



## IN PASSING

*The cemetery as a temporal bridge between physical life and symbolic death*

**[Figure 0.0.1]** (front and back cover photo)  
Brion cemetery, detail of weathered  
concrete, photo by Jens Kristian Seier,  
2012, courtesy of Flickr, cover design by  
author

IN PASSING

*The cemetery as a temporal bridge between physical life and  
symbolic death*

AR2A011 History Thesis

Yasemin Parlar 5284007

Supervisor: Sabina Tanović  
TU Delft Faculty of Architecture and the Built Environment

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Contents

6	ABSTRACT
7	METHODOLOGY
	RESEARCH METHODS
9	INTRODUCTION
11	INTEREST
12	BACKGROUND
15	APPROACH
19	TIMES OF PASSAGE
23	MEMORIES PAST
31	ENCOUNTERING MOMENTS
39	REMINISCING TOMORROW
47	REFLECTIONS
52	REFERENCES
54	LIST OF FIGURES
59	APPENDIX



### Abstract

This thesis will examine how time-based design features in funerary architecture are manifested as architectural narratives, focusing on the experience of the visitor as they pass through the space. Accepting the transition period, from Arnold van Gennep's Rites of Passage, as the most prominent of the funerary rites, temporal elements in architecture for death take on a significant role to determine the experience of the visitors. These temporal elements guide the visitor's spiritual journey through the various stages of transition.

Through the analysis of a selection of case studies that all use time as a medium in their architectural elements, this thesis will attempt to reveal the entangled relationships between the passage of time and the visitor's self-reflection. The focus on a temporal approach will be used to understand how the episodic fragments of the architecture are unified into one symbolic transitory space. The research will, therefore, examine how the use of symbolism and metaphors of death and transition from one realm to the other translates into poetic architecture that orchestrates the experience of the visitor often in a sequential manner.

[Figure 0.0.2] Brion cemetery, entrance propylaeum with overgrown vegetation, photo by author, 2017

### Methodology

The research consists of analysis of primary and secondary literature. Primary literature consists of drawings, models, photographs of a selection of case studies. Secondary literature consists of literature about specific case studies and theoretical and historical sources about funerary rituals in different cultures.

Jacque Lacan's theories on the Mirror Stage and Martin Heidegger's theory on Dasein will be used to guide the analysis of the case studies to reveal the fundamental questions that temporalities in the architecture raise about existence and the formation of the Self. Other key references include: "Temporal Cues in Built Environments" by Kevin Nute and Zhuo Job Chen, "Time as a Medium: Early Work of Miralles" by Philip Speranza, "Passages in the Garden: An Iconology of the Brion Tomb" by Michael A. Stern among others.

Case studies focus on projects that use design strategies to inform the experience of time passing to orchestrate the transitional rites of both the living and the dead.

- Brion Cemetery, Carlo Scarpa
- Igualada Cemetery, Enric Miralles and Carme Pinós
- Extension of Gubbio Cemetery, Andrea Dragoni and Francesco Pes

### Research methods

The paper describes the allusion to the distinct time periods of the past, present, and future in funerary architecture in three parts. The analysis is focused on the experience of the visitor as they pass through the architecture.

The temporal elements in the case studies are analyzed using the psychoanalytic theories of Jacque Lacan and Martin Heidegger to understand the relationship between the temporalities and the formation of the Self of the visitor.

### Key words

*Temporality, time, transition, reflection, Self, recollection, engaging, contemplation*





## 1.0 Introduction

### 1.1 Interest

#### A very personal experience

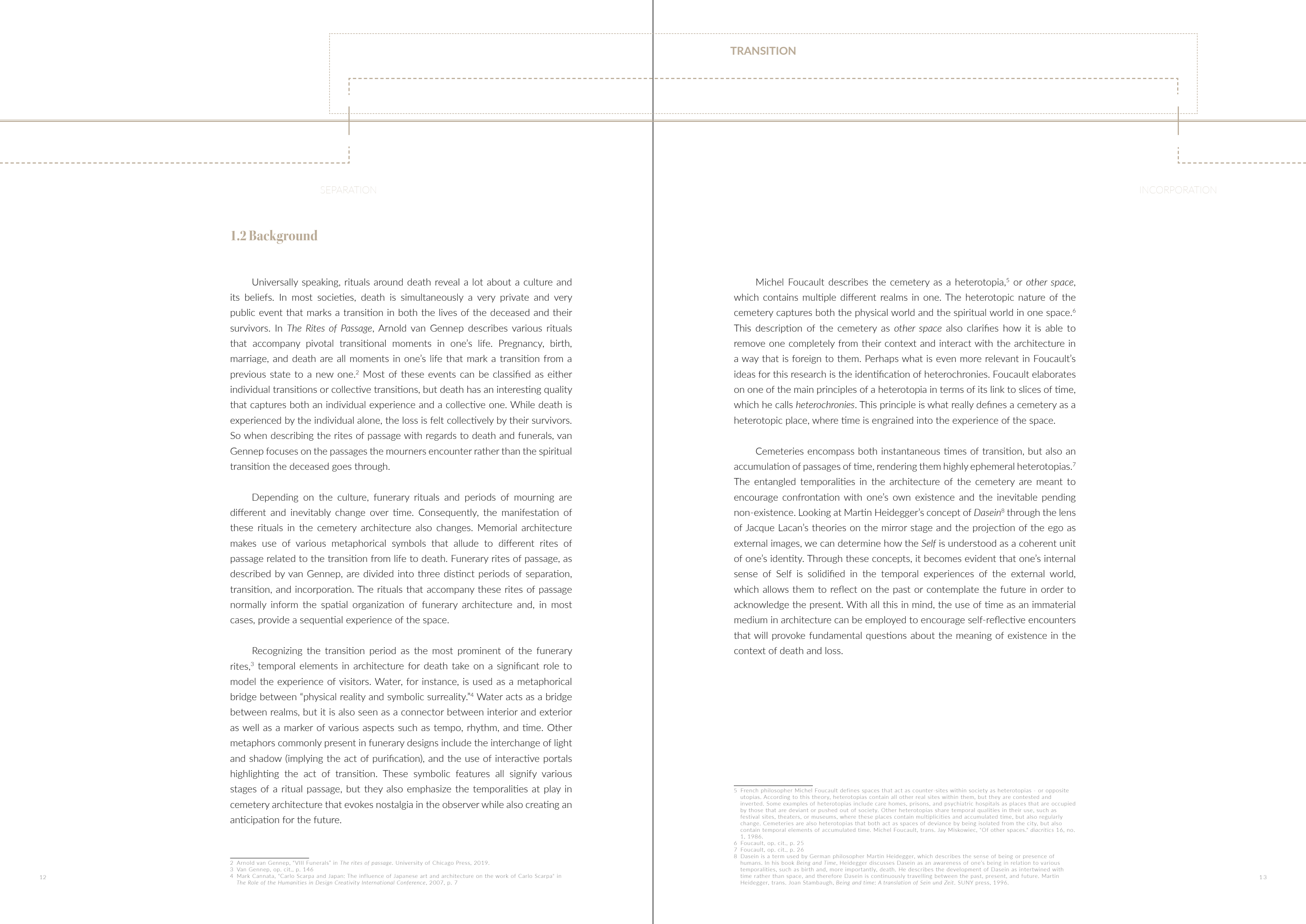
An endless repetition of cypress trees, tall and slender, almost reaching for the sky, creates a rhythmic shadow pathway leading to a concrete island surrounded by nothing but fields. Removing the visitor from their reality, this path of contemplation terminates at the first space of transition to the symbolic realm of the dead. Confronted by the choice of two possible entries, the visitor must decide which path to take to enter the Brion cemetery, by Carlo Scarpa – two alternate paths leading to two different sequential experiences. Crossing this threshold marks the beginning of a symbolic journey where the cemetery acts as a bridge between the *real* and the *imaginary*;<sup>1</sup> a poetic architecture that gives substance and materiality to the very personal and emotional experience of death, loss, and transition. Here, one experiences a change in their perception of time, where time simultaneously slows down and speeds up. The carefully crafted architecture of the space orchestrates the visitor's every movement, and guides them to walk faster or slower, take a pause, observe, reflect, and move on.

The power of that experience sparked a deep personal interest to understand the symbolic meanings behind the overall design of Carlo Scarpa's Brion cemetery (*figure 1.1.1*). In an intuitive way, the design seemingly conveys an individual experience of loss, while simultaneously driving the visitor to question the significance of their own existence. The duality of this experience was especially powerful for me as a visitor who was not commemorating a specific person or performing a funerary ritual. Visiting the cemetery as an architectural place allowed me to understand the impact of the space on me personally. Even defining myself as a visitor, a temporary occupant that passes through the space, was important to identify my role in the experience. This new perspective on the potential of cemetery architecture led me to conduct a psychoanalytic reading of architecture for memory, loss, and transition. This thesis, therefore, examines how the use of design strategies in funerary architecture, which evoke different experiences of temporality, influence processional narratives of transition from life to death.

<sup>1</sup> According to French psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan, the *imaginary* is a part of the developmental period of a child, which he defines as the *Mirror Stage*. The *imaginary* is the realm of the ego which is a pre-linguistic stage of perception that involves images. It is the first time a child perceives themselves when they see a whole image of their body in the reflection of a mirror. This external image of them as a whole unifies the fragmented parts of the ego in their mind and, for the first time, forms a sense of Self. The *imaginary* comes before the *symbolic* stage where Lacan describes consciousness as a language of signifiers and the signified. The *real* is the stage which resists symbolization. This stage is where Lacan discusses the death drive, which will be further discussed in the coming chapters. Jacques Lacan, "The mirror stage as formative of the function of the I as revealed in psychoanalytic experience, 1949" in *Jacques Lacan Écrits: The first complete edition in English*, trans. Bruce Fink, 2006.



[Figure 1.1.1] Brion cemetery, entrance to funerary chapel, photo by author, 2017



## 1.2 Background

Universally speaking, rituals around death reveal a lot about a culture and its beliefs. In most societies, death is simultaneously a very private and very public event that marks a transition in both the lives of the deceased and their survivors. In *The Rites of Passage*, Arnold van Gennep describes various rituals that accompany pivotal transitional moments in one's life. Pregnancy, birth, marriage, and death are all moments in one's life that mark a transition from a previous state to a new one.<sup>2</sup> Most of these events can be classified as either individual transitions or collective transitions, but death has an interesting quality that captures both an individual experience and a collective one. While death is experienced by the individual alone, the loss is felt collectively by their survivors. So when describing the rites of passage with regards to death and funerals, van Gennep focuses on the passages the mourners encounter rather than the spiritual transition the deceased goes through.

Depending on the culture, funerary rituals and periods of mourning are different and inevitably change over time. Consequently, the manifestation of these rituals in the cemetery architecture also changes. Memorial architecture makes use of various metaphorical symbols that allude to different rites of passage related to the transition from life to death. Funerary rites of passage, as described by van Gennep, are divided into three distinct periods of separation, transition, and incorporation. The rituals that accompany these rites of passage normally inform the spatial organization of funerary architecture and, in most cases, provide a sequential experience of the space.

Recognizing the transition period as the most prominent of the funerary rites,<sup>3</sup> temporal elements in architecture for death take on a significant role to model the experience of visitors. Water, for instance, is used as a metaphorical bridge between "physical reality and symbolic surreality."<sup>4</sup> Water acts as a bridge between realms, but it is also seen as a connector between interior and exterior as well as a marker of various aspects such as tempo, rhythm, and time. Other metaphors commonly present in funerary designs include the interchange of light and shadow (implying the act of purification), and the use of interactive portals highlighting the act of transition. These symbolic features all signify various stages of a ritual passage, but they also emphasize the temporalities at play in cemetery architecture that evokes nostalgia in the observer while also creating an anticipation for the future.

TRANSITION

INCORPORATION

Michel Foucault describes the cemetery as a heterotopia,<sup>5</sup> or *other space*, which contains multiple different realms in one. The heterotopic nature of the cemetery captures both the physical world and the spiritual world in one space.<sup>6</sup> This description of the cemetery as *other space* also clarifies how it is able to remove one completely from their context and interact with the architecture in a way that is foreign to them. Perhaps what is even more relevant in Foucault's ideas for this research is the identification of heterochronies. Foucault elaborates on one of the main principles of a heterotopia in terms of its link to slices of time, which he calls *heterochronies*. This principle is what really defines a cemetery as a heterotopic place, where time is engrained into the experience of the space.

Cemeteries encompass both instantaneous times of transition, but also an accumulation of passages of time, rendering them highly ephemeral heterotopias.<sup>7</sup> The entangled temporalities in the architecture of the cemetery are meant to encourage confrontation with one's own existence and the inevitable pending non-existence. Looking at Martin Heidegger's concept of *Dasein*<sup>8</sup> through the lens of Jacque Lacan's theories on the mirror stage and the projection of the ego as external images, we can determine how the *Self* is understood as a coherent unit of one's identity. Through these concepts, it becomes evident that one's internal sense of Self is solidified in the temporal experiences of the external world, which allows them to reflect on the past or contemplate the future in order to acknowledge the present. With all this in mind, the use of time as an immaterial medium in architecture can be employed to encourage self-reflective encounters that will provoke fundamental questions about the meaning of existence in the context of death and loss.

<sup>5</sup> French philosopher Michel Foucault defines spaces that act as counter-sites within society as heterotopias - or opposite utopias. According to this theory, heterotopias contain all other real sites within them, but they are contested and inverted. Some examples of heterotopias include care homes, prisons, and psychiatric hospitals as places that are occupied by those that are deviant or pushed out of society. Other heterotopias share temporal qualities in their use, such as festival sites, theaters, or museums, where these places contain multiplicities and accumulated time, but also regularly change. Cemeteries are also heterotopias that both act as spaces of deviance by being isolated from the city, but also contain temporal elements of accumulated time. Michel Foucault, trans. Jay Miskowicz, "Of other spaces," *diacritics* 16, no. 1, 1986.

<sup>6</sup> Foucault, op. cit., p. 25

<sup>7</sup> Foucault, op. cit., p. 26

<sup>8</sup> Dasein is a term used by German philosopher Martin Heidegger, which describes the sense of being or presence of humans. In his book *Being and Time*, Heidegger discusses Dasein as an awareness of one's being in relation to various temporalities, such as birth and, more importantly, death. He describes the development of Dasein as intertwined with time rather than space, and therefore Dasein is continuously travelling between the past, present, and future. Martin Heidegger, trans. Joan Stambaugh, *Being and time: A translation of Sein und Zeit*. SUNY press, 1996.

<sup>2</sup> Arnold van Gennep, "VIII Funerals" in *The rites of passage*. University of Chicago Press, 2019.

<sup>3</sup> Van Gennep, op. cit., p. 146

<sup>4</sup> Mark Cannata, "Carlo Scarpa and Japan: The influence of Japanese art and architecture on the work of Carlo Scarpa" in *The Role of the Humanities in Design Creativity International Conference*, 2007, p. 7

"In the work of Carlo Scarpa  
'Beauty'  
the first sense  
Art  
the first word  
then Wonder  
Then the inner realization of 'Form'  
The sense of the wholeness of inseparable elements.  
Design consults Nature  
to give presence to the elements  
A work of art makes manifest the wholeness of the 'Form'  
a symphony of the selected shapes of the elements.  
In the elements  
the joint inspires ornament, its celebration.  
The detail is the adoration of Nature."<sup>9</sup>  
  
Louis Kahn, ca. 1970

### 1.3 Approach

Through the analysis of a selection of case studies that all use time as a medium in their architectural elements, this thesis studies how temporalities in cemetery architecture materialize the temporalities of human life. The research also examines how the passage of time is used to prompt a reflective journey that ultimately allows one to question the meaning of their own existence.

Carlo Scarpa's Tomba Brion, or Brion cemetery, in San Vito d'Altivole near Treviso, Italy, is an addition to the existing municipal cemetery completed in 1978. The cemetery garden, separated from surrounding fields by a concrete fence, is the burial site for the Brion couple, as well as Scarpa himself. The project consists of three main programmatic elements that are the funerary chapel, the tombs of the Brion couple, and a meditation pavilion. These elements are organized in an "L" shape that hugs the existing cemetery and are connected by a series of covered corridors and water features. The cemetery is accessed by two different portals: a private one that leads directly to the chapel (*figure 1.1.1*) and a more public one that passes through the existing cemetery into the large lawn between the Brion tombs and the meditation pavilion (*figure 1.3.1*).<sup>10</sup> In this paper, Brion cemetery is examined primarily in the way in which perception of time for the visitor is distorted and choreographed as a way to engage them with the architecture. The changing rhythm is a tool that Scarpa uses to unify the fragmented funerary programs into one successive transitory space, which takes the visitor on a contemplative journey. With the use of materials that weather over time, the architecture imitates the aging human, and thus, materializes the Self in one's physical environment.



[Figure 1.3.1] Brion cemetery, entrance through existing cemetery towards propylaeum, photo by author, 2017

<sup>9</sup> Louis Kahn, "Carlo Scarpa by Louis Kahn." Web article. *Phaidon*. <https://www.phaidon.com/agenda/architecture/articles/2013/october/18/carlo-scarpa-by-louis-kahn/> (accessed April 14, 2021).

<sup>10</sup> Michael A. Stern, "Passages in the Garden: An Iconology of the Brion Tomb." *Landscape Journal* 13, no. 1, 1994, p. 45

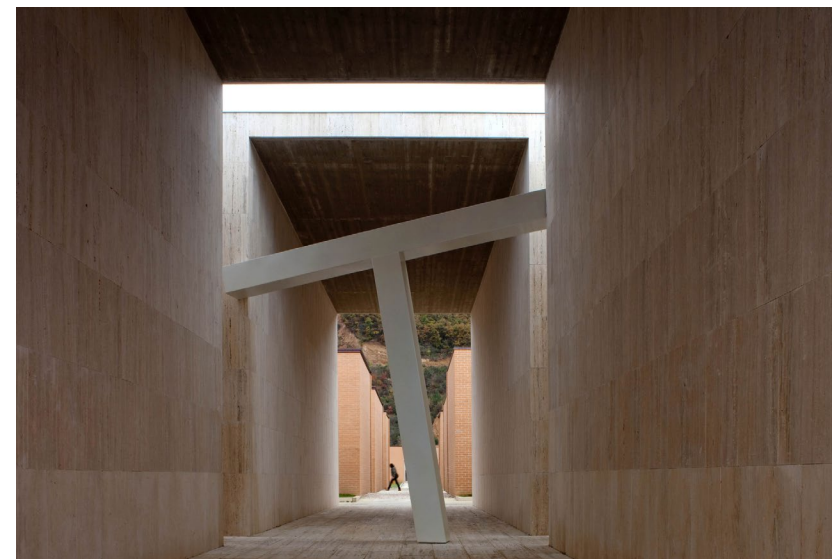




[Figure 1.3.2] Igualada cemetery, entrance gates showing pathway beyond, by Flickr user Cecilia, 2009, courtesy of Flickr

Igualada cemetery (or Cementiri Nuo in Catalan) near Barcelona, Spain, was designed by Enric Miralles and Carme Pinós in 1984 as a replacement for the old cemetery that was in its place. Faced with a requirement to use niche walls for burial rather than graves in soil, the architects chose to bury the entire architecture in the ground to symbolize the return of man to nature. The project cuts a linear pathway through the landscape and embeds the burial niches within the retaining walls that hold back the earth (figure 1.3.2). This pathway marks a symbolic journey of transition and leads to a cul-de-sac that loops and brings one back to the path.<sup>11</sup> Miralles and Pinós' meticulous integration of architecture and nature in Igualada cemetery mirrors the inescapable return of humans back to nature, and with its various design elements that allude to the passage of time, the architecture achieves to capture the past, present, and future all in one evocative space. Similar to Brion cemetery, Igualada cemetery externalizes one on to the architecture to let the Self be perceived as an image in the physical realm.

Finally, the extension of Gubbio cemetery (constructed in 2011), by Andrea Dragoni and Francesco Pes in Gubbio, Italy, was used as a new model of a monumental cemetery that examines the role of the cemetery within the city. The space is organized on a linear grid with a series of narrow corridors that open onto larger squares named the *squares of silence* (figure 1.3.3). The scale and rhythm of the architecture was influenced by the urban fabric that surrounds the cemetery. The design uses a series of volumetric spaces to create a rhythm of enclosures that open up to the sky to both evoke timelessness by removing the visitor from their context, but also allow said visitors to interact with only the precise time they are in. Artworks by prominent Italian artists, Sauro Cardinali and Nicola Renzi, occupy the squares of silence and add a secondary function of exhibition and public gathering to the space.<sup>12</sup> Similar to Scarpa, the architects compose the visitors' movements through changes in tempo, narrowing and widening of spaces, and with the use of interactive elements, encourages them to be active in the present moment of transition.



[Figure 1.3.3] Gubbio cemetery, view from main axis, artwork marking center of project, photo by Alessandra Chemollo, 2012, courtesy of ArchDaily

The temporalities embedded into the architecture of these cemeteries have an intertwined relationship with one's sense of Self; therefore, a psychoanalytic reading of the space will reveal the significance of the temporal signifiers to the experience of the visitor. This research aims to unveil the powerful experience of passing through an architectural cemetery, and the reflective quality that such a cemetery can carry beyond acting as architecture of memory.



"If heedful association were simply a succession of 'experiences' occurring 'in time' and if these experiences 'associated' with each other as intimately as possible, letting a conspicuous, unusable tool be encountered would be ontologically impossible. Whatever we have made accessible in contexts of useful things, letting things be in relevance as such must be grounded in the ecstatic unity of the making present that awaits and retains."<sup>13</sup>

Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 1953

## 2.0 Times of passage

The physical space of the cemetery is what gives a material decoding to transitions that come with the funerary rites of passage. However, without the added layer of time, one's experiences are rendered meaningless in relation to their own existence. This is because life and existence gain true meaning once we accept that there is an inevitable end, and the eventual expiration of this existence is what makes us search for the meaning of our being in the present.<sup>14</sup> Pivotal moments in a person's life such as birth, marriage, relocation, loss, and death are all events that provoke a confrontation with one's own existence. Each of these events mark a transition in one's life and an invitation to reexamine their identity and how it fits into a changing context. While the present moment is the only time that physically exists, these events all trace the passage of time in their reminder of the past or longing for the future, and therefore, encourage us to contemplate our own temporalities.

Death has a significant role in this reexamination, where one normally first accepts and mourns the loss of a loved one and, consequently, performs various customary funerary rites, which act as operations put in place to overcome this major life event. A deeper analysis of the psychological effects of death, and the space designated to materialize it, can provide a clearer reading of the extents to which loss changes our perception of our own being. With this in mind, cemetery architecture is not only a place to commemorate those we have lost, and tombs and burial grounds are not only materialized memories, but they are in fact suggestive places that create a space of self-reflection. This begins with the basic programmatic function of death and rituals that accompany it, but transcends through the symbolic architecture into a more inward journey of transition intended for the visitors. With the added element of time as a guiding force of the design (*figure 2.0.1*), the space of the cemetery allows the visitor to situate themselves in various moments of their existence. The following sections will examine various time-based features used in the architecture of cemeteries, and how these temporalities then become influencers of how one moves through the transition period and makes sense of not only the loss of someone, but also the eventual loss of the Self.



[Figure 2.0.1] Iqualada cemetery, entry pathway with modular wall catching shadows, by Nathan Bishop, 2013, courtesy of Flickr

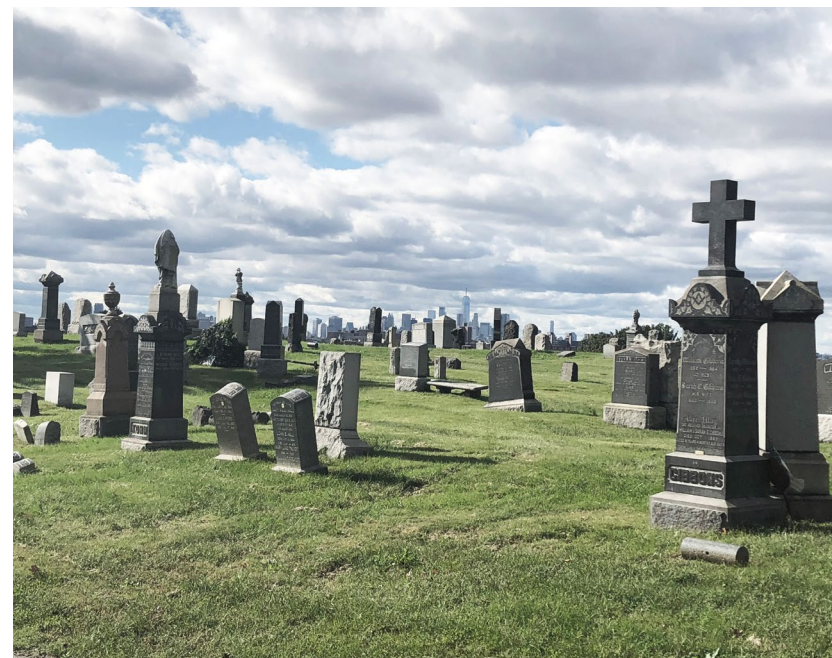


"One of the goals of international modernism was to transcend history and culture, but its lack of familiarity frequently alienated its occupants. We are not talking here of a mere absence of personal memories, but deeper, unconscious instincts inherited from our common distant ancestors."<sup>15</sup>

Kevin Nute and Zhou Job Chen, "Temporal Cues in Built Environments," 2018

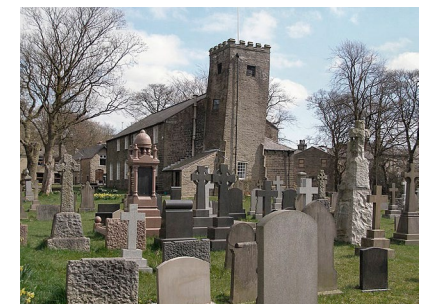
## 2.1 Memories past

Cemeteries are inherently spaces of memory with the primary and more substantial desire of commemorating death and eternalizing the memory of loss through material architecture. Historically, cemeteries or graveyards were located in churchyards in the city centers (*figure 2.1.2*). They were spaces void of social interaction and they only functioned as memorials. Due to concerns of health and overcrowding, burial sites were moved to the edges of cities in the 19th century.<sup>16</sup> The detachment of the cemetery from the centralized church had an impact on the role of the space. The cemetery was no longer just a graveyard or solemn place. Instead, it transformed into a landscape known as the Elysium (*figure 2.1.1*).<sup>17</sup> Symbolic elements in the architecture that alluded to the passages in one's life, such as weathered materials and hints of nature taking over the architecture, defined the space as meditative gardens that allowed for the visitors' contemplation. Elysiums were picturesque landscapes that used nature in their design along with the traditional markers of memory to create a more pleasurable environment in the cemetery.



[Figure 2.1.1] (left) Greenwood cemetery, Brooklyn, NY, photo by author, 2018

[Figure 2.1.2] (below) Edenfield Parish Church and Graveyard, photo by David Dixon, 2010, courtesy of Wikimedia Commons



Landscapes carpeted with gravestones, decorative tombs that act as monuments, and names and dates that capture the layered histories that build up the space of the cemetery are all elements of the architecture that are used as markers of the past. They are both reminders of times before, but also physical objects that try to preserve the essence of those who no longer exist. While these physical indications of memory carry an important role, some more subtle elements in the architecture that recall the past and suggest familiarity are intended to evoke a strong emotional connection with the visitors.

<sup>16</sup> Sabina Tanović, *Designing Memory: The Architecture of Commemoration in Europe, 1914 to the Present*, Cambridge University Press, 2019, p. 63

<sup>17</sup> John Dixon Hunt, "The Architecture of Death: The Transformation of the Cemetery in Eighteenth-Century Paris by Richard Etlin," in *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, Vol. 44, No. 1, 1985, p. 83

<sup>15</sup> Kevin Nute and Zhou Job Chen, "Temporal Cues in Built Environments," *International Journal of the Constructed Environment* 9, no. 1, 2018, p. 2



Looking at Martin Heidegger's theory of the Dasein, Michael Inwood argues that one's sense of existence is not limited to the present moment, but in fact it relates back to our birth and to our future death.<sup>18</sup> As mentioned in the previous section, the only time that physically exists is the present, however, we reflect on our existence by thinking about the past and the future. Here, time becomes a defining factor of one's being more than the spatial context they are currently in. Our personal history, along with the layers of histories woven into our culture and family, shapes our existence up to the present moment. Therefore, architectural elements that recall a sense of nostalgia create a resonance with the visitor's past and sense of familiarity.<sup>19</sup> Feelings of security can be brought out from environments that are recognizable as shelter or protection. For example, Miralles and Pinós's choice to tilt the walls of burial niches at a particular angle at Igualada cemetery is not only a way to create playful movement in the space, but also a means to transform the otherwise open and unprotected space into that of shelter (figure 2.1.4). The niches, designed in a modular system of pre-cast concrete panels with strategic gaps at the joints that allow for a play of light and shadow, represent temporality and fragility (figure 2.1.3). The concrete "visor" that traces above the niche walls, therefore, emphasizes the sense of protection evoked in the space.<sup>20</sup>



[Figure 2.1.3] (above) Igualada cemetery, varying light on modular niches, photo by Luis E. Carranza, 2012, courtesy of Flickr

[Figure 2.1.4] (right) Igualada cemetery, tilted niche walls, photo by Flickr user Cecilia, 2009, courtesy of Flickr



The use of materials that weather and degrade suggest the passage of time and stand as reminders of the aging architecture that mirrors the ephemerality of the visitor's life. Elapsed time that is traced in the architecture points to both a previous state of being and also a future of further decay and non-existence.<sup>21</sup> Rusted steel and rain-stained concrete in the Igualada cemetery show signs of weathering and thus materialize the passage of time (figure 2.1.5). The decay and repair of damaged materials, such as the wooden floor planks cast into the concrete, are used to emphasize the living quality of the architecture and its changes over many years (figure 2.1.6).<sup>22</sup>



[Figure 2.1.5] (left) Igualada cemetery, rusted steel sliding door for family crypt, photo by Flickr user Cecilia, 2009, courtesy of Flickr

[Figure 2.1.6] (right) Igualada cemetery, wooden floor planks embedded in concrete ground, photo by Luis E. Carranza, 2012, courtesy of Flickr

[Figure 2.1.7] (below) San Gimignano cemetery, gabion walls, photo by Filippo Poli, 2020, courtesy of ArchDaily

Materials can also be used in alternate ways to imply passed time, for example at Castel San Gimignano cemetery<sup>23</sup> gabion walls (typically used to retain earth) are used as separators between the burial niches and pathways (figure 2.1.7). This change in the function creates a tension between the realm of the deceased and the living by seemingly holding back the burial niches from the pathway. The gabion walls visually suggest the decaying of materials as the drystone walls of the niches transforms into the stacked stones encased by wire cages. At Igualada cemetery, gabion walls are used to display seasonal changes by collecting leaves and pine needles in the autumn, thus reflecting the change of time in a more cyclical manner.<sup>24</sup> The way in which the architecture uses temporal cycles of nature creates connections with the visitors and their natural cycle of life. Therefore, the internal sense of Self is externalized in the images of the architecture.<sup>25</sup> Igualada cemetery recalls the past by connecting architecture to the human body and aging. The architecture is depicted as a living entity and therefore the visitor draws connections with their own past when they are confronted with the past of the architecture.



21 Nute and Chen, op. cit., p. 5

22 Philip Speranza, "Time as a Medium: Early Work of Miralles," *Architectural Design* 86, no. 1, 2016, p. 63

23 Castel San Gimignano cemetery in Italy, by MICROScape Architecture + Urban Design AA, was constructed in 2019 as a redevelopment of the existing cemetery. The architecture emphasizes tensions in the site between the existing and new design, spiritual and physical, and landscape and architecture. Gabion walls that are used to highlight the tension between the spaces, as described above, are also used to trace seasonal changes similar to Igualada cemetery. Paula Pintos, "Castel San Gimignano Cemetery / MICROScape architecture urban design AA," *ArchDaily* (January 2020). <https://www.archdaily.com/931689/castel-san-gimignano-cemetery-microscape-architecture-urban-design-aa> (accessed April 3, 2021).

24 Speranza, op. cit., p. 63

25 Sean Homer, *Jacques Lacan*. Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, Taylor & Francis e-library, 2005, p. 31





According to Jacque Lacan, the image of the self is fragmented and not whole until one enters the mirror stage. In the mirror stage, the ego is doubled and projected in either our dreams or physically manifested in the external world. Until we see our double externalized, we cannot comprehend the self as a whole being.<sup>26</sup> For this reason, the doubling of the human body in the architecture of Igualada cemetery lets the visitor understand the Self as a whole. Similarly, Brion cemetery recalls the past through use of materials that age with time. Scarpa choreographs the architecture just as the architecture choreographs the movements of the visitor. Time is engrained into the concrete that makes up the architecture, where board form concrete is used to carve the design and production process into the material (*figure 2.1.8*). This also gives the otherwise austere and cold concrete a warmer and more dynamic quality. The textured concrete ages in strategic places where a gap in the parapet allows for rain to flow a certain way (*figure 2.1.9*),<sup>27</sup> so the aging of the materials is emphasized.

The bodies of water surrounding the chapel and meditation pavilion seem to flood the architecture where sunken pathways continue under water (*figure 2.1.10*). At first glance the architecture looks as if it is floating, however, the sunken elements create a sense that water has actually risen over time and that nature is taking over the architecture. The water stains and algae along the edges of the pools, as well as the vegetation inside and tall cypress trees outside the cemetery, all indicate the architecture giving into nature over time.

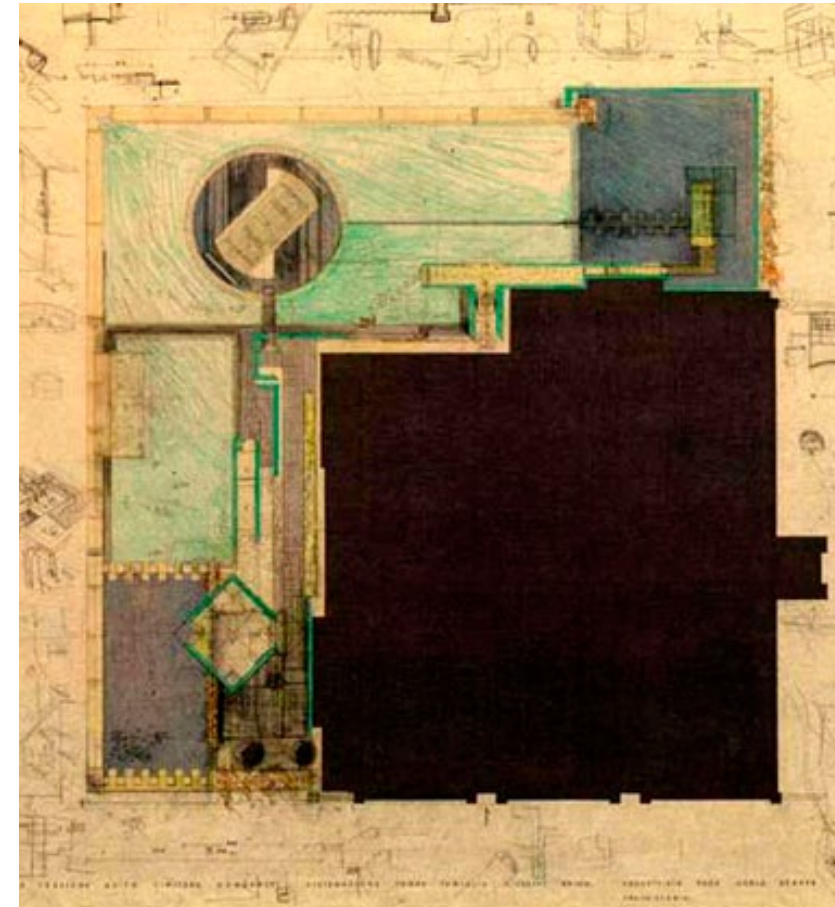


[Figure 2.1.8] (top) Brion cemetery, board form concrete detail, photo by author, 2017

[Figure 2.1.9] (bottom) Brion cemetery, rain-stained concrete from gap in parapet of chapel, photo by author, 2017

[Figure 2.1.10] (right) Brion cemetery, chapel, stepping stones continue under water, photo by Federico Covre, 2018, courtesy of Divisare

While these cemeteries successfully mirror the human body, the way in which they create recognizable environments is also very important to understand how a visitor relates to the space. As heterotopias, cemeteries are typically alien spaces that remove one from their daily lives. However, as previously described in Igualada cemetery, a sense of security established in the space can evoke a familiar feeling of a comfortable environment that humans seek in places they occupy. People look for these collective memories of space in new environments that they are in, so architecture that recalls those atmospheres feels more intimate. At Brion cemetery, pathways that connect the three programmatic elements all have a roof (*figure 2.1.12*), some of which are tilted or pitched (*figure 2.1.11*). These shallow and narrow spaces act as sheltered paths that guide a safe journey from one point to the next. Here the reminders of the past happen in between the architectural elements, before one even enters the chapel or the meditation pavilion. The carefully designed details of the architecture convey an implied history of the architecture that existed before what we see today. Brion cemetery captures a specific moment in the architecture's lifetime after it has already aged, mirroring the already past time in the visitor's own lifetime.



[Figure 2.1.11] (above) Brion cemetery, covered pathway, photo by author, 2017

[Figure 2.1.12] (left) Brion cemetery, plan, Carlo Scarpa, 1968-78, courtesy of Archivi degli Architetti

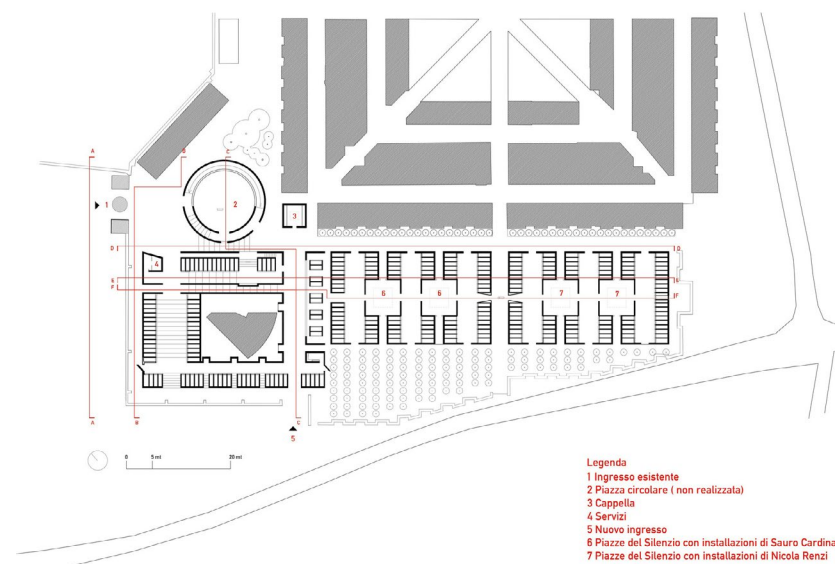
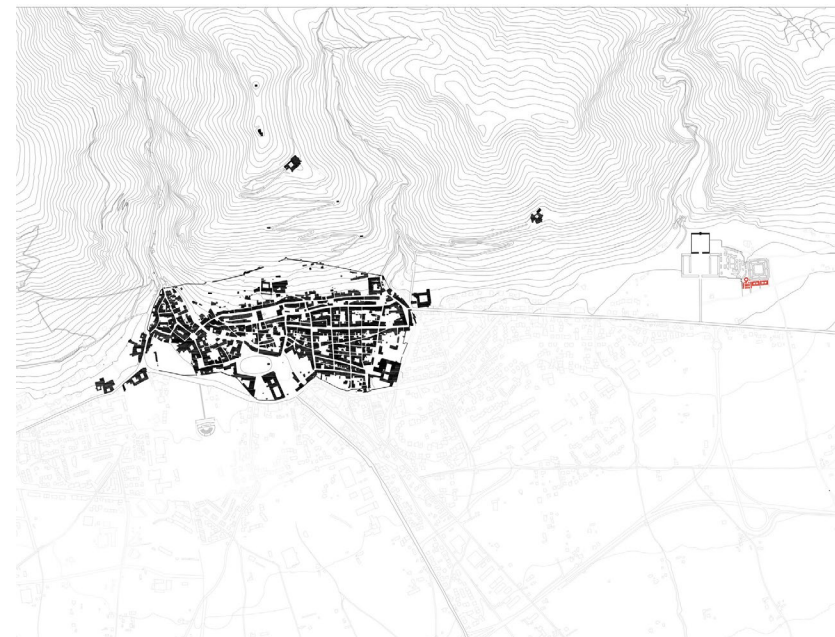


[Figure 2.1.13] (right) Gubbio cemetery, volume over entrance, photo by Alessandra Chemollo, 2012, courtesy of ArchDaily

[Figure 2.1.14] (below) Alley in Gubbio, photo by Flickr user Anguskirk, 2009, courtesy of Flickr



The extension at Gubbio cemetery focuses on creating a familiar environment rather than connecting directly to the visitor. Memories are evoked in the architecture that mirrors traditional Italian architecture, which is recognizable to all of the visitors. Surrounded by names and dates that the visitor may not recognize, the scale and rhythm of the blocks suggest a continuation of the city, thus relating to the daily lives of the visitors. The entrance to the cemetery tilts a large leaning volume over the pathway to demarcate the threshold and create a sense of security similar to the other two cemeteries (figure 2.1.13). While this volume does convey a symbolic shelter, it more accurately signifies a gateway or arched entryway into a historical city (figure 2.1.14). The layout of the extension not only mimics the rhythm of the original cemetery on site (figure 2.1.16), but with its narrow gridded pathways that intermittently open up into squares, or piazzas, reflect the density and urban fabric of the historic city center of Gubbio (figure 2.1.15).<sup>28</sup> Materials like travertine also recall familiarity in Italian architecture. With the symbolic entryway, scale, materials, and rhythm, the cemetery creates a parallel city of the dead that allude to the living city. By connecting to a familiar setting, the cemetery that typically removes one from their reality is able to capture a personal connection with the visitors.



[Figure 2.1.15] (top) Gubbio cemetery, urban plan, by Andrea Dragoni, 2011, courtesy of ArchDaily

[Figure 2.1.16] (bottom) Gubbio cemetery, floor plan, by Andrea Dragoni, 2011, courtesy of ArchDaily

Drawing connections to the past, the architecture of the cemetery is able to relate to the visitor on a more personal level. This connection allows the space of the cemetery, which can often feel like an isolated and strange environment, to become a reflection of the journey of transition the visitor is on. Reflecting on the past in this setting both honors the memories of the deceased and also lets the visitor experience a more inward contemplation of their own past and how their fragmented identities unify into one whole Self over time.

"So there are no temporally extended objects or events, no world enduring over time, only an instantaneous temporal slice of a world and of the objects and events within it."<sup>29</sup>

Michael Inwood, *Heidegger: A Very Short Introduction*, 2000

<sup>29</sup> Inwood, op. cit., p. 67

## 2.2 Encountering moments

The setting of the cemetery is inevitably retrospective. As described earlier, the space is populated with reminders of various past moments in history. While the recollection of the past in the architecture is what differentiates the cemetery from other types of architecture, elements that engage the visitors in the present moment acknowledge one's personal connection to those memories. So while one of the main functions of a cemetery is to act as a place of memory, the other important function is to serve the users that are engaging with the space in the present.

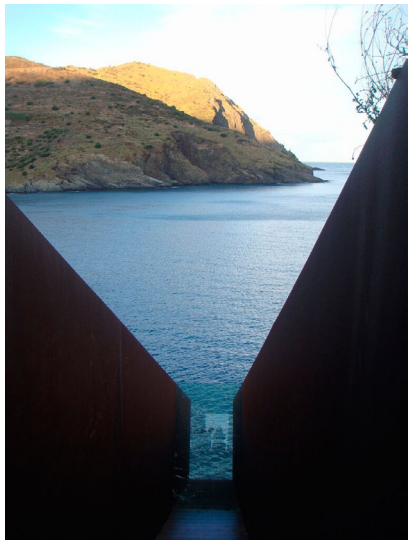
Whether a person is visiting a cemetery as part of the funerary ritual, or they are visiting at a later time, they are thinking of the past and about the loss they have experienced. This kind of contemplation of the past might remove the Self from the experience. However, a physical connection to the environment through one's body allows one to be fully present and sense intentional changes to that environment.<sup>30</sup> Cemetery architecture that allows the visitor to engage with the present moment encourages them to relate these memories of loss to their own being (*figure 2.2.1*). It forces one to interact with these memories in such a way that enables an understanding of one's own existence in terms of how the past has shaped the present. In this sense, memories of the past do not solely relate to one's being, so linking them to the present may reflect a more unified Self.



**[Figure 2.2.1]** Igualada cemetery, visitors leaving flowers in niches, photo by Diego Terna, 2009, courtesy of Flickr

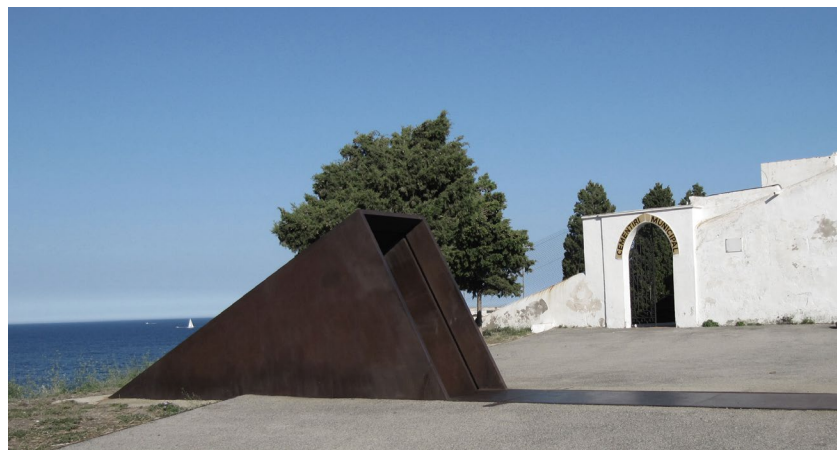
<sup>30</sup> Nute and Chen, op. cit., p. 5





[Figure 2.2.2] (above) Portbou cemetery, inside Walter Benjamin memorial, photo by Jordan Silver, courtesy of Atlas Obscura

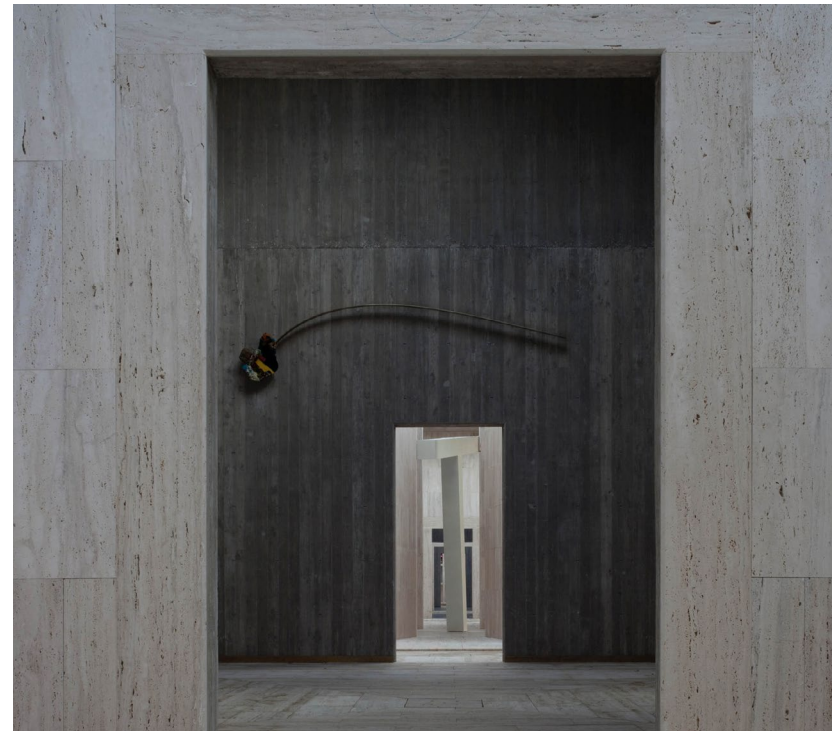
[Figure 2.2.3] (right) Portbou cemetery, Walter Benjamin memorial within landscape, photo by Hugo Pardo Kuklinski, 2011, courtesy of Flickr



31 Inwood, op. cit., p. 67  
 32 Inwood, op. cit., p. 91  
 33 *Passages* is a memorial for the 50th anniversary of Walter Benjamin's death at Portbou cemetery, in Portbou, Spain. The design, by Israeli artist Dani Karavan, consists of three separate passages that are integrated into the landscape of the cemetery. Inspired by the work Benjamin, the memorial traces and connects memories of past pain with ideas of a better future. The first passage, which is discussed in the above text, is the rusted steel tunnel that descends down towards the sea. The second passage is a pathway that leads from the entrance of the cemetery to a small square with various pieces by Karavan. This is a place to stop and gaze at the landscape. The third passage brings the visitor to a square platform with a stone cube in the center. This is the space of the cemetery where Benjamin rests. Joan Gubert, Cristina Masanés, and Pilar Parcerisas, "Passages Karavan," *Walter Benjamin a Portbou*, <https://walterbenjaminportbou.org/en/passages-karavan/> (accessed April 3, 2021).

With the notion that only the present moment exists now, the past is gone and the future has not yet come,<sup>31</sup> how we interact with the present is vital to how we interpret the past and prepare for the future. The past that is related with the Self is the past that lives on in the present.<sup>32</sup> In other words, events from the past that we recall as memories in the present moment are the ones that shape the current Self. Therefore, in a setting that is designed to remind one of past times, acknowledging the present and engaging with it allows one to understand the past in relation to the current Self and recognize that the way we remember the past is largely influenced by the current circumstances. Events from the past may be gone, time may have elapsed, and circumstances may have changed, but the Self lives on in the present. To make choices for the future, or to reflect upon the past, we must first be active in the present.

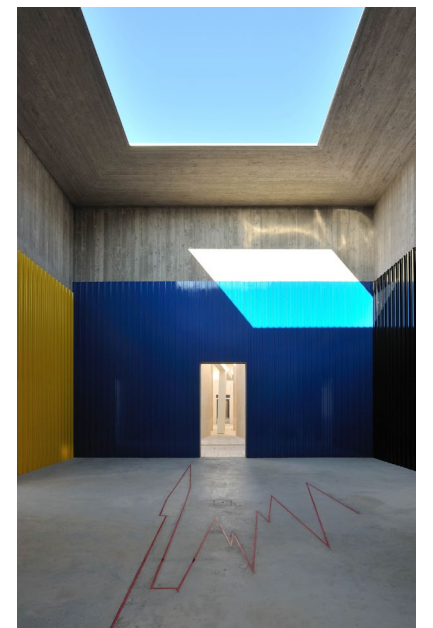
The cemetery is a space that is functionally, and often physically, removed from its context. It isolates one from the living world and places them in a solemn environment where time flows at a different pace, external sounds are muted, and the atmosphere conveys the separateness of this realm from the city that surrounds it. When the visitor is removed from their reality to such an extent, elements in the architecture that bring them back to the present allows them to acknowledge the reality of the space they are interacting with. For instance, Dani Karavan's 1994 memorial, *Passages*,<sup>33</sup> for Walter Benjamin at Portbou cemetery, consists of a long and narrow staircase that descends from the entrance of the cemetery towards the sea. The staircase is encased by a rusted steel tunnel which removes the visitor from the landscape that they were in and focuses them on the path they are on (figure 2.2.3). As the visitor moves down the dark passage, they must pay attention to every step they take until the opening at the bottom starts to bring in light. Here, they are finally allowed to see a view of the waves hitting the rocks beyond (figure 2.2.2). The visual of the water along with the sounds of the crashing waves returns the visitor to the present moment.



[Figure 2.2.4] (left) Gubbio cemetery, artwork seen in square of silence, photo by Alessandra Chemollo, 2012, courtesy of ArchDaily

[Figure 2.2.5] (below) Gubbio cemetery, square of silence with light from oculus above, Alessandra Chemollo, 2012, courtesy of ArchDaily

Engaging with the present focuses one's attention inward, especially in a setting that is entirely isolated from any context. Gubbio cemetery isolates the visitor from their context, similarly to Portbou cemetery, by placing them in a narrow path that blocks all views other than what is in front of them. One walks through this path only interacting with what the architecture allows for. With a rhythmic sequence of narrow spaces followed by more open squares, the architecture gives a moment of relief to the isolation (figure 2.2.4). The visitor is allowed for a moment to stop and be present.<sup>34</sup> Although this view is framed and thus strategically chosen, here the visitor is allowed to get a glimpse of the outside world; they get a sense of time and so they slow down and reflect. The artwork in these squares momentarily removes the visitor from the space of the cemetery and the memories they are recalling, and allows them to interact with something outside of the Self (figure 2.2.5). Completely out of its typical context, the artwork brings one into a state of awareness due to its inherent strangeness in the cemetery. The art, therefore, forces one to contemplate this consciousness.<sup>35</sup> The varying shadows cast by the artwork gives hints as to the time of day. Interacting with the artwork requires one to be in the present moment. Here, a moment is not defined as a single slice of time, but rather a string of instants tied together by that experience.<sup>36</sup> It is important to understand the present time in this sense of experiential moments because the interactive artwork of the Gubbio cemetery stitches various instants together to make meaningful moments that let one encounter the fragmented Self as a whole.



34 Frearson, op. cit.  
 35 Rosalind Krauss, "Death of a Hermeneutic Phantom: Materialisation of the Sign in the Work of Peter Eisenman," in *The Anxiety of Interdisciplinarity*, ed. Alex Coles and Alexia Defert, Vol. 2, London: Black Dog Publishing, 1998, p. 28  
 36 Nute and Chen, op. cit., p. 8





[Figure 2.2.6] (above) Igualada cemetery, interactive movable gates, photo by Flickr user Calafellvalo, 2019, courtesy of Flickr

[Figure 2.2.7] (right) Igualada cemetery, shadows projected on walls, photo by Jonathan Dowse, 2009, courtesy of JBDowse



By burying the architecture in the landscape, Igualada cemetery also removes the visitor from their context and eliminates views towards the outside of the path. As the visitor moves slowly down the symbolic river that makes up the path, they encounter wooden planks embedded into the concrete as if washed up towards the loop at the end of the route (figure 2.2.6).<sup>37</sup> Along this journey, the river gently pushes the visitor through the burial niches where the trees create a play of light and shadow projected onto the concrete (figure 2.2.7). This animation of the space brings attention to the present time by contrasting the slow movement of the pathway of memories. Along the path, the visitor also encounters moments where they must physically interact with the architecture to proceed with their journey. The entry gate rolls out to open the path at the start of the day. This ritual of the gate opening and closing marks the moment of transition from the outside world into the symbolic one.<sup>38</sup> The crypt doors are moved by the visitors and so their focus is put upon these transitional elements that mark a threshold between them and their loved ones. Specifically designed spaces in the niches for placing personal objects and memorabilia offer another opportunity for visitors to interact with the cemetery and make a personal connection to the space (figure 2.2.1). By physically engaging with the architecture, the visitor is made aware of their own effect on the environment that surrounds them.

Humans voluntarily engage with space through the act of touch, so one's sense of being is confirmed in the tactile reality of the world that surrounds them.<sup>39</sup> The way in which one feels the space of architecture through changing textures, qualities of sound or light, and even sensing a change in time reaffirms the reality of that space and one's presence in it. Brion cemetery engages the visitor with the present moment by changing the pace of their movement. As the visitor moves through the spaces of the cemetery, they are constantly encountering changes in the texture of surfaces they walk on, differences in the sizes of stairs (figure 2.2.8), and alternating light conditions which all force the visitor to pay close attention to each movement and choice they make. The architecture choreographs the visitor's every move including where their gaze is directed. For example, to approach the meditation pavilion, which is removed from the large lawn by a body of water, the visitor must first push a glass and steel door downwards into the water and step over it (figure 2.2.9). This symbolic ritual both engages the visitor in the theatrics of the threshold and also acts as a metaphor of purification whereby the visitor is now allowed to cross into the pavilion.<sup>40</sup>

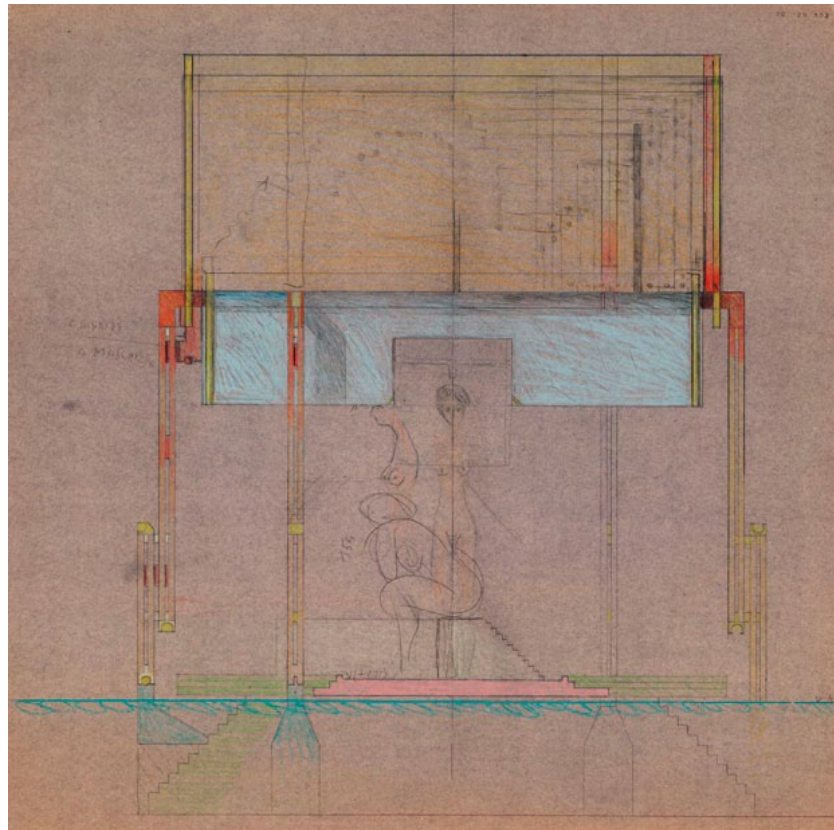


[Figure 2.2.8] (above) Brion cemetery, irregular stairs leading to tombs, photo by Darren Bradley, 2018, courtesy of Modern Architecture



[Figure 2.2.9] (left) Brion cemetery, corridor leading to glass pulley door, photo by Darren Bradley, 2018, courtesy of Modern Architecture



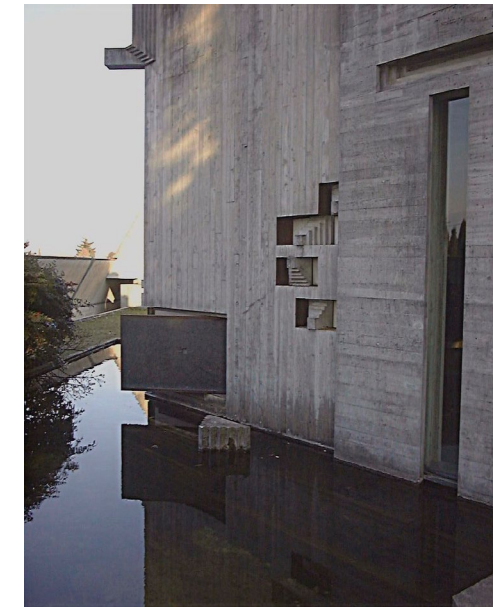


The path then transforms into stepping stones that direct the attention of the visitor to each step they take, emphasizing the importance of this journey. Inside the pavilion, the visitor is forced to interact with the architecture in a certain way as the framed view of the large lawn is only visible when the visitor sits on a bench (figure 2.2.10). Once they are seated, the window frames a view of the large lawn with the tombs behind the reflective pool that surrounds the pavilion (figure 2.2.11). Water is used throughout the cemetery as an element that pulls the visitor back into the present moment (figure 2.2.12). The sound of running water that travels from the tombs towards the meditation pavilion breaks the silence of the space to help the visitor return to the present Self (figure 2.2.13).<sup>41</sup>



[Figure 2.2.10] (top) Brion cemetery, meditation pavilion drawing, by Carlo Scarpa, ca. 1970, courtesy of Phaidon

[Figure 2.2.11] (bottom) Brion cemetery, sketch of meditation pavilion (was under repair, therefore missing top structure), by author, 2017



[Figure 2.2.12] (top) Brion cemetery, interactive door at chapel, photo by Penn State University, 2011, courtesy of Flickr

[Figure 2.2.13] (bottom) Brion cemetery, water feature linking to the tombs, photo by Darren Bradley, 2018, courtesy of Modern Architecture

As spaces that are removed from their context, cemeteries have the potential to remove visitors from their reality. This effectively limits the way in which one experiences the reflective journey of finding the Self. Time in the cemetery can feel stagnant and permanently in the past if interactive elements are not utilized. Spaces that awaken the senses and allow for a tactile interaction with the architecture reminds one of their presence in the current moment. Through this physical relationship with the environment, the visitor is able to comprehend the memories that are evoked in the space relative to the Self in the present. Thus, only when one is physically involved in the architecture can they recognize the effects of body and architecture on one another:<sup>42</sup> the Self is reaffirmed.

"The way in which we anticipate the future defines the meaning that the past can have for us, just as the way in which our ancestors projected the future determines our own range of possibilities."<sup>43</sup>

Kenneth Frampton, *Studies in Tectonic Culture*, 1985

## 2.3 Reminiscing tomorrow

What makes the existence of the Self most evident is its temporality, the knowledge of its eventual demise.<sup>44</sup> Human life is limited, so the awareness of death gives a sense of urgency to the life we live. The Self finds meaning in its fragility, therefore, the anticipation of the future guides its every choice in the present. The cemetery confronts the visitor with their own death and forces them to acknowledge the limit of their own life. Humans look for potentials of growth in the spaces they occupy; they like to plan and account for any possibilities in the future.<sup>45</sup> The architecture of the cemetery, for this reason, can help them prepare for their future and anticipate what is to come (*figure 2.3.1*). Death, or the anticipation of it, removes the Self from everything else around it. Contrary to other significant transitions in one's lifetime, death is a transition that a person experiences alone. People experience loss together, but the loss of the Self can only be anticipated as an individual.<sup>46</sup> This is why it is important to understand the cemetery as a place of isolation; the confrontation with death is something the Self experiences alone.



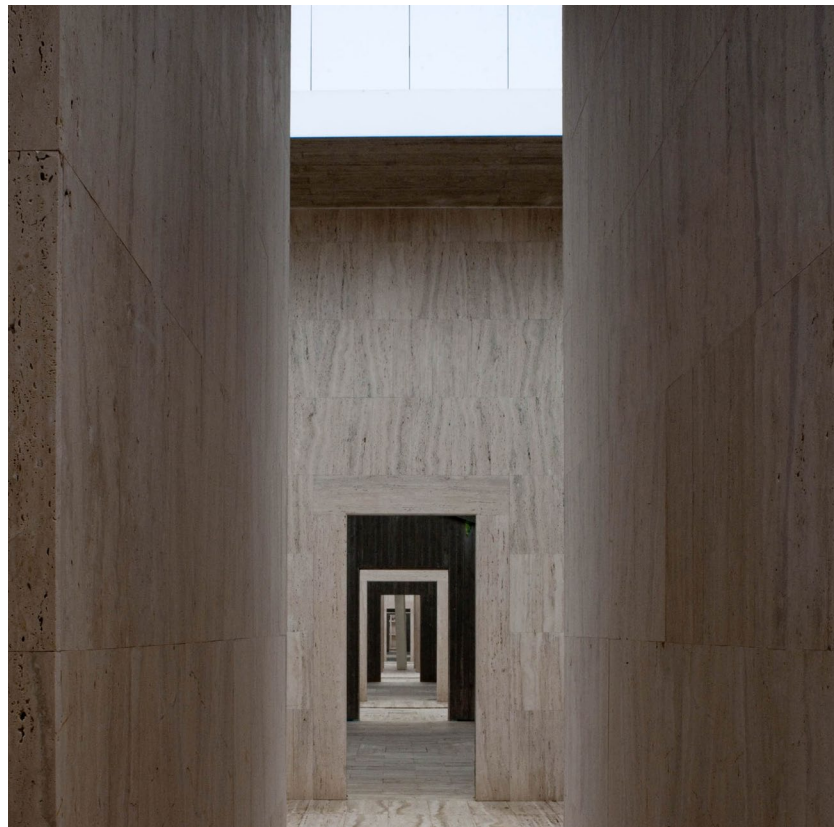
[Figure 2.3.1] Iguualada cemetery, empty niche, photo by Luis E. Carranza, 2012, courtesy of Flickr

According to Lacan, the death drive is not something that guides one towards death or the future. Instead, it is something that stems from death.<sup>47</sup> So, the anticipation of the future that is described here is not the anticipation of death, but rather the life that is rendered meaningful because of it. Heidegger suggests that the Self comes back into the present out of its own death. In other words, the present is the past that the future Self returns to.<sup>48</sup> This idea describes the multiple temporalities that exist within the Self and how one must simultaneously think ahead to their future, return to the past, and exist in the present. One can also argue that the eventual future of the Self is a return to a previous state of non-existence. In this sense, the future forces one to come back to their past, hence the title of this chapter: Reminiscing tomorrow.

<sup>44</sup> Inwood, op. cit., p. 68  
<sup>45</sup> Nute and Chen, op. cit., p. 10  
<sup>46</sup> Inwood, op. cit., p. 70  
<sup>47</sup> Homer, op. cit., p. 89  
<sup>48</sup> Inwood, op. cit., p. 90

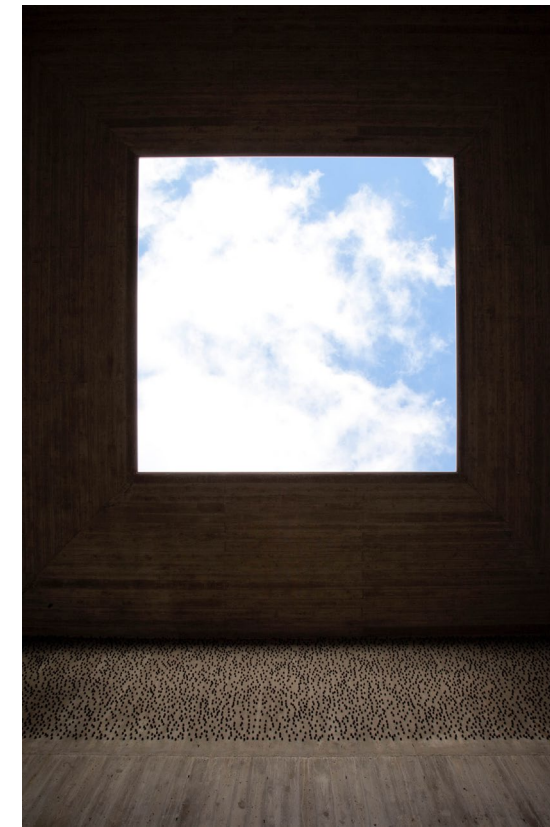


One of the ways in which architecture can imply a sense of prospect of the future is through extended views ahead and glimpses of spaces beyond the space one is currently occupying.<sup>49</sup> These glimpses into spaces that one will come across as they move through the architecture motivates a movement forward and ensures that one continues to pass through the spaces. Vistas that frame specific views of what is beyond, act as windows into future events and images of what to look forward to. With its arrangement of spaces in a rhythmic orthogonal grid tied together with long corridors, Gubbio cemetery frames layers of spaces on top of one another (*figure 2.3.2*). Streets that transverse the main axis that one walks along, in addition to the openings that bring one in and out of the squares of silence, creates an interplay of light and dark layers that frame each other and the spaces beyond. Within these layered frames, the artworks in the squares work to draw the visitor along the path. The grid of the extension to the cemetery suggests possible future extensions to the space and a continuity of the linear rhythm. This alludes to a potential growth in the future of the cemetery to accommodate more people, and thus shows a sense of preparedness in the space, which we seek in the environments we occupy.<sup>50</sup> The readiness of the space to grow and possibly accommodate oneself in the future evokes a sense of security in the knowledge that they may also rest here one day.



[Figure 2.3.2] Gubbio cemetery, framed views, photo by Alessandra Chemollo, 2012, courtesy of ArchDaily

Gubbio cemetery's use of artworks in the space alludes to the future in an unusual way when compared with other cemeteries. The squares of silence differ programmatically from the rest of the architecture. While these more open spaces work to engage the visitor with the present moment, they are also meant to be spaces for future exhibitions and other works of art.<sup>51</sup> This element gives the cemetery a very interesting living quality. Even though the corridors of the cemetery remove one from their context, one of the major programmatic components actively invites the public to use the space. Although the purpose of this function is about engaging with the city, any collective event in the realm of the cemetery resembles the public ceremony of the funeral. Drawing a parallel between the public recognition of death with the celebration of art proposes a more positive meaning to the transition from life to death. One can see this prospect in the cemetery as a way to prepare the visitor for the future and anticipate it rather than fear it. Therefore, the only connection to the outside world one has as they move through the cemetery is strategically placed in the squares of silence. The openings in the ceiling of the squares act as windows to heaven that lift one's horizon to the sky (*figure 2.3.3*).<sup>52</sup> This symbolic view of the sky, thus, solidifies the connection between the collective event of the festival and the funeral.



[Figure 2.3.3] Gubbio cemetery, window to the sky, photo by Alessandra Chemollo, 2012, courtesy of ArchDaily





[Figure 2.3.4] (above) Brion cemetery, casual use of lawn, photo by author, 2017

[Figure 2.3.5] (right) Brion cemetery, propylaeum, photo by Jens Kristian Seier, 2012, courtesy of Flickr



Symbolic windows framing deliberate views that refer to the future are also utilized at Brion cemetery (figure 2.3.6). The large lawn between the tombs and meditation pavilion is approached by the public entrance that brings the visitor through the old part of the cemetery. After the visitor passes between the graves, they arrive at the propylaeum where inside is a narrow and dark hallway that leads to the perpendicular cloister that brings them either towards the meditation pavilion at the right or the tombs on the left. At the intersection of the two corridors, two interlocking circular windows open up to the large lawn (figure 2.3.5).<sup>53</sup> Irregular stairs that bring the visitor up to the level of the second hallway, and thus eye level with the circular windows, purposefully slow down the pace of the visitor to focus their attention on what they see beyond the opening. This window is the first view of the garden the visitor is allowed to see. The path to the left brings one into the garden beyond the window, which was conceived as a public garden that Scarpa has described as a place one can have wine and a picnic (figure 2.3.4).<sup>54</sup> This lawn, similar to the squares of silence at Gubbio cemetery, brings an alternate program to the space of the cemetery rendering it as a garden before a cemetery. The lawn, with views of the mountains and sky in the background, evokes a sense of freedom and prospect for the future. Because of the significance of this open space, the visitor is given two different perspectives of it: first as they approach the cemetery through the public propylaeum and the second, while they are in the most private space of the cemetery, the meditation pavilion.



[Figure 2.3.6] (top) Brion cemetery, view from Scarpa's grave in to lawn beyond, photo by author, 2017

[Figure 2.3.7] (bottom) Brion cemetery, view into rear of chapel, photo by author, 2017

The episodic nature of the project, and its organization that draws inspiration from Chinese and Japanese stroll gardens,<sup>55</sup> makes for a sequential experience of the space with framed views similar to that of Gubbio cemetery (figure 2.3.7). These selected views, clues of spaces beyond, sounds of running water that carry through from one place to the next and move with the visitor, gives the architecture a narrative, film-like quality. This notion that the architecture is telling a story is what motivates the visitor to keep moving, or strolling, through the cemetery and anticipate what will come next. The visitor is able to make their own choice about which direction they go, but ultimately they are guided to move through each space sequentially. This orchestration reflects one's life, where one is able to make their own choices for their life, but they will eventually return to the same predictable end.



[Figure 2.3.8] (right) Igalada cemetery, view from above landscape, photo by Luis E. Carranza, 2012, courtesy of Flickr

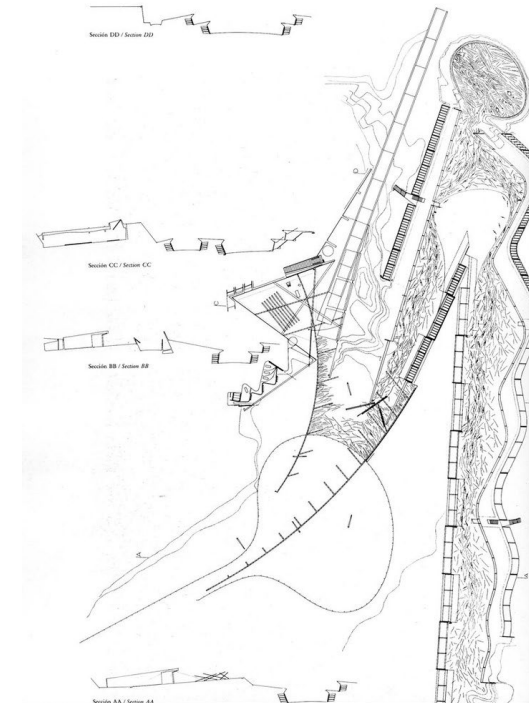
[Figure 2.3.9] (below) Meiso no Mori, Toyo Ito & Associates Architects, 2006



The reflection of human life and return to non-existence is seen throughout the architecture of Igalada cemetery. Miralles believed that “permanence is contrary to existence,”<sup>56</sup> therefore, even when alluding to the future, the architecture recalls the past by drawing on its fragile quality. At Igalada cemetery, we can accept the death drive as a return to a previous state, a regression to non-existence, therefore, even the prospect of the future can evoke a sense of nostalgia. Empty, nameless niches and crypts at the cemetery wait to be filled (figure 2.3.1), thereby, showing signs of preparedness for the future similar to Gubbio cemetery. Walking through the niches, one cannot help but think of their own possible future here, perhaps in one of the family tombs. The architecture, in many ways, mirrors how the human body returns to soil in the way it gives in to nature. The whole architecture is buried into the soil, so even though burial niches are used, the body still returns to nature. Buried underground and hidden from sight, we can accept Igalada cemetery as a found landscape that one almost stumbles upon. Meiso No Mori, by Toyo Ito,<sup>57</sup> functions similarly as a found landscape rather than a built form where the undulating concrete roof mimics the topography of the contextual landscape (figure 2.3.9). By resembling smoke that escapes the crematorium, the roof becomes a weightless feature of the architecture. Its dematerialization blurs the line between the natural and the built, and therefore creates a seamless integration. The concrete visor at Igalada cemetery traces the boundary between architecture and nature, but just as in Meiso No Mori’s roof, from above the landscape this visor is perceived as a delicate edge, an insignificant line (figure 2.3.8).



The incompleteness of the architecture at Igalada also alludes to a similar decay and return to nature, but also to potential growth. For instance, the niche walls are interrupted abruptly at the loop at the end of the pathway. The wall ends with no clear cut-off, and the loop is completed with the landscape (figure 2.3.10).<sup>58</sup> Moments like this suggest that the architecture could continue to grow, or perhaps decay. Notions of incompleteness are even visible in the drawings of the cemetery with their use of singular lineweights that remove any hierarchies between nature and material (figure 2.3.12), and also in the photographic studies by Miralles that use cut-outs as a way to emphasize the temporal quality of the architecture (figure 2.3.11). The incomplete nature of the space confronts the visitor with questions of what may happen in the future to the cemetery and also their life.



[Figure 2.3.10] (top) Igalada cemetery, abrupt stop in niche wall, by Flickr user Cecilia, 2009, courtesy of Flickr

[Figure 2.3.11] (bottom) Igalada cemetery, cut-out photo study, by Enric Miralles, still taken from Richard Copan’s film, *Le Cimetière D’Igalada*

[Figure 2.3.12] (left) Igalada cemetery, plan and sections, by Enric Miralles and Carme Pinós, 1984, courtesy of ArchDaily

By referencing the future in various ways, the space of the cemetery forces one to come to terms with their own fate. Understanding the meaning of this future with its limited existence makes the Self gain meaning and priority in the present. The Self exists as fragments in different timelines simultaneously, and its ability to think ahead to the future and come back from it to the past and present allows it to become a unified whole.<sup>59</sup> The architecture of the cemetery reflects the human experience in order to connect with the visitors sense of Self, while also promoting a feeling of freedom and preparedness to create a positive anticipation for the future so that one is able to engage with the present without fearing the future.

<sup>56</sup> Speranza, op. cit., p. 61

<sup>57</sup> Toyo Ito’s Meiso No Mori, completed in 2006, is the municipal funeral hall in the Gifu region in Japan. The title of the project in Japanese translates to “forest of meditation.” A 20cm thick concrete roof spans over the entire crematorium and is supported by columns that drop from the undulations in the roof. The building allows for expansive views of the lake and surrounding environment with glazed circulation areas pushed to the edges. Tom Wilkinson, “Meiso no Mori in Kakamigahara by Toyo Ito & Associates,” *The Architectural Review* (November 2016). <https://www.architectural-review.com/buildings/meiso-no-mori-in-kakamigahara-by-toyo-ito-associates> (accessed April 3, 2021).

<sup>58</sup> Copans, op. cit.  
<sup>59</sup> Inwood, op. cit., p. 99





### 3.0 Reflections

Following the narrative journey visitors go on at Brion cemetery, Igualada cemetery, and Gubbio cemetery enabled me to examine how time-based elements in their designs evoke powerful experiences of self-reflection. A psychoanalytic reading of temporal elements in the three cemeteries, using the theories of Jacques Lacan and Martin Heidegger, revealed the interdependencies between the material architecture and the sense of Self of the visitor passing through it. This analysis shows how the architecture externalizes the Self as an image in the physical world by acting as a projection of the visitor's own being. The material manifestation of the Self is what provokes the visitor to seek more connections between the architecture and their own existence.

Understanding the temporalities that are entangled into one's existence, the layered histories that shape them up until the present and beyond into the future highlight the fragmented nature of the Self. What unifies these different parts of the Self is the simultaneous experience of the past, present, and future. These temporalities are not linear, but rather interdependent on one another, which is why it is important to look at them concurrently. As a heterotopia, the cemetery allows for the entangled temporalities to be displayed in one space, thus the visitor is brought back to their past, pushed forward into the future, and returned from there into the present. Despite the careful distinction of elements in the architecture that allude to the past, present, or the future, it is clear from my research that discussing one time without touching on the others is impossible. It is also interesting to read these cemeteries side by side, since elements like the use of nature and the resemblance of the architecture to the human body may refer to the past in one cemetery and future in the other. These dualities in the temporal symbols convey how even the metaphors are entangled with time.

Gubbio cemetery's intention to bring the new program of exhibition into the cemetery to engage with the city, and Brion cemetery's function as a meditative garden, suggest new ways that cemetery architecture can be conceived. With a new understanding of how time-based elements can evoke strong personal connections with the space, temporalities can inform memorial architecture to transcend beyond acting as just spaces of memory. One problem that contemporary cities face is the lack of space for cemeteries to expand. Cities are growing beyond their boundaries, which is where cemeteries are typically located. With limited room for both the city and the cemetery to expand, there is a desire to find alternate forms of burial, such as high-rise cemeteries proposed across the world. The duality of the cemetery as a place for memory and also a place of reflection can create a new meaning for cemetery architecture where they can be more integrated into daily life. Temporal elements can be purposefully employed in cemetery architecture to add multiplicities into its program to ensure its assimilation into the growing city and the lives of the ones occupying it. New cemeteries can use time-based elements to make the city come to life, just as they urge the individual to confront their own existence.

"This continuous tension of being and non-being is what makes the city come alive."<sup>60</sup>

Mark Cannata, "Carlo Scarpa and Japan," 2007

<sup>60</sup> Cannata, op. cit., p. 7



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Video reference:

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## List of figures

[Figure 0.0.1] “Carlo Scarpa, architect: Brion tomb, San Vito d'Altivole cemetery, 1969-1978 (largely completed by 1972).” by Jens Kristian Seier is licensed under CC BY-NC 2.0

[Figure 0.0.2] Brion cemetery, entrance propylaeum with overgrown vegetation, photo by author, 2017

[Figure 1.1.1] Brion cemetery, entrance to funerary chapel, photo by author, 2017

[Figure 1.3.1] Brion cemetery, entrance through existing cemetery towards propylaeum, photo by author, 2017

[Figure 1.3.2] “Igalada Cemetery, Enric Miralles and Carme Pinós, Igualada, Spain, gates” by Velcro. is licensed with CC BY 2.0

[Figure 1.3.3] Chemollo, Alessandra. “PORTADA.” Digital image. Web article. *ArchDaily*, accessed April 8, 2021. [https://www.archdaily.com/461990/extension-of-gubbio-cemetery-andrea-dragoni-francesco-pes/52b91a4fe8e44ed2de0000dc-extension-of-gubbio-cemetery-andrea-dragoni-francesco-pes-photo?next\\_project=no](https://www.archdaily.com/461990/extension-of-gubbio-cemetery-andrea-dragoni-francesco-pes/52b91a4fe8e44ed2de0000dc-extension-of-gubbio-cemetery-andrea-dragoni-francesco-pes-photo?next_project=no)

[Figure 2.0.1] “Igalada Cemetery” by Nathan Bishop is licensed under CC BY-NC-ND 2.0

[Figure 2.1.1] Greenwood cemetery, Brooklyn, NY, photo by author, 2018

[Figure 2.1.2] Dixon, David. “Edenfield Parish Church and Graveyard.” Digital image. *Wikimedia Commons*. April, 15, 2010. [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Edenfield\\_Parish\\_Church\\_and\\_Graveyard\\_-\\_geograph.org.uk\\_-\\_1807439.jpg#P170](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Edenfield_Parish_Church_and_Graveyard_-_geograph.org.uk_-_1807439.jpg#P170)

[Figure 2.1.3] “Cementiri Nou Igualada” by Luis E Carranza is licensed under CC BY-NC-SA 2.0

[Figure 2.1.4] “Igalada Cemetery, Enric Miralles and Carme Pinós, Igualada, Spain, gates” by Velcro. is licensed with CC BY 2.0

[Figure 2.1.5] “Igalada Cemetery, Enric Miralles and Carme Pinós, Igualada, Spain, gates” by Velcro. is licensed with CC BY 2.0

[Figure 2.1.6] “Cementiri Nou Igualada” by Luis E Carranza is licensed under CC BY-NC-SA 2.0

[Figure 2.1.7] Poli, Filippo. “HR22\_cemetery\_Castel\_San\_Gimignano\_\_MICROSCAPE\_\_photo\_Filippo\_Poli.” Digital image. *ArchDaily*, accessed April 8, 2021. <https://www.archdaily.com/931689/castel-san-gimignano-cemetery-microscape-architecture-urban-design-aa/5e18e1fe3312fdc02f00002e-castel-san-gimignano-cemetery-microscape-architecture-urban-design-aa-photo>

[Figure 2.1.8] Brion cemetery, board form concrete detail, photo by author, 2017

[Figure 2.1.9] Brion cemetery, rain-stained concrete from gap in parapet of chapel, photo by author, 2017

[Figure 2.1.10] Covre, Federico. “Capella-Tomba Brion.” Digital image. Web article. *Divisare*, accessed April 9, 2021. <https://divisare.com/projects/390066-carlo-scarpa-federico-covre-cappella-tomba-brion>

[Figure 2.1.11] Brion cemetery, covered pathway, photo by author, 2017

[Figure 2.1.12] Scarpa, Carlo. Elaborato grafico della Tomba Brion nel cimitero di San Vito d'Altivole, nella provincia di Treviso, progettata da Carlo Scarpa in collaborazione con Guido Metropoli, Carlo Maschietto e lo Studio Porcinai di Firenze, 1968-1978. Archivio di Stato di Treviso. Centro Carlo Scarpa.

[Figure 2.1.13] Chemollo, Alessandra. “ard\_10.” Digital image. Web article. *ArchDaily*, accessed April 9, 2021. [https://www.archdaily.com/461990/extension-of-gubbio-cemetery-andrea-dragoni-francesco-pes/52b918cce8e44e83af0000b3-extension-of-gubbio-cemetery-andrea-dragoni-francesco-pes-photo?next\\_project=no](https://www.archdaily.com/461990/extension-of-gubbio-cemetery-andrea-dragoni-francesco-pes/52b918cce8e44e83af0000b3-extension-of-gubbio-cemetery-andrea-dragoni-francesco-pes-photo?next_project=no)

[Figure 2.1.14] “An alley in the medieval walled town of Gubbio, Italy” by Anguskirk is licensed under CC BY-NC-ND 2.0

[Figure 2.1.15] Dragoni, Andrea. “urban\_plan.” Digital image. Web article. *ArchDaily*, accessed April 9, 2021. [https://www.archdaily.com/461990/extension-of-gubbio-cemetery-andrea-dragoni-francesco-pes/52b918cce8e44e83af0000b3-extension-of-gubbio-cemetery-andrea-dragoni-francesco-pes-photo?next\\_project=no](https://www.archdaily.com/461990/extension-of-gubbio-cemetery-andrea-dragoni-francesco-pes/52b918cce8e44e83af0000b3-extension-of-gubbio-cemetery-andrea-dragoni-francesco-pes-photo?next_project=no)

[Figure 2.1.16] Dragoni, Andrea. “Floor\_plan.” Digital image. Web article. *ArchDaily*, accessed April 9, 2021. [https://www.archdaily.com/461990/extension-of-gubbio-cemetery-andrea-dragoni-francesco-pes/52b918cce8e44e83af0000b3-extension-of-gubbio-cemetery-andrea-dragoni-francesco-pes-photo?next\\_project=no](https://www.archdaily.com/461990/extension-of-gubbio-cemetery-andrea-dragoni-francesco-pes/52b918cce8e44e83af0000b3-extension-of-gubbio-cemetery-andrea-dragoni-francesco-pes-photo?next_project=no)

[Figure 2.2.1] “Enric Miralles, Carme Pinós, Igualada Cemetery, 1985-94, Barcelona, Spain” by Diego Terna is licensed under CC BY-NC-ND 2.0

[Figure 2.2.2] Silver, Jordan. “Portbou Cemetery.” Digital image. *Atlas Obscura*, accessed April 10, 2021. <https://www.atlasobscura.com/places/walter-benjamin-memorial>

[Figure 2.2.3] “Memorial de Walter Benjamin” by Hugo Pardo Kuklinski is licensed under CC BY 2.0

[Figure 2.2.4] Chemollo, Alessandra. "ard\_13." Digital image. Web article. *ArchDaily*, accessed April 9, 2021. [https://www.archdaily.com/461990/extension-of-gubbio-cemetery-andrea-dragoni-francesco-pes/52b918cce8e44e83af0000b3-extension-of-gubbio-cemetery-andrea-dragoni-francesco-pes-photo?next\\_project=no](https://www.archdaily.com/461990/extension-of-gubbio-cemetery-andrea-dragoni-francesco-pes/52b918cce8e44e83af0000b3-extension-of-gubbio-cemetery-andrea-dragoni-francesco-pes-photo?next_project=no)

[Figure 2.2.5] Chemollo, Alessandra. "ard\_20." Digital image. Web article. *ArchDaily*, accessed April 9, 2021. [https://www.archdaily.com/461990/extension-of-gubbio-cemetery-andrea-dragoni-francesco-pes/52b918cce8e44e83af0000b3-extension-of-gubbio-cemetery-andrea-dragoni-francesco-pes-photo?next\\_project=no](https://www.archdaily.com/461990/extension-of-gubbio-cemetery-andrea-dragoni-francesco-pes/52b918cce8e44e83af0000b3-extension-of-gubbio-cemetery-andrea-dragoni-francesco-pes-photo?next_project=no)

[Figure 2.2.6] "Cementiri Nou d'Igualada (3)" by calafellvalo is licensed under CC BY-NC-ND 2.0

[Figure 2.2.7] Dowse, Jonathan. "A screened niche next to the lower walk." Digital image. *JBDowse*, accessed April 10, 2021. <https://jbdowse.com/eur/igualada-3>

[Figure 2.2.8] Bradley, Darren. "brion 9." Digital image. *Modernist Architecture*, accessed April 10, 2021. <http://modernistarchitecture.blogspot.com/2018/05/my-pilgrimage-to-tomba-brion.html>

[Figure 2.2.9] Bradley, Darren. "brion 4." Digital image. *Modernist Architecture*, accessed April 10, 2021. <http://modernistarchitecture.blogspot.com/2018/05/my-pilgrimage-to-tomba-brion.html>

[Figure 2.2.10] Scarpa, Carlo. "Brion Cemetery Meditation Pavilion drawing, ca. 1970." Web article. *Phaidon*, accessed April 8, 2021. <https://www.phaidon.com/agenda/architecture/articles/2013/december/23/carlo-scarpas-cemetery-for-brionvega-boss/>

[Figure 2.2.11] Brion cemetery, sketch of meditation pavilion (was under construction), by author, 2017

[Figure 2.2.12] "Brion Cemetery" by Penn State Libraries Pictures Collection is licensed under CC BY-NC 2.0

[Figure 2.2.13] Bradley, Darren. "brion 5." Digital image. *Modernist Architecture*, accessed April 10, 2021. <http://modernistarchitecture.blogspot.com/2018/05/my-pilgrimage-to-tomba-brion.html>

[Figure 2.3.1] "Cementiri Nou Igualada" by Luis E Carranza is licensed under CC BY-NC-SA 2.0

[Figure 2.3.2] Chemollo, Alessandra. "ard\_12." Digital image. Web article. *ArchDaily*, accessed April 9, 2021. [https://www.archdaily.com/461990/extension-of-gubbio-cemetery-andrea-dragoni-francesco-pes/52b918cce8e44e83af0000b3-extension-of-gubbio-cemetery-andrea-dragoni-francesco-pes-photo?next\\_project=no](https://www.archdaily.com/461990/extension-of-gubbio-cemetery-andrea-dragoni-francesco-pes/52b918cce8e44e83af0000b3-extension-of-gubbio-cemetery-andrea-dragoni-francesco-pes-photo?next_project=no)

[Figure 2.3.3] Chemollo, Alessandra. "ard\_21." Digital image. Web article. *ArchDaily*, accessed April 9, 2021. [https://www.archdaily.com/461990/extension-of-gubbio-cemetery-andrea-dragoni-francesco-pes/52b918cce8e44e83af0000b3-extension-of-gubbio-cemetery-andrea-dragoni-francesco-pes-photo?next\\_project=no](https://www.archdaily.com/461990/extension-of-gubbio-cemetery-andrea-dragoni-francesco-pes/52b918cce8e44e83af0000b3-extension-of-gubbio-cemetery-andrea-dragoni-francesco-pes-photo?next_project=no)

[Figure 2.3.4] Brion cemetery, casual use of lawn, photo by author, 2017

[Figure 2.3.5] "Carlo Scarpa, architect: Brion tomb, San Vito d'Altivole cemetery, 1969-1978 (largely completed by 1972)." by Jens Kristian Seier is licensed under CC BY-NC 2.0

[Figure 2.3.6] Brion cemetery, view from Scarpa's grave in to lawn beyond, photo by author, 2017

[Figure 2.3.7] Brion cemetery, view into rear of chapel, photo by author, 2017

[Figure 2.3.8] "Cementiri Nou Igualada" by Luis E Carranza is licensed under CC BY-NC-SA 2.0

[Figure 2.3.9] Toyo Ito & Associates, Architects. "Crematorium in Kakamigahara." *Toyo Ito & Associates, Architects*, accessed April 10, 2021. [http://www.toyo-ito.co.jp/WWW/Project\\_Descript/2005-/2005-p\\_07/2005-p\\_07\\_en.html](http://www.toyo-ito.co.jp/WWW/Project_Descript/2005-/2005-p_07/2005-p_07_en.html)

[Figure 2.3.10] "Igualada Cemetery, Enric Miralles and Carme Pinós, Igualada, Spain, gates" by Velcro. is licensed with CC BY 2.0

[Figure 2.3.11] Miralles, Enric. "Photographic study of Igualada Cemetery." Digital still from *Le Cimetiere D'Igualada*, by Richard Copans, 2010; France: Arte Distribution, 2011.

[Figure 2.3.12] Miralles, Enric, and Pinós, Carme. "Plans and sections." Digital image. Web article. *ArchDaily*, accessed April 10, 2021. <https://www.archdaily.com/375034/ad-classics-igualada-cemetery-enric-miralles-carme-pinos>

# APPENDIX

## OTHER CULTURES

With limited time and space to explore this topic, I chose to limit my research on European cemeteries with western funerary rituals since my initial inspiration came from a visit to the Brion cemetery. Although I attempt to keep a more universal reading of the architectural elements by supporting ideas with psychoanalytical theories, temporal qualities entangled with funerary rituals are undeniably dependent on their culture. This research can therefore be expanded to encompass other cultures, such as Japan, that perhaps have a more cyclical sense of time.

Carlo Scarpa uses many references from Japanese culture in his designs as Mark Cannata describes in his paper, "Carlo Scarpa and Japan: The influence of Japanese art and architecture on the work of Carlo Scarpa". Cannata compares the architecture of Scarpa to Japanese notion of Wabi-Sabi<sup>1</sup> and the symbolic journey from one world to another or a journey of purification.<sup>2</sup> In his visit to Japan, Scarpa noted that buildings and their immediate surroundings were within one composition. His main fascination was the architecture of the tea house and its spatial organization based on the rituals of the tea ceremony. One important element of the Japanese tea house is the small entrance door that forces a humble entry into the ceremony room, the influence of this choreographed entry portal can be seen in the various thresholds in the Brion cemetery's architecture. Cannata describes several other symbolic Japanese influences such as the purification of the movement from light to dark in the Shinto religion, and the use of water as a metaphorical bridge between physical and symbolic realms.

The notions of temporality that influenced Scarpa's architecture can be further researched within the context of Japan and Japanese architecture for death. A cyclical sense of time may change the way in which different times are entangled with one another, and so the architecture for death may not be a cemetery or place of memory, but rather a place of pure transition. The architecture in this case may be different, but further research can examine if time-based cues in the space still apply to evoke an understanding of the cyclical passage of time.

<sup>1</sup> Sabi defined as "chill", "lean" or "withered", Wabi defined as a state of mind or way of life.  
<sup>2</sup> Cannata, op. cit., p. 4





