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Cemetery in Sweden as cultural landscape

**-A phenomenological study on cemetery design
and planning in Stockholm**

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Abstract

The focus of this thesis is centered around the cemeteries in Stockholm city. As a form of arrangement and design of objects located on the land, the cemetery can be conceptualized as a landscape. Its distinct function, serving as a memorial space for the living and a final resting place for the deceased, adds layers of complexity. As such, the cemetery becomes a shared space for both the living and the dead, reflecting and encompassing local social and cultural dynamics, including shifting attitudes towards death and burial practices, as well as the utilization and formation of urban spaces. By studying the cemeteries in Stockholm, this thesis aspires to discover intriguing phenomena from the point of view of the design and planning of cemeteries, and to establish certain connections between them and the Swedish social and cultural factors involved in the formation of contemporary cemeteries.

The core concepts that guide this thesis are the notion of cultural landscape introduced by Carl Sauer and the phenomenological methodology. Within the framework of cultural landscape, the visible landscape is regarded as a result of the interplay between cultural and natural forces, culminating in what is known as a "cultural landscape"; Employing the phenomenological methodology allows for an exploration of the meanings embedded within a landscape by examining the phenomena it presents. Therefore, the social and cultural aspects inherent in a cemetery, as a cultural landscape, can be identified and analyzed through the study of its physical forms and associated texts, (material objects or expressions that possess human meaning).

Through these theoretical frameworks, with case studies as the primary method, alongside contextual facts related to cemeteries in Sweden, this thesis has obtained various findings. They are summarized in three-fold conclusions: 1) The openness of Swedish cemeteries; 2) Burial types and identities of the deceased; and 3) Landscape design in the cemeteries. Drawing on these conclusions, the thesis also offers a brief discussion on potential future directions for cemetery development, particularly in relation to a new cemetery currently under construction in Stockholm. This thesis may provide valuable insights for architects, designers, geographers, and sociologists, informing their future research, design, and planning endeavors within the realm of cemeteries in Sweden.

Key words: cultural landscape, Swedish cemeteries, cemetery design, cemetery planning, burial, cremation, phenomenology, landscape design, parks, Stockholm, Sweden

Word count: 15 908

Glossary

- Allemansrätten - the Right of Public Access
- Begravningslagen - the Burial Act
- Ekonomibyggnad - utility buildings in cemeteries
- Kyrkogård/Begravningsplats - cemetery
- Kyrkogårdsnämnden - the Cemetery Board Stockholms
- Kyrkogårdsförvaltning - Stockholm Cemetery Administration
- Stockholms stad - Stockholm Municipality
- Svenska Kyrkans Arbetsgivarorganisation - the Church of Sweden Employers' Association
- Svenska Kyrkan - the Church of Sweden

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1. Introduction

Stockholm's World Heritage Site - Skogskyrkogården (The Woodland Cemetery) – sparked debates in the winter of 2021, as many people, especially children, went sledding on its hillsides (Dagson, 2021). While this is not the first time this discussion has arisen; similar activities other than the traditional ones in a cemetery have also taken place in other Swedish cities (Rae, 2021; Nordh et al., 2023; Grabalov, 2018). Although the hillsides where people sled are not in the burial areas in Skogskyrkogården, it is nevertheless an interesting phenomenon: why would people choose a cemetery for such activities? Is it always permitted, and does the planning of the cemetery, besides the policies and laws, support such behaviors?

In essence, what is presented to us extends beyond a mere physical landscape, aligning with Carl Sauer's concept of a "cultural landscape," which emphasizes the role of cultural influences in shaping the environment. Landscapes are seen as cultural expressions, as human civilization generates culture that becomes internalized within the physical surroundings. Over time, this interaction between culture and nature yields a "cultural landscape," representing a geographic area in the final meaning (Sauer, 1963). It is not only the result of human alteration of the natural (physical) landscape, but also of human adaptation to it: aided by those suggestions which man has derived from nature, we get the feeling of harmony between the human habitation and the landscape into which it so fittingly blends (ibid). Although Swedish cemetery design exhibits many unique features that have been explored in several research, there are few studies that have directly related it to Swedish society and culture through the lens of the concept of cultural landscape.

Sledding serves as an example of the various ways in which Swedish cemeteries are utilized, reflecting a range of social and cultural aspects in Sweden around cemeteries. Cemeteries inherently possess unique spatial characteristics and an atmosphere of remembrance, serving as a resting place for the deceased and a site for mourning and commemoration for the living. However, what specifically distinguishes the cemetery spaces in Stockholm and Sweden at large? Are there cultural dimensions evident in the

diverse uses of cemeteries that have implications for their planning and design? These questions directly lead to this thesis.



