1. Introduction: continuity, change, and contestation in urban deathscapes

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Places associated with death, dying, and the dead are all around us. When traversing a city, we might pass funeral homes, cemeteries, and crematoria, often distinctively marked by large parking lots and in some cases centuries' old greenery. While driving or cycling, we might pass roadside or war memorials: places once publicly associated with death, now marked by home-made or officially dedicated and designed memorial signs. When travelling on public transport, we might be sitting next to a person who honours a deceased loved one by carrying their briefcase, listening to their favourite music, or wearing a piece of jewellery or clothing associated with the departed. When reading a newspaper, we might stop at the page with death notifications, looking for familiar names. When browsing the Internet, we might come across Facebook and other social media pages of those who have passed, and when playing virtual reality games, we might meet avatars of those who have left the offline world but are still living on in the virtual.

Places associated with death, dying, and the dead are thus plentiful. We are continuously surrounded by sites of death in ways that are visible and invisible, expected and unexpected, constant and constantly changing. The Covid-19 global pandemic has brought death and the dead even closer to our day-to-day lives, with daily death tolls dominating the national news, stories of private mourning brought to our constant attention, and cemeteries in particularly urban settings taking on new or changed importance for bereavement, leisure and other purposes (e.g., Alexis-Martin, 2020; Maddrell, 2020; Mathijssen et al., 2020; Pentaris, 2021; Peterson, 2022). All these places are characterised by power and politics, commercialisation and capitalism, and tradition and modernisation. In line with our mentalities towards death (i.e., our attitudes towards death; see Jacobsen, 2016, 2021; Walter, 2019), they range from the intimately private to the collectively public, and from the hidden to the spectacular. These many different spaces make us aware that death is anything but sequestered from everyday life – if only we know how and where to look. This is perhaps especially so in urban contexts, where land scarcity and population

pressures bring places to live, work, play, and mourn in close proximity to each other.

Over a decade ago, geographers Avril Maddrell and James Sidaway (2010) published the edited volume *Deathscapes: Spaces for Death, Dying, Mourning and Remembrance*. In it, they described and analysed spaces for death, dying and the dead as material, representational, and "more-than-representational." Since then, a greater awareness of the prevalence of deathscapes in our everyday lives, as well as in extraordinary time-spaces of war, disaster, and pandemics, has resulted in a significant and growing body of scholarship on the topic, which pushes beyond its original remit of deathscapes in the European context,[1] and which delves even deeper into the growing prevalence of digital deathscapes.[2] As Maddrell (2020, p. 171) argues elsewhere, "Current scholarship on deathscapes explores a wide range of nuanced human embodied experiences, meanings and practices, spatialities, historic landscapes, and contemporary trends, as well as political, industrial, and environmental responsibilities, and culpabilities." This present edited volume builds on this growing scholarship and contributes to the growing multi- and inter-disciplinary fields of death studies and urban studies.

In this volume, we bring together international perspectives on deathscapes, including chapters from Japan, Singapore, Namibia, Luxembourg, the United Kingdom, North-West Europe, Denmark, Mexico, and Peru. The volume is primarily focused on contemporary developments and challenges. The research the chapters draw upon has been conducted in the past ten years or is research still under way, making the chapters timely and the insights on the concept of deathscapes contemporary. In addition, we have chosen an urban focus in the examination of these deathscapes. Not only does the urban provide the setting in which the deathscapes are located; the deathscapes themselves are shaped by these particular urban contexts. As zones of encounter they influence, and are influenced by increasing global migration, population density, land scarcity, and other urban phenomena. Focusing on contemporary research done in cities in diverse locations in the world, this volume highlights new urban and cultural trends, such as international and national migration patterns, postcolonial legacies, technological advancements, evolving relations between the human and the non-human, developments in molecular science, and other changes shaping social and cultural urban landscapes across the globe.

