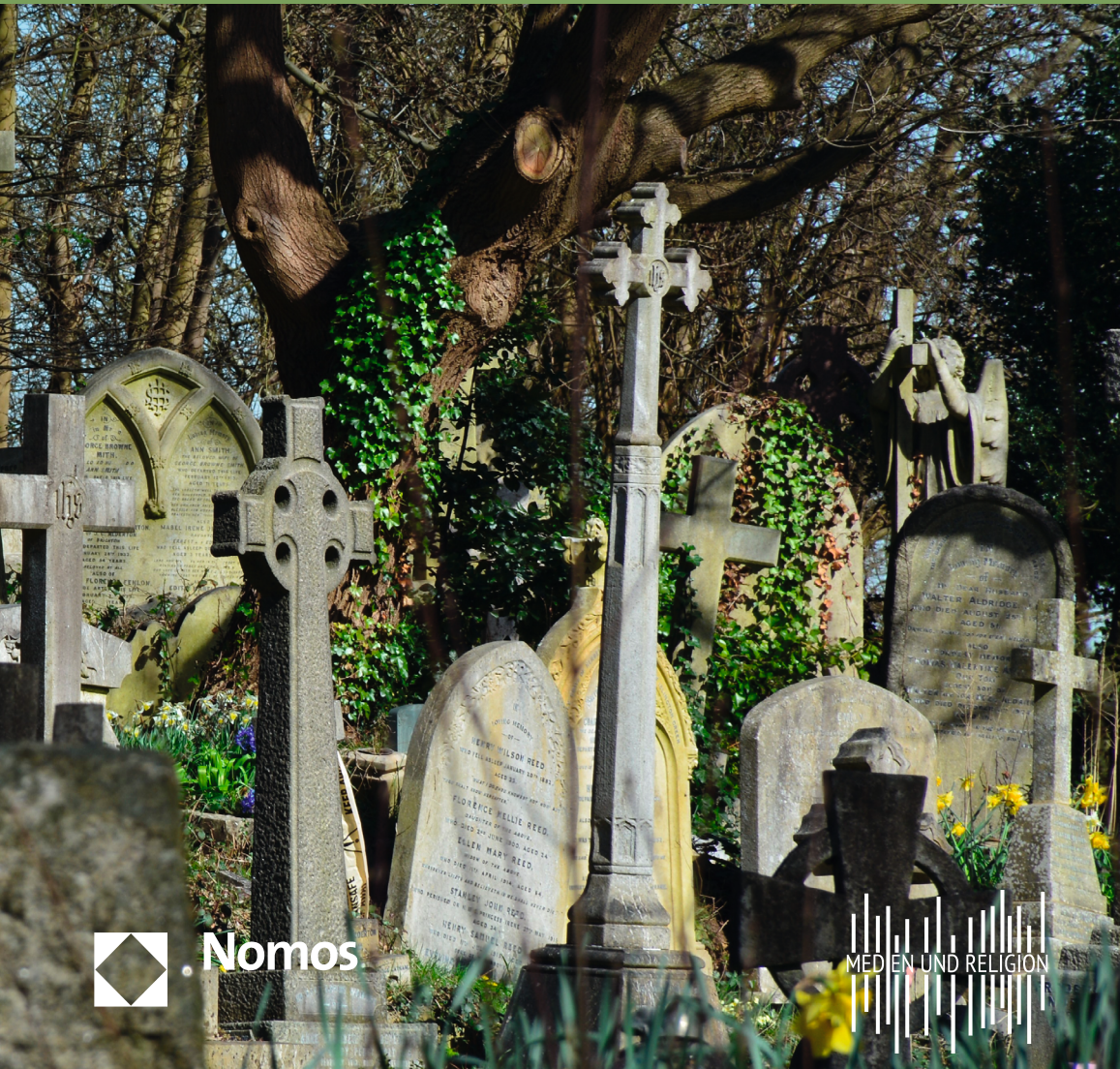


Marie-Therese Mäder | Alberto Saviello | Baldassare Scolari [eds.]

Highgate Cemetery

Image Practices in Past and Present



Nomos



MEDIEN UND RELIGION

Media and Religion | Medien und Religion

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Volume 1 | Band 1

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© Coverpicture: Graves in the East Cemetery (Image: Daria Pezzoli-Olgianti 2018)

The publication was supported by the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF).



SCHWEIZERISCHER NATIONALFONDS
ZUR FÖRDERUNG DER WISSENSCHAFTLICHEN FORSCHUNG

The Deutsche Nationalbibliothek lists this publication in the Deutsche Nationalbibliografie; detailed bibliographic data are available on the Internet at <http://dnb.d-nb.de>

ISBN 978-3-8487-5277-5 (Print)
978-3-8452-9452-0 (ePDF)

British Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

ISBN 978-3-8487-5277-5 (Print)
978-3-8452-9452-0 (ePDF)

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Mäder, Marie-Therese / Saviello, Alberto / Scolari, Baldassare
Highgate Cemetery
Image Practices in Past and Present
Marie-Therese Mäder / Alberto Saviello / Baldassare Scolari (eds.)
376 pp.
Includes bibliographic references.

ISBN 978-3-8487-5277-5 (Print)
978-3-8452-9452-0 (ePDF)

1st Edition 2020

© Marie-Therese Mäder / Alberto Saviello / Baldassare Scolari (eds.)

Published by
Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft mbH & Co. KG
Waldseestraße 3-5 | 76530 Baden-Baden
www.nomos.de

Production of the printed version:
Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft mbH & Co. KG
Waldseestraße 3-5 | 76530 Baden-Baden

ISBN (Print): 978-3-8487-5277-5
ISBN (ePDF): 978-3-8452-9452-0

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5771/9783845294520>



Onlineversion
Nomos eLibrary



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Table of Contents

Preface	9
Image Practices at Highgate Past and Present Introduction	11
<i>Marie-Therese Mäder, Alberto Saviello, Baldassare Scolari</i>	
<i>I. The Broader Image</i>	
Experiencing Highgate Cemetery as a Place Landscape, Text, Threshold	33
<i>Carla Danani</i>	
Performing Difference in Front of Death Material, Bodily and Spatial Practice	53
<i>Daria Pezzoli-Olgiati</i>	
The Politics of Death Death and Politics in Victorian England	79
<i>Ann Jeffers</i>	
<i>II. Politics of Images</i>	
Looking for Jenny & Co. The Image as Practice for a Feminist Imaginary	93
<i>Dolores Zoé Bertschinger</i>	
Remembering Karl Marx Image – Icon – Idol	121
<i>Baldassare Scolari</i>	

Sport as Bodily Practice of Remembrance Remembering Heroes, Remembering Nations <i>Alexander Darius Ornella</i>	149
---	-----

III. Image Cultivation

Public Events at a Historic-Religious Site Highgate Cemetery in London as a Cultural Practice <i>Marie-Therese Mäder</i>	175
--	-----

Highgate Cemetery at a Crossroads How to Take the Right Turn? A Contribution Based on the Economic Theory of Clubs <i>Michael Leo Ulrich</i>	197
---	-----

IV. Fantastic Images

Tales of the Dead Narrating Highgate Cemetery between Nostalgia and Heterotopia <i>Niels Penke</i>	217
--	-----

A Top-Hat, a Mad Murderess, a Vampire King Practices, Imaginations, and the Materiality of Haunted Highgate <i>Anna-Katharina Höpflinger</i>	235
--	-----

V. Images of Eternity

«Simply to thy Cross I cling» Hymns and the Performance of Memory in Victorian Highgate Cemetery <i>Sean Michael Ryan</i>	255
--	-----

Highgate Cemetery A City of Angels <i>Natalie Fritz</i>	273
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VI. *Images of a Paradise Garden*

Requiescant in Pace Staging Nature as a Socio-Religious Practice in Highgate Cemetery <i>Paola von Wyss-Giacosa</i>	307
Animal, Vegetable or Mineral? Performativity of Living Images in Highgate Cemetery <i>Ann Jeffers</i>	329
Highgate Cemetery's Landscape as a Matrix of Imagination <i>Alberto Saviello</i>	349
Authors	373

Preface

The current volume is the third publication of the interdisciplinary research network *International Exchange on Media and Religion*. The publication distinguishes itself from the previous two projects of the network insofar as we decided to focus on a single object – Highgate Cemetery in London – whilst asking questions from different perspectives. The interdisciplinary approach, which not only shapes the volume itself but also most of the single contributions, offers a diversity of insights, not only into Highgate cemetery's past and present state but also into the general role of images in socio-religious practices. By choosing Highgate cemetery as a single focus and source we intended to bring anthropology, art history, history, literary studies, media studies, philosophy, study of religion, and theology into conversation with each other.

Besides the different theories and scholarly methods presented in each chapter, the project itself applied a specific working mode. During two workshops in London hosted by Heythrop College in 2016 and 2017 the authors extensively discussed each of the papers. In addition we visited the cemetery together, the west part in a guided tour and the east part on our own. To work together on the same object, visiting it, and experiencing this extraordinary place proved to be extremely fruitful for our thinking. The theoretical and methodical discussions left the university building and took place on site. The individual impressions that were collectively shared enriched our images/perception of the cemetery and each single contribution. By walking between the tomb stones, trees, and grave figures many conversations between the researchers from England, Germany, Italy and Switzerland evolved and personal experiences were exchanged. The aim of this working mode was to test and intertwine different approaches to analyse the multilayered and complex network of images which constitute Highgate Cemetery, both as an actual and as a medial place. The presentation of the work at the annual conference of the European Association of the Study of Religion (EASR) in Bern (CH) in 2018 was not only a wonderful reunion with colleagues but also showed the fruit of our collaboration.

The project was possible thanks to the support of various institutions and people. Heythrop College kindly hosted the group on two occasions with the help of Ann Jeffers and Sean Ryan. The Center for Religion, Economy and Politics at the University of Zurich (ZRWP), the Ludwig-

Maximillian-Universität München (LMU), the research group Media and Religion, the personal funding of each researcher made this project possible, and the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF), which funded this publication. And finally our special recognition goes to Sean Ryan who proofread the chapters with great attention, precision and endless patience.

The structure of the table of contents mirrors the different approaches and narratives that were developed in our workshops during which conspicuous similarities between papers led to their being clustered into grouped sections. Thematically, the book does not aim to exhaustively cover Highgate cemetery and its history, but rather the section titles open-up the particular realms and topics that our academic exchange about image practices at Highgate cemetery creatively generated. The following introduction aims to shed light on this complex phenomenon.

Zürich, Frankfurt/M, Meilen, autumn 2020

Marie-Therese Mäder

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