Figure 1. People sledding on the hillsides of Skogskyrkogården (The Woodland Cemetery). (TV4, 2021)

The motive of this thesis is to highlight the value of culture in the realm of design and planning and explore their interrelationship, which should not be overlooked. Local culture exerts a profound influence on people's behaviors, as well as the planning and design of the surrounding environments, including cemeteries. Cemeteries have evolved into a crucial component of our cultural heritage. The appearance of our cemeteries today reflects society's view of death and burial over several hundred years, both in terms of the architectural design of the cemeteries with burial blocks, pathways and vegetations, as well as the design of the grave apparatus with gravestones, inscriptions, decorations and selection of plants.

1.1 Aims & Research questions

This thesis endeavors to explore the planning and design of contemporary Swedish cemeteries within an urban context, utilizing a phenomenological methodology. Drawing inspiration from the cemeteries in Stockholm, the study aims to uncover noteworthy phenomena pertaining to their planning and design. These phenomena will be interpreted through the lens of the cultural landscape concept, with the objective of

establishing connections between the observed phenomena and various aspects of Swedish society. This includes customs, traditions, institutions, and other cultural elements that shape Sweden's social and cultural fabric in relation to burial practices and the formation of cemeteries.

To guide the study towards this objective, two progressive research questions have been formulated:

1. What distinct phenomena can be observed in the design, planning, and utilization of cemeteries in present-day Stockholm?
2. How do these identified phenomena reflect social and cultural aspects of Sweden, and what connections can be established between these phenomena and the broader social and cultural context?

1.2 Ontology and epistemology

First, a qualitative approach is used in the thesis to examine phenomena such as the representation of design and planning as well as the usage of cemeteries in Stockholm. With the intention of exploring the relationships between the design and planning of cemeteries and aspects of Swedish society and culture in the context of Sweden, this thesis is based on a relativist ontology of constructivism where realities are “apprehendable in the form of multiple, intangible mental constructions, socially and experientially based, local and specific in nature” (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Constructivism ultimately recognizes the complexity of the reality, when the formation of today’s cemeteries is indeed complex with various factors as well as different related agents involved, such as policies, institutions, traditions, customs, aesthetics, and spirituality, etc.

Under constructivism, the conventional distinction between ontology and epistemology disappears (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Since reality is conceived as "constructed," our understanding of the world is thus subjective - it is based on our comprehension and interpretation of "how it is constructed". In addition, phenomenology as the guiding

methodology of this thesis also defines the epistemology of it, i.e., we can acquire knowledge by observing and experience the phenomena in the world in order to access to and capture the essential nature of them (which will be further explained in the theoretical framework section). Returning to the topic of the thesis, the representation of cemetery design and planning and the understanding of relevant texts will enable us to interpret the role of Swedish society and culture in the formation of cemeteries.

1.3 Delimitations & limitations

This thesis is a generic study that intends to capture the phenomena present in urban cemeteries and the commonalities of Swedish society that they reflect. Given the diversity of cemeteries and demographics in Stockholm city, it could largely cover the various situations in the design, planning, and usage of the majority of Swedish cemeteries. Hence the context of this thesis is set in the cemeteries in the urban area of Stockholm as an example of Swedish cemetery. Indeed, there is a large population currently living in the adjacent municipalities of Stockholm, yet although it would have a certain influence on the aspects of the population of visitors and buried deceased, as this thesis does not intend to trace the demographic situation of the cemeteries but only the observable phenomena, this factor is not to be considered.

Moreover, since this thesis intends to focus on the relationship between urban cemeteries in contemporary Sweden and Swedish society and culture, and many of the impacts on this occurred after the modernization turn of Sweden in the mid-19th century (as will be elaborated in the thesis), the time frame of the focus is set in the 19th century and after.

1.4 Disposition

The thesis is divided into six sections and subdivided into different parts. The Introduction section is followed by relevant background, including Stockholm's urban demographics, cemetery management and types of graves, Swedish funeral ceremonies, cultural attitudes towards death, Swedish cultural attitudes towards death, cemetery

design in Sweden, the current situation of cemeteries as recreational spaces. In the third section the theoretical framework is explained, covering the fundamental concepts and methodology. The fourth section is on research design, which focuses on the methods and case selection of the thesis. The fifth section is the findings of the case studies, followed by a concluding section where the relationship between Swedish cemetery design and planning and social and cultural layers is established. Lastly, some discussion is given on the planning of new cemeteries in Sweden.