This volume is the result of two related events, which, due to the particular times we live in, both took place online: a workshop on death in urban spaces held in June 2020, and a panel at the multidisciplinary 2020 RAI/RGS-IBG event in September 2020. While there are disadvantages of not holding panels in person, the virtual events made it possible to discuss the topic of urban deathscapes with worldwide contributors, and we are proud to bring together a selection of these scholars in this book.[3] The international perspective also

enables a better understanding of the particularities and similarities between deathscapes in different settings and has helped to identify emerging trends and issues. As the chapters show, deathscapes (both conceptual and material) are evolving, pushing the boundaries of what we currently know about them and about local societies' relations to them. This is elaborated on in the Afterword to this volume.

All contributors to this book have a background in geography or anthropology, and the chapters consequently reflect this, offering people- and place-centred insights into urban deathscapes. In recent decades research in these disciplines has been converging, contributing to a rich field of multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary death studies.[4] Bringing geographic and anthropological outlooks on death, disposition, and remembrance in complex urban contexts together, this book brings forward the varied continuities, changes, and contestations in how people experience, think about, plan for, and memorialise death within complex entanglements of urban life. Taken together, the chapters are not only a collection of experiences from around the globe, but also of international change.

THE URBAN

The focus in this volume is on deathscapes that are located in and marked by the urban. It is our hope that this volume therefore not only contributes to our understandings of deathscapes, but also of cities and lives therein. Societies worldwide are urbanising at an unprecedented speed. It is predicted that by 2050 almost 70 per cent of the world's population will live in urban contexts (UN DESA, 2019). Such urban centres are often marked by significant historical, social and political events, and studies on urban life, urban identities, and urban practices have therefore not been scarce. One question in urban studies is how the city relates to its international, national, and non-urban surroundings. For example, Saskia Sassen (1992) famously noted how processes of urban growth and transnational migration, together with other aspects of globalisation, have contributed to configuring cities as social entities in their own rights that are often markedly distinct from surrounding nation states, while George Gmelch and Petra Kuppinger (2018) argued that the city is a vital part of broader transitional and global systems. Others, such as Marian Burchardt and Stefan Höhne (2015), describe cities as "infrastructures of diversity," wherein continuous social and cultural changes lead to a "reimagination and the creation of new concepts that influence the political, social and spiritual life not only of their urban inhabitants but also, as new trends of thought are carried to the urban peripheries, of rural dwellers" (Westendorp, Remmert & Finis, 2021, p. 1).

Our focus on the urban requires us to in some way define the 'urban.' The concept has been defined by scholars in manifold ways, starting from the Chicago School of Sociology to recent subfields such as urban anthropology, urban geography, and urban sociology. Regardless, a definitive definition of the concept has never been given, one of the main reasons being that a city does not only exist as objective physical landscape, but also as a collective imagination (Irving, 2004). The rural and urban cannot be easily separated, as customs and institutions constantly transcend such ideal types, connecting the rural and the urban in steady flows of people, ideas, technologies, information and goods (Gmelch & Kuppinger, 2018; Inda & Rosaldo, 2008; Jensen, 2006; Nonini, 2014). Consequently, instead of giving definitions of the 'urban,' urban scholars have opted to give different images of the city, such as the contested, creative, divided, de-industrialised, ethnic, gendered, modernist, postmodern, post-secular, traditional, sacred, smart, supranational, and sustainable city, to name only a few.[5]

Studies of the city and urban life have a long history in both cultural anthropology and geography. Urban anthropology has its focus on how individuals and communities are integrated in the fabrics of urban life and relate to larger socio-economic and political processes and realities. The subdiscipline of urban anthropology started roughly in the 1970s, reflecting the worldwide movement of people from the rural to the urban, and the development of cities in postcolonial environments. At first, the focus was mainly on the intersections between urbanism, urbanisation and urban poverty, taking the marginalised in cities as the main research focus (e.g., Fox, 1977). From the 1980s onwards, urban anthropology became more vibrant, and widened its focus to developing a better understanding of urban policy and urban processes, leading at one and the same time to more systematic and methodological overviews of anthropology in the city.[6] Although coming relatively late to the field of exploring urban life (Brettell, 2000), today an increasing number of anthropologists carry out research in cities, including Western cities, recognising the importance of cities as "hubs of cultural and ethnic interaction as well as challenging settings for future sustainable development" (Pardo, Prato & Kaltenbacher, 2018).

The geographic study of the city evolved earlier, with the subdiscipline of urban geography inspired by and emerging from the Chicago School of Sociology in the late 1950s. The original focus of the field was on positivist and quantitative understandings of cities, to analyse and understand social patterns and behaviours in urban environments, neighbourhood change and urban expansion, land zones, population change, and urban infrastructures, to name a few. The cultural turn in the wider discipline in the 1990s also broadened the focus of urban geography, to explore questions of race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, and everyday life, as well as the interconnectedness of urban environments (Lees, 2002; Soja, 1999). Writers like Ash Amin, Nigel

Thrift (Amin & Thrift, 2002), Doreen Massey (1994, 2005) and Edward Soja (1996) led this turn, which has continued to develop since (Jonas, McCann & Thomas, 2015). However, the study of death, dying, and remembrance has for a large part been side-lined in the field of urban geography, although important work has drawn attention to this blind spot for some time now, usually based in interdisciplinary studies of urban geography, planning, cultural geography, and death studies (Bowlby et al., 2021; Jedan, Maddrell & Venbrux, 2018; Maddrell, 2016; Maddrell & Sidaway, 2010).

In this volume, we opt to understand the urban as having defining characteristics, which set it apart from and in comparison to rural areas, and which are particular to the contemporary time in which this volume is published. We understand urban contexts to be nodes in extensive transnational networks. They are marked by a high degree of variation and interaction between people, ideas, and goods. Cities are fundamentally characterised by a diversity in people, professions, lifestyles, and many more. More than in rural areas, these diversities lead to innovations and transformations, for example, relating to technology, social relations, culture, religion and, central to this volume, ways of remembrance and mourning. However, they can also lead to a plethora of issues and contestations which can be seen reflected in the ways in which people deal with death. These issues relate to growing urban multiculturalism and multi-religiousness, urban population density and pressures on land use, increasing inequalities, uncertainties and unhappiness, and political changes.

These characteristics do not only have consequences for how lives in these urban areas are constructed, but equally for how dying and death are dealt with. This volume therefore results from an acknowledgement of the intricate relation between death and urban space. Higher population densities urge us to find more space-efficient solutions for the disposal and remembrance of the dead, spaces for death and disposal are increasingly present alongside living quarters, and growing inequalities and multiculturalism require often sacred traditions to be flexible and negotiated. Cities are places marked by economic and social inequality and violence, where diseases sweep easily. At the same time, they are the locations where such problems are most often addressed and combatted (Hassett, 2017). Focusing on deathscapes in urban contexts highlights these intricate relationships.

NEW PERSPECTIVES ON URBAN DEATHSCAPES

The concept of deathscapes (Kong, 1999; Teather, 2001) follows Arjun Appadurai's (1996) conceptualisation of 'scapes' as global dimensions of cultural flows. In their publication, Maddrell and Sidaway (2010, p. 4) define deathscapes as varied and interrelated "places associated with death and for the dead" and investigate how these places are imbued with diverse meanings

and associations. For them, deathscapes include spaces for the disposal of, and caring for the dead, spaces of death and dying, and spaces of remembrance. These "landscapes of sentiment" (Kong & Yeoh, 2003a) are often symbolic, highly political and politicised, performative, subjective, and permeated with multiple and at times contested meanings. Other scholars equally emphasise how deathscapes encompass a diverse range of spatial contexts and material culture through which individuals and communities bring meaning to their senses of death (Davies, 2017; see also Davies, 2005; Hockey, Komaromy & Woodthorpe, 2010).

In their volume, Maddrell and Sidaway (2010) explore the variety of spaces associated with death: deathscapes can be material places associated with death, disposition, and remembrance; physical, embodied spaces of experience and expression of dying, bereavement, and remembrance; and nonmaterial virtual spaces, exemplified by online memorialisation, bereavement blogs, and virtual counselling communities. Building on this place-centred approach to equally prioritise people and embodied experiences, in this volume we regard deathscapes as places endowed with meaning and significance, particularly to the people who associate them with death and remembrance. In these spaces, the living undertake various forms of performance and embodied practice in relation to the dead (Young & Light, 2013). These performances and relations are subjective and can change from person to person and with time. Deathscapes are therefore spaces that are inscribed with meanings related to death, dying, and remembrance, and as such can exist anywhere and anytime.

As meaning-full places (or: places filled with meaning), deathscapes offer a window into people's experiences of death, making sense of death, and materialisation of death, and the absence-presence experience of the bereaved (Maddrell, 2012). The "sustained performance and inscription of remembrance in public space" (Maddrell & Sidaway 2010, p. 3) materialises memory and emotion. As such, deathscapes carry manifold meanings imprinted by the identity of the deceased, by those who express their remembrance of the deceased, by the cultural norms of death, and by social and institutional expectations surrounding memorialisation (Hartig & Dunn, 1998). These spaces express contemporary ideas of respectful and dignified dispersal and remembrance; spaces which not only impact the dead, but also the living. As such, deathscapes are as much about the living as they are about the dead. Allan Amakin and Kami Fletcher (2020) have, for example, indicated how cemeteries are intrinsically related to issues of race, faith, and ethnicity, and in the Singaporean context, Lily Kong and Brenda Yeoh (2003b) and Hamzah Muzaini and Yeoh (2007) relate cemeteries to colonialism and postcolonial nationalism.

Cemeteries and crematoria are the epitomic sites of death disposal, bereavement and remembrance. Here, the connection between the deceased and the bereaved produces emotional geographies (Maddrell & Sidaway, 2010), which

are at one and the same time personal and collective, private and institutional (see also Hartig & Dunn, 1998 on roadside memorials). Most chapters in this volume deal with these more 'obvious' deathscapes, such as cemeteries, crematoria, and funeral homes. Contributors, however, move beyond seeing these sites as spaces for and of the dead by foregrounding new and marginalised perspectives. Across the chapters there is a recognition that these bounded spaces are in fact permeable, dynamic, and linked to wider spatialities, social relations, and cultural practices. Chapter authors focus on these varied spaces from international, contemporary, and urban perspectives, resulting in the decentring of Western norms. The chapters will therefore broaden our scholarly understanding of the meanings and uses behind these 'obvious' or 'typical' spaces of death.

At the same time, deathscapes surpass these obvious marked sites of death and bereavement. They can include sites such as hospitals and retirement homes, museums, a loved one's home, natural settings, a Facebook page, photo album, and many other places, both in 'real' life and online, that are associated with death (Maddrell, 2012, 2016). But they can also be more intangible: spaces that are not inherently related to death but become related to death by the practices of the living, such as particular public spaces, personal homes, and individual bodies. Regulations, rituals, and emotions imprinted on these sites change their role and significance, marking the place and making it in a sense 'sacred'. In other words: death and bereavement are intensified at certain sites (such as the regulated spaces of the hospital, the cemetery, and the mortuary) but affect and unfold in many others: the home, neighbourhoods, public spaces, places of worship, and sites of accidents, tragedy, and violence.

Bringing together different empirical understandings of death with a focus on urban deathscapes, this book brings forward three insights. First, each urban deathscape is produced and constructed by multiple actors. Urban contexts bring a proliferation of different actors together in relatively confined spaces, including stakeholders (those communities, organisations, and individuals who make decisions about the spaces and manage them accordingly through explicit regulations or implicit unwritten rules and social norms, as well as aesthetic preferences), and users (those who visit the space, and deal with death in the space in communal and/or individual ways). These actors use, perceive, and experience spaces of death in different ways, leading to continuities, changes and contestations. Moreover, apart from the different functions these actors hold in spaces associated with death, each one of them has an intersectional identity (related to age, gender, religion, sexuality, ethnicity, etc.) which equally influences their engagements with particular deathscapes.

Second, each urban space reflects dynamic social and cultural spatial and temporal factors. The dynamics affecting deathscapes are various and include, amongst others, (post)colonialism, urbanisation, competing land demands,

migration, changing demographics and gentrification, modernisation and neo-liberalisation, commodification, (post)secularism, and (post)modernisation. Urban deathscapes are therefore nodes in global networks, and focusing on them as continuously changing spaces, not fixed but fluid, creates a detailed and open conversation about their multiple meanings.

Third, each space is influenced by certain urban 'death mentalities' (Ariès, 1974; Jacobsen, 2016, 2021; Walter, 2017, 2019), that is, the norms, cultural values, and ways in which people deal with death in and through rituals, grave culture, approaches to health and illness, and other death-related practices. These death mentalities are not only local, but also international and transnational, and they play out at macro, meso, and micro levels. Death mentalities revolve around ideas of 'doing the right thing' for the deceased and the impacts of death-related practices on the dead as well as the living. But ideas of 'proper' or 'good' death practices are not straightforward and are – like the above points – influenced by societal trends, familial and communal changes, and individual preferences, as well as the urban contexts in which the communities described in the volume find themselves.

Taking these three aspects together, we consider urban deathscapes to be physical, embodied, and virtual spaces reflecting contemporary dynamics, marked by diversities, multiplicities, and fluidities which are common to areas of high population density. In these spaces, change, contestation, and/or continuity happens, through time or simultaneously. Each of the contributors in the book reflects on these understandings and explores and unravels the dynamics of these in the locations and communities they are researching from, enhancing our understanding of urban deathscapes.

SOCIO-POLITICAL, FAMILIAL, AND TECHNOLOGISED CONTINUITY, CHANGE, AND CONTESTATION

Deathscapes are emotionally charged, characterised by prescriptive and hegemonic meanings and practices, and produced through the intersection of different interpretations and interests, producing contradictions and contestation (Maddrell & Sidaway, 2010; Stevenson, Kenten & Maddrell, 2016). In that sense, the idea of what is proper, to whom and by what definition are constantly negotiated, and these struggles are often visible in sites associated with death and the dead. In being so complex, deathscapes illuminate identity intersections and their role in the production of space through the interweaving of meanings (Kong, 1999). Race, ethnicity, religion, gender, and class are but some of the markers carrying countless value systems that are reinforced and challenged upon death and memorialisation.

These multiple interpretations come strongly to the fore in the nine ethnographic chapters of this volume. The chapters are divided into three sections highlighting distinct aspects of contemporary urban deathscapes: the socio-political, the familial, and the technologised. Part I (Socio-political deathscapes) deals with negotiations between the politics behind and lived experiences of deathscapes. It ranges from state politics and cemetery management to the micro-politics of communities and individual aspirations. In Chapter 3 on Bukit Brown Cemetery in urban Singapore, See Mieng Tan and Benedict Yeo lay bare the political contestations surrounding the mentioned gravesite in favour of Singapore's national development endeavours. The cemetery, which holds over 100,000 tombs, is located in the middle of Singapore, and stretches over 86 hectares of valuable land. As a city state with constant anxiety over land scarcity, space in Singapore is tightly controlled and planned for by the state. The cemetery is seen as contradictory to the modernist agenda of the Singaporean government, as it limits options for the development of infrastructure and public housing, needed for (economic) development. Plans for the future development of the cemetery spark the interest of different local activist groups, who advocate for the preservation of the cemetery for kinship, heritage, and nature reasons. What is clearly shown in the chapter is that deathscapes have no singular narrative to tell. Rather, their histories and (political) contemporary account are multiple and diverse, relating to different actors and interest groups, including the state.

Similar contestations and socio-political and economic multiplicities are brought to light by Christien Klaufus in her description of life and death at Lima's semi-formal metropolitan cemeteries (Chapter 2). Lima, as other Latin American urban centres, has a large number of urban cemeteries, many of which are neither officially sanctioned nor controlled by the government. These deathscapes have grown out of the failure of the Peruvian government to provide affordable and sufficient burial spaces, especially for vulnerable urbanites. According to Klaufus, these cemeteries can be described as "self-constructed, co-created, and co-managed burial deathscapes conceptually scaled between not-fully-formal and 'clandestine'." While acknowledged by the municipality, the cemeteries are regarded as unstructured, chaotic, and dangerous. At the same time, they are popular among tourists, local residents, vendors, and other daily 'users,' who come to the cemetery to materialise and ritualise their beliefs and/or make a living, thereby combining dimensions of the spiritual and material. To capture this complexity, Klaufus argues for the importance of using an "assemblage approach" when studying deathscapes. Such an approach will lay bare the many narratives surrounding deathscapes, including narratives that highlight the mundane and unspectacular.

In Chapter 4 by Katie McClymont, Yasminah Beebeejaun, Avril Maddrell, Brenda Mathijssen, Danny McNally, and Sufyan Dogra, deathscapes (in this

case: cemeteries and crematoria) are explored as important sites of belonging and home. The chapter links the first and second section of this edited volume nicely together, by showing how deathscapes are at one and the same time part of and influenced by the socio-cultural context, as well as familial and community relations and identities. Based on research in four small cities in England and Wales (Huddersfield, Northampton, Swindon, and Newport), McClymont et al. indicate how cemeteries and crematoria are shaped by majority cultural and political ideas and practices, relating this to the inclusion and/or exclusion of those of minority ethnic or faith backgrounds. At the same time, individuals with such a background relate to the deathscapes in personal and communal ways, often linking their belonging to these spaces to ideas of 'home.' The chapter shows evidence of shifting boundaries of the postcolonial 'state,' as well as the possibility offered by deathscapes to create a sense of belonging to such state, in the past, present, and future.

Part II (Familial deathscapes) shows how deathscapes are at the nexus of a diverse variety of communities, ranging from extended families and families spanning across multiple generations, to transnational (religious) families. Moving from the political to the familial, Elisabeth Boesen's chapter on Cape Verdean mourning rituals in Luxembourg highlights that deathscapes are not only fixed parts of the public sphere, but can also be intimate as well as evolving and temporary (Chapter 5). By focusing on the familial and communal, deathscapes are seen to transgress boundaries between the public and private, between the global and the local, between tradition and modernity, and between the sacred and the mundane. What is most clearly highlighted is the permeability of deathscapes with other domains of life. The lavishly decorated graves of Cape Verdean migrants stand out in contrast to the restrained aesthetics of orderliness of Luxembourgish cemeteries. However, for Cape Verdeans, deathscapes extend to the confines of individuals' homes, and larger apartment buildings and neighbourhoods surrounding those homes. Focusing on these intimate sites, Boesen claims that "death transforms private space into public space."

Jack Boulton's chapter aims for the reverse: he shows how public space can be transformed into private space. He focuses on familial and communal aspects of a space that is only related to death by those who know its historical and contemporary narratives. In Chapter 6, Boulton describes a particular jetty extending from Swakopmund, a coastal city in Namibia. This jetty is historically and contemporarily related to death in multifaceted ways. Its death character began during the whaling industry, extended during the colonial era and Herero-Nama war (1904–08), and now relates to the many suicides taking place from the end of the jetty. However, the jetty is also a place for tourists to come, stroll, and enjoy food at its restaurants, clearly marking the multisidedness of this public scape. Because of this multisidedness, different

actors revolve around the jetty, from humans to ghosts, witches, demons, and ancestors – all coming together into one 'family.' Interestingly, Boulton argues the jetty is hence more than its materiality: it is a more-than-human deathscape that incorporates the spiritual and other-worldly.

While Boulton's chapter extends into the realms of the other-worldly and more-than-human, Chapter 7 by Danielle House, Mariske Westendorp, Vevila Dornelles, Helena Nordh, and Farjana Islam extends the local by focusing on the translocality of deathscapes. In their chapter, the emphasis is on the conversations held at European cemeteries between cemetery managers and Muslims, who wish for the bodies of themselves and their loved ones to be buried according to Islamic principles and norms. Focusing on a sense of belonging in death and the materiality of graves and cemeteries, the authors argue for a better understanding of the heterogeneity of the 'Muslim experience' in north-western European communities. While all expressing a belonging to the transnational 'family' of Islam, Muslims materialise death in different, individualised ways, something cemetery managers do not always consider in the planning and organising of Islamic cemetery sections. Similar to the other chapters in this section, the chapter highlights how deathscapes are continuously co-produced by a multitude of factors, actors, and policies.

Part III of the volume (Technologised deathscapes) details the *technologised* character of contemporary urban deathscapes. This technology stretches both the multisensory experience of death, as well as our understanding of death and our relation to the deceased. In Chapter 8, Anne Allison details how urban challenges in Tokyo have led to a "mechanical grievability," meaning a technological re-design of the family grave and visitation system by the so-called 'ending business.' In urban Tokyo, where both land and time are scarce, technological innovation, mirroring Toyotism and its 'just-in-time' production style, has infiltrated memorial practices. The ageing and socially fragmented population of the city is no longer capable of upholding traditional mourning rituals, and hence looks to technology to fill some of the ritual gaps, in order to prevent those without local family becoming disconnected souls. In the end, technology here works as a "social prosthetic," taking over and filling in the symbolism of the traditional grave. In this way, an ontological entanglement between humans and machines arises.

Such a more-than-human entanglement is also described by Eimear Mc Loughlin in Chapter 9, although in relation to animals. Much like Klaufus' chapter, Mc Loughlin argues how death and our mentality to it has become unspectacular, in this case through its mechanisation. Or rather: in the spectacle of death, we have become witnesses, making death at once spectacular and unspectacular. At an industrial slaughterhouse in Denmark, death is on display for all who are interested in facing the so-called truth of meat production. However, what appears to be transparent is in fact an experience closely

narrated by tour guides, leading visitors in their interpretations and understandings of the production line they are witnessing. Mc Loughlin demonstrates how the sensory disrupts this, and how through the smells and sounds of industrialised porcine production the non-human other comes close to us and its death grievable.

The sensory also plays a crucial role in the last chapter, written by Arely Cruz-Santiago. Chapter 10 details the many invisible and unacknowledged murders and disappeared persons in present-day Mexican society. Family members of these disappeared search for remains of their loved ones, forming a "forensic citizenship." In practices of biorecuperation, corpses and digital technologies come together. Yet in Mexico City this process is incomplete leading to a vast array of unnamed corpses and unidentified DNA material. In the absence of a body to mourn, alternatives are created with the help of technology. These technologies fill the space for mourning and remembrance, indicating that deathscapes persist, even if the body is absent, and that a focal point is always necessary for grieving processes. As Cruz-Santiago shows, molecular DNA, situated in a liminal space between family members that can bring material presence to disappeared persons, can be sonified: the DNA of the disappeared transformed into music which can be listened to, celebrated and commemorated.

CONTINUITY, CHANGE, AND CONTESTATION IN URBAN DEATHSCAPES

Taking the nine chapters together, it is our hope that our focus on deathscapes in international urban settings will offer a new set of perspectives on the personal, communal, governmental, social, economic, and technological negotiations surrounding death and the place(s) of and for the dead. Through ethnographic, visual and other qualitative approaches the chapters in this volume reveal the outcomes of such negotiations. At times, the negotiations lead to wider *changes* in trends, practices, and politics. For example, Anne Allison shows how increasing urban density and changing urban lifestyles lead to changing death rituals, where mortuary care has become automated and fitting within fast-paced and individual routines. Danielle House and her co-authors describe changes in death memorialisation from the perspectives of users and stakeholders in instances when different actors come together on a small piece of land. Jack Boulton relates suicide to changes in how death is experienced, contextualising it historically and contemporarily. More generally, Eimear Mc Loughlin and Christien Klaufus delve into changes related to death at large, especially our modern attitudes towards death as hidden or (un)spectacular. Similarly, Arely Cruz-Santiago shows us how death intersects with technological changes.

At other times, *contestations* arise as alternate norms and values intersect and at times conflict with dominant and/or assumed practices for death. This includes specific urban contexts and issues; for example, demand and value of land, urban 'territories,' public space, and social-cultural 'churn,' a result of the "throwntogetherness" (Massey, 2005) of urban populations, including migrants and minorities, as explained in the chapter by Katie McClymont et al. The clearest contestation comes forth from the chapter by See Mieng Tan and Benedict Yeo, when they describe different perspectives on the future of a particular cemetery, related to contesting values of infrastructure development versus heritage protection. Christien Klaufus describes a somewhat similar contestation between different actors, albeit from a more micro-political perspective. Lastly, Elisabeth Boesen shows how contestations do not only take place at cemeteries, but also at apartment buildings, and perhaps even within homes and families. Contestations also arise in terms of exclusion and relate to questions of who are mourned or not, as Anne Allison, Jack Boulton and Eimear Mc Loughlin describe.

Regardless of the changes and/or contestations, what all the chapters show is a sense of the *continuities* in how memorialisation and bereavement practices are experienced, used, managed, described, marketed, and so on. Regardless of changing or competing rituals, a sense of continuity with 'the ways in which it has always been done' or with the values behind rituals and practices remains. House et al., Allison, and Boesen all describe how rituals and practices are negotiated in new and developing contexts, in which ideas of 'good' practices are held onto despite of changed circumstances. In some sense, Mc Loughlin also describes the value of holding on to 'how it is supposed to be done', in this case how the death of an animal should feel and be experienced by both the animal and the onlooker. Regardless of changing urban infrastructures and materialities, continuous relations and communities with the dead, as continuing bonds, exist and are emphasised. Cruz-Santiago describes the continuous need of family members to communicate with the disappeared, and Klaufus shows how continuing bonds are upheld in daily practices at Peruvian cemeteries. And, regardless of different meanings ascribed to people, places, and practices, narratives keep redirecting attention to the past, thereby relating the past to the present and the future. This past is one marked by colonialism, ideas of heritage, spirituality, and identity politics, as Boulton, Tan and Yeo, and McClymont et al. describe.

Taking these insights together, the chapters in this book show us how urban deathscapes, all around the world, are as much signs of the times as they are of tradition, and as much part of their specific locales as of the world at large.

NOTES

1. e.g., Heng, 2020; Hunter, 2013; Jammes & Shuai, 2020; Jeychandran, 2020; Klaufus, 2014, 2015; Mullaney et al., 2019; Rusu, 2017, 2020; Seo & Park, 2014.
2. e.g., Arnold et al., 2017; Cann, 2014; Eason, 2019; Perera & Pugliese, 2021; Han, 2019; Kasket, 2012a, 2012b; Maddrell, 2012; Murrell, Jamie & Penfold-Mounce, 2021; Roberts, 2012.
3. Arba Bekteshi, Michelangelo Giampaoli, Pavel Grabalov, LaShaya Howie, Nirali Joshi, Janine Marriott, Saskya Tschebann and Bo Wang also participated in either or both of the events. We are grateful for their input during these events. Some of their work has been published or will be published elsewhere (e.g., Grabalov, 2018; Grabalov & Nordh, 2020, 2022; Howie, 2022).
4. e.g., Anderson et al., 2010; Beebeejaun et al., 2021; Cannell, 2013; Das & Han, 2015; Graham, 2017; Hallam & Hockey, 2001; Kong, 1999, 2012; Lopez & Gillespie, 2015; Jedan et al., 2018; Maddrell et al., 2018, 2021; Mathijssen, 2017, 2018; McClymont, 2016, 2018; Morin, 2018; Nordh et al., 2021; Rugg, 2006, 2020; Venbrux et al., 2013; Westendorp & Gould, 2021; Woodthorpe, 2012.
5. e.g., Beaumont & Baker, 2011; Haarstad, 2016; Hatuka, 2018; Holston, 1989; Low, 1996, 2020; Rapport, 2020.
6. e.g., Hannerz, 1980; Jaffe & De Koning, 2018; Krase, 2017; Kuppinger, 2021; Leeds, 1994; Low, 1996, 2020; Pardo & Prato, 2012, 2021.

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