. Uppsala, 1994.

Ingemark, Sten. "Eldbegängelseföreningen fick dubbel start i Helsingborg". *Kyrkogården*, 3 (1986): 5-6.

Ingemark, Sten. "Staden skulle bli kremeringens Mekka". *Kyrkogården*, 3 (1986): 7-8.

Ingemark, Sten. "Baltiska templet väckte sensation vid den stora utställningen i Malmö 1914". *Kyrkogården*, 7 (1994): 26-27.

Jackson, J. B. "From Monument to Place". *Landscape*, 17 (1967-68): 22-26.

Jakobson, Roman. "Two aspects of language and two types of aphasic disturbances". *Fundamentals of Language*, Janua Linguarum: Series Minor 1. The Hague: Mouton, 1956.

Jay, Martin. *Downcast Eyes; the denigration of vision in twentieth-century French thought*. Berkley, Los Angeles, London: University Of California Press, 1993.

Johansson, Bengt O. H. *Tallum; Gunnar Asplunds & Sigurd Lewerentz skogskyrkogård i Stockholm*. Stockholm: Byggförlaget, 1996.

Johansson, Ulf G. "De första svenska krematorierna och deras förutsättningar". *Konsthistorisk tidskrift*, 3-4 (1964): 117-26.

John, Graham St. "Alternative Cultural Heterotopia and the Liminoid Body: Beyond Turner at ConFest". *Australian Journal of Anthropology*, 12/1 (2001): 47-67.

Kant, Immanuel. *Kritik av omdömeskraften*, translated by Sven-Olof Wallenstein. Stockholm: Thales, 2003. [Original title: *Critik der Urtheilskraft*. Berlin und Libau: Lagarde und Friedrich, 1790.]

Karlsmo, Emelie. "Rum för begravning. 1900-talets begravningskapell och krematorier". *Begravning*, Svenskt Gudstjänstliv, 73, Tro och Tanke, 6. Svenska kyrkans forskningsråd, 1998.

Key, Ellen. *Skönhet för alla: Fyra Uppsatser*. Studentföreningen Verdandis småskrifter, 77. Stockholm: Bonnier, 1899.

Kong, Lily. "Geography and religion; trends and prospects". *Progress in Human Geography*, 14/3 (1990): 355-71.

Kong, Lily. "Cemeteries and Columbaria, Memorials and Mausoleums: Narrative and Interpretation in the Study of Deathscapes in Geography". *Australian Geographical Studies*, 37/1 (1999): 1-10.

Kristeva, Julia. *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection*, translated by Leon S. Roudiez. New York: Columbia University Press, 1982.

Kyrkogården, "Garnsvikens begravningsplats", 7 (2002): 5-7.

Kyrkogården, "Landet runt", 1 (2004): 14.

Kyrkogården, "Statistik 2003", 3 (2004): 9-15.

Kärrholm, Mattias. *Arkitekturens territorialitet – till en diskussion om territoriell makt och gestaltning i stadens offentliga rum*. Lund: Grahns Tryckeri AB, 2004.

Lakoff, George and Mark Johnson. *Metaphors we live by*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980.

Lakoff, George and Mark Turner. *More than Cool Reason: A Field Guide to Poetic Metaphor*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989.

Lax, Sigurd F. "'Heterotopia' from a biological and medical point of view". *Other Spaces. The Affair of the Heterotopia*, HDA, Dokumente zur Architectur, 10 (1998): 114-123.

Leach, Edmund. "Magical Hair". *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland*, 88/2 (Jul. – Dec., 1958): 147-64.

Leach, Edmund. *Culture and Communication: The Logic by Which Symbols are Connected*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976.

Lefebvre, Henri. *The Production of Space*, translated by Donald Nicholson-Smith. Oxford UK och Cambridge USA: Blackwell, 1991. [Original title: *La Production de l'espace*. Paris: Anthropos, 1974.]

Levinas, Emmanuel. "Language and proximity". *Collected Philosophical Papers*, translated by Alphonso Lingis. Dordrecht/Boston/Lancaster: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1987.

Lindahl, Göran. *Grav och Rum: svenskt gravskick från medeltiden till 1800-talets slut*. Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1969.

Lipphardt, Anna. "Burial plots, mourning and commemoration among Jews from Vilna in New York". [Online] *Creating Identities*, abstracts, retrieved 27 Oct. 2003, URL <http://www.rodrun.de/creating-identities/Abstracts.pdf>.

Lundquist, Kjell. "Från beteshage till trädgård – kyrkogårdens historia". *Kyrkogårdens gröna kulturarv*. Stad och land, 103. Alnarp: Movium, 1992.

MADD Online [Online], "Home" (Copyright: Mothers Against Drunk Driving), retrieved 10 May 2004, URL <http://www.madd.org/home/>.

Malinowski, Bronislaw. "The problem of meaning in primitive languages". Supplement 1 to C. K. Ogden and I. A. Richards, eds. *The Meaning of Meaning; A study of the Influence of Language upon Thought and of the Science of Symbolism*. Routledge: Thoemmes Press, 1994. [First published in 1923.]

Marx, Karl. *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy*, vol. I. London: Penguin, 1990. [This edition first published in Pelican Books in 1976. Original title: *Das Kapital. Kritik der politischen Oekonomie*, (1867).]

McLeod, Mary. "Everyday and 'Other' Spaces". *Architecture and Feminism*, eds. Debra Coleman, Elizabeth Danze and Carol Henderson. New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1996.

McManners, John. *Death and the Enlightenment. Changing Attitudes to Death among Christians and Unbelievers in Eighteenh-century France*. Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 1985.

Merriam-Webster Online [Online], "Fetish" (Copyright: Merriam-Webster, Incorporated, 2004), retrieved 12 May 2004, URL <http://www.merriam-webster.com/cgi-bin/dictionary?book=Dictionary&va=fetish&x=20&y=14>.

Merriam-Webster Online [Online], "Idol" (Copyright: Merriam-Webster, Incorporated, 2004), retrieved 12 May 2004, URL <http://www.merriam-webster.com/cgi-bin/dictionary?book=Dictionary&va=idol&x=24&y=14>.

Merriam-Webster Online [Online], "Limen" (Copyright: Merriam-Webster, Incorporated, 2004), retrieved 12 May 2004, URL <http://www.merriam-webster.com/cgi-bin/dictionary?book=Dictionary&va=limen&x=15&y=10>.

Metcalf, Peter and Richard Huntington. *Celebrations of Death: the anthropology of mortuary ritual*, second edition. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991. [First edition published in 1979.]

Miljöbalken (1998:808).

Minges, Parthenius. "Blessed John Duns Scotus". [Online] *The Catholic Encyclopaedia*, transcribed by Rick McCarty. (Copyright: K. Knight, 2003), retrieved 25 March 2004, URL <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/05194a.htm>.

Morris, Ian. *Burial and ancient society: The rise of the Greek city-state*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987.

Mulder, Jan W. F. and Sándor G. J Hervey. "Index and Signum". *Semiotica*, 4 (1971): 324-38.

Mulder, J. W. F. and S. G. J. Hervey. *Theory of the Linguistic Sign*, Janua Linguarum: Series minor, 136. The Hague: Mouton, 1972.

OED Online [Online], "Ceremony", second edition 1989, eds. J. A. Simpson and E. S. C. Weiner. (Copyright: Oxford University Press), retrieved 17 Dec. 2003, URL <http://dictionary.oed.com/cgi/entry/00035866>.

OED Online [Online], "Fetish, n.", second edition 1989, eds. J. A. Simpson and E. S. C. Weiner. (Copyright: Oxford University Press), retrieved 13 Jun. 2003, URL <http://dictionary.oed.com/cgi/entry/00084062>.

OED Online [Online], "Heterotopy", second edition 1989, eds. J. A. Simpson and E. S. C. Weiner. (Copyright: Oxford University Press), retrieved 13 Jun. 2003, URL <http://dictionary.oed.com/cgi/entry/00105569>.

OED Online [Online], "Idol, n.", second edition 1989, eds. J. A. Simpson and E. S. C. Weiner. (Copyright: Oxford University Press), retrieved 12 May. 2004, URL <http://dictionary.oed.com/cgi/entry/00111326>.

OED Online [Online], "Proximity", second edition 1989, eds. J. A. Simpson and E. S. C. Weiner. (Copyright: Oxford University Press), retrieved 12 Jun. 2003, URL <http://dictionary.oed.com/cgi/entry/00191204>.

OED Online [Online], "Rite", second edition 1989, eds. J. A. Simpson and E. S. C. Weiner. (Copyright: Oxford University Press), retrieved 17 Dec. 2003, URL <http://dictionary.oed.com/cgi/entry/00207357>.

OED Online [Online], "Ritual, a. and n.", second edition 1989, eds. J. A. Simpson and E. S. C. Weiner. (Copyright: Oxford University Press), retrieved 17 Dec. 2003, URL <http://dictionary.oed.com/cgi/entry/00207381>.

On-line Bestiary [Online], "Folio 25v", The Aberdeen Bestiary Project, second edition, translation & transcription Colin Mc Laren & Aberdeen University Library (Copyright: Colin Mc Laren & Aberdeen University Library, 1995), retrieved 27 Jan. 2004, URL <http://www.abdn.ac.uk/bestiary/translat/25v.hti>.

Paasi, Anssi. "The institutionalization of regions: a theoretical framework for understanding the emergence of regions and the constitution of regional identity". *Fennia*, 164/1 (1986): 106-42.

Paulsson, Gregor. *Vackrare vardagsvara*, faksimilupplaga. Stockholm, AB Grafiska Gruppen, 1995. [First published in Stockholm: Svenska Slöjdföreningen, 1919.]

Paulsson, Gregor. *Hur bo? Några ord om den moderna smakriktningen*. Stockholm: Kooperativa förbundet, 1934.

Peirce, Charles Sanders. *The essential Peirce: Selected philosophical writings*, vol. 2, 1893-1913. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998.

Pettersson, Staffan. "Garnsvikens begravningsplats". *Kyrkogården*, 7 (2002): 5-7.

Pugin, Augustus Welby Northmore. *The True Principles of Pointed or Christian Architecture and An Apology for the Revival of Christian Architecture in England*, joint facsimile edition of first editions. Gracewing Publiching: Leominster, Herefordshire, Gracewing, 2003. [*True Principles* first published in 1841; *An Apology* first published in 1943.]

Pugin, Augustus Welby Northmore. *The present state of ecclesiastical architecture in England*, facsimile edition of the first edition. Oxford, 1969. [First published in 1843.]

Ragon, Michel. *The space of Death: a study of funerary architecture, decoration, and urbanism*, translated by Alan Sheridan. Charlottesville: Univ. Press of Virginia, 1983. [Original title: *L'espace de la mort. - Essai sur l'architecture, la décoration et l'urbanisme funéraires*, ed. Michel Albin. Paris, 1981.]

Rapp, Christof. "Aristotle's Rhetoric". [Online] *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, summer 2002 edition, ed. Edward N. Zalta (Copyright: Christof Rapp, 2002), retrieved 21 Nov. 2003, URL <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2002/entries/aristotle-rhetoric/>.

Rodriguez, Juan. "Descansos: A tribute of love". [Online] *Lower Rio Grande Valley Multimedia Archive* (Copyright: UT-Pan American 2000), retrieved 24 May 2004, URL <http://www.panam.edu/dept/lrgvarchive/Descansos.htm>.

Rothkrug, Lionel. "Popular religion and Holy Shrines". *Religion and the People 800-1700*, ed. James Obelkevich. Chapel Hill: North Carolina Press, 1979.

Sandin, Gunnar. *Modalities of Place: On polarisation and Exclusion in Concepts of Place in Site-Specific Art*, Doctoral dissertation presented at the Department of Theoretical and Applied Aesthetics, School of Architecture, Lund Institute of Technology, Lund University. Lund: KFS AB, 2003.

Saussure, Ferdinand de. *Kurs i allmän lingvistik*, i översättning av Anders Löfqvist. Paris: Bo Cavefors Bokförlag, 1970. [Original title: *Cours de Linguistique Générale*. Lausanne: Payot, 1916.]

Schechner, Richard. *The Future of Ritual; writings on culture and performance*. London and New York: Ruthledge, 1995.

SeeMeRot.com [Online], "Live Coffin Cam", (Copyright: SeeMeRot.com, 2003), retrieved 13 Feb. 2004, URL <http://www.seemerot.com/>.

Shields, Robert. *Places on the Margin: Alternative Geographies of modernity*. London: Routledge, 1991.

Silén, Marianne. "Berthåga – hela tillvarons trädgård". *Byggindustrin*, 25 (2002): 13-5.

SJVFS (1998:34).

Snoek, Godefridius J. C. *Medieval Piety from Relics to the Eucharist; A process of mutual interaction*. Leiden, New York, Köln: E. J. Brill, 1995.

Soja, Edward W. *Thirdspace. Journeys to Los Angeles and other real-and-imagined places*. Malden USA and Oxford UK: Blackwell, 1996.

Sonesson, Göran. "Action becoming Art: 'Performance' in the context of Theatre, Play Ritual – and Life". *Visio: revue internationale de sémiotique visuelle*, 5/3 autumn (2000):105-120.

SOU 2000:6, 1.2.1.

STOKK's Hjemmeside [Online], "Kaknas2", (Copyright: Stockholms Kennelklubb, 1997-2003), retrieved 18 Dec. 2003, URL <http://www.stokk.skk.se/Kaknas2.html>.

Ståhl, Lars-Henrik. "*(-)* Den utpekande gesten". *Tre texter om förskjutningens estetik*, akademisk avhandling för avläggande av doktorsexamen vid tekniska fakulteten vid Lunds Universitet, Sektionen för arkitektur, Avdelningen för formlära. Lund: KF-Sigma, 1996.

Sydsvenskan, "Hymnens band knöts i sand", söndag 8 juni 2003, Malmö C4.

Thurston, Herbert. "Relics". [Online] *The Catholic Encyclopaedia*, transcribed by Michael C. Tinkler. (Copyright: K. Knight, 2003), retrieved 21 Nov. 2003, URL <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/12734a.htm>.

Tisch School of the Arts at NYU [Online], "Performance Studies", retrieved 23 Apr. 2004, URL <http://performance.tisch.nyu.edu/page/home>.

Turner, Victor. *The forest of symbols: aspects of Ndembu ritual*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1970. [First published in 1967.]

Turner, Victor. *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure*. New York: Aldine de Gruyter, 1997. [First published in 1969.]

Turner, Victor. *Dramas, Fields and Metaphors: Symbolic Action in Human Society*. Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1974.

Turner, Victor, *From Ritual to Theatre: The Human Seriousness of Play*. New York: Performing Arts Journal Publications, 1982.

Uddenberg, Nils. "Vad tänker vi om djuren?". *Världsbild och mening; En empirisk studie av livsåskådningar i dagens Sverige*, red. Carl Reinhold Bråkenhielm. Nya Doxa, 2001.

Vossius, Gerhardus Johannes. *Elementa rhetorica eller retorikens grunder*, Meddelanden, Litteraturvetenskapliga institutionen, Göteborgs universitet, 5, översatt och utgiven av Stina Hansson. Göteborg: Litteraturvetenskapliga institutionen, Göteborgs Universitet, 1990.

Wadsjö, Harald. *Kyrkogårdskonst: avbildningar från äldre Svenska kyrkogårdar*. Stockholm, 1919.

Wadsjö, Harald. *Gravkonst*. Lund: Samfundet för hembygdsvård, 1930.

Walker, George Alfred. *Gatherings from Grave Yards*. Kila, MT, USA: Kessinger Publishing, 2003. [First published in 1839.]

Walker, Marshall. "Hearing the individual voice: identity on early Christian sarcophagi of late antiquity". [Online] *Creating Identities*, abstracts, retrieved 27 Oct. 2003, URL <http://www.rodrun.de/creating-identities/Abstracts.pdf>.

Wall, Bruno. *Gravskick i förändring, tradition och visioner*. Svenska kyrkans Församlingsförbund, 2002.

Ward, Graham. *Cities of God*. London: Routledge, 2000.

Westerdahl, Maria. *Den Svenska Skogskyrkogården, en bild från norr till söder*, Stad och land, 136. Alnarp: Movium, 1995.

White, Hayden. *Tropics of Discourse: Essays in Cultural Criticism*. Baltimore & London: the Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987. [First published in 1978.]

Whiting, Jerry. "Descansos – roadside memorials for traffic victims". [Online] *Descansos, roadside memorials and crosses*, retrieved 10 May 2004, URL <http://www.jetcityorange.com/descansos/>.

Whiting, Jerry. "RE: RE: Image of roadside memorial". [Personal e-mail], received 21 May, 2004.

Åhrén, Snickare Eva. *Döden, kroppen och moderniteten*. Linköping Studies in Arts and Science, 249. Stockholm: Carlsson, 2002.

Åkesson, Lynn. *Mellan levande och döda: föreställningar om kropp och ritual*. Stockholm: Natur och Kultur: Forskningsrådsnämnden, 1997.

Övden, Oscar. *Eldbegängelserörelsen*, Studentföreningen Verdandis småskrifter, 326. Stockholm, 1928.

Övden, Oscar. *Eldbegängelsens historia i Sverige: fem årtionden svensk eldbegängelserörelse 1882 - 1932*, utgiven på uppdrag av Svenska eldbegängelseföreningen. Stockholm, 1932.

Images

Cover image

Kotënko, Artëm. *Portrait of Oscar as St. Christopher Cynocephalus*, 2000.

Descanso

Whiting, Jerry. *Malvern.*

Dogman

Deardorff, Daniel. *Dogman*. Copyright: Daniel Deardorff, 2001-2004.