2. Background

2.1 Urban demographic and diverse society in Sweden

As of December 2020, 88% of Sweden's population resided in urban areas, with one-third of the total population residing in urban areas having more than 100,000 inhabitants (SCB, 2021). The rise in urbanization in Sweden is primarily influenced by immigration rather than people relocating from rural regions to urban areas (Boverket, 2019). According to the statistics of 2022 from SCB (Statistics Sweden, the Swedish government agency responsible for producing official statistics), in the metropolitan areas of the 3 largest cities of Sweden, Stockholm, Gothenburg, and Malmö, the residents born in other countries are respectively 660,567, 238,949, and 201,307, which take about 27%, 22.3%, and 26.3% of the total population of each region (SCB, 2022), and for Stockholm Municipality, from 2015 to 2022, the population increased from 923,516 to 984,748, and 64% of the new residents were born in other countries (SCB, 2022). The ten most common countries of origin for people immigrating to Sweden in 2022 were emigrants returning to Sweden, India, Poland, Germany, Syria, Pakistan, Iran, Afghanistan, Turkey, and Romania (Statista Research Department, 2023). At the same time, the religious affiliation of Sweden has become more diverse from the dominant Lutheran Christianity of the Church of Sweden. Although in Sweden the state is not allowed to register religious affiliation, we can still refer to the data in the CIA World Factbook: Church of Sweden (Lutheran) 57.6%, other (includes Roman Catholic, Orthodox, Baptist, Muslim, Jewish, and Buddhist) 8.9%, none or unspecified 33.5% (Central Intelligence Agency, 2019).

As the demographics change, we can also witness changes of culture in Sweden, including funerary culture. This has also placed demands on the design of cemeteries. The report of research project CEMI (Cemeteries and Crematoria as public spaces of belonging in Europe: a study of migrant and minority cultural inclusion, exclusion and integration) - *A roadmap for inclusive cemeteries and crematoria in diverse societies* pointed out the urge of creating more inclusive cemeteries and crematoria in European countries with more diverse societies, including Sweden, since there are still national

legislation and dominant cultural norms reflected in cemetery and crematorium infrastructure and services that can be exclusionary for minorities (Beebejaun et al., 2022). The report also proposed a number of suggestions for cemetery design for this goal, including having: facilitation of diverse funerary needs and preferences, including secular and local religious communities, neutral ritual buildings (e.g. no religious iconography), a selection of appropriate portable religious icons that can be used on an optional basis in funeral rituals, and adaptable ritual buildings (e.g. overflow spaces for large funerals with TV screen relay), etc. (ibid)

2.2 Management and governance of cemeteries

In Sweden, the entity that is responsible for funerals, cremations and burials is called the burial authority. The burial authority is responsible for these activities within a specific geographic area called the administrative district. There may be several burial authorities within a municipality, and the administrative district of a burial authority may be located in several municipalities. The burial authority is obliged to provide a grave for all deceased residents registered in the authority's administrative district. It must provide and maintain a sufficient number of graves, and provide special graves for people who are not members of a Christian faith community. Funerals, cremations and burials also include receiving the body of a deceased person for storage and viewing, performing cremations and burials, and providing premises without religious symbols for a funeral ceremony. (Svenska Kyrkans Arbetsgivarorganisation, 2020).

The burial authority is usually the parishes and groups of parishes of the Church of Sweden, but in Stockholm and Tranås it is also the municipalities (Svenska Kyrkans Arbetsgivarorganisation, 2020). As for Stockholm, the Cemetery Board, appointed by the City Council, has political responsibility for burial activities in Stockholm city and is responsible for the Cemetery Administration (Stockholms stad, 2021). The Cemetery Administration is responsible for burial services in Stockholm and manages 11 cemeteries: Skogskyrkogården, Norra begravningsplatsen, Strandkyrkogården, Sandsborgskyrkogården, Räcksta begravningsplats, Hässelby begravningsplats, Bromma kyrkogård, Brännkyrka kyrkogård, Spånga kyrkogård, Galärvarvskyrkogården,

and Västberga begravningsplats. There are also many other public and private cemeteries managed by Jewish, Catholic and other parishes and foundations besides the Church of Sweden (Stockholms stad, 2022a, 2022b, 2023a).

Anyone who was registered in Sweden at the time of their death is entitled to a free grave for 25 years in a public or private cemetery. Burial activities and cremation is paid for, with certain reservations, by the burial fee. Everyone who is registered in the population register in Sweden and pays municipal income tax would pay the burial fee, and is entitled to the services listed in the Burial Act. As of 2017, this applies throughout Sweden, except Stockholm and Tranås Municipality. Before the start of each budget year, the municipal councils in Stockholm and Tranås decide the size of the burial fee that the inhabitants in these municipalities will pay (Stockholms stad, 2023a; Svenska Kyrkans Arbetsgivarorganisation, 2020).

2.3 Types of Graves

There are various types of graves in Swedish cemeteries, such as:

- Kistgravplats (coffin grave);
- Urngravplats (urn grave);
- Askgravplats (ash burial grave);
- A space in a minneslund (memorial grove);
- Kistminneslund (e.g. a woodland burial ground where coffins are buried in a collective area);
- An askgravlund (a burial ground for collective use like a memorial grove, but in which the ashes are buried not scattered);
- A niche in a kolumbarium or urnmur (indoor or outdoor columbarium).

There is no entitlement to be granted a grave in advance (Svenska Kyrkans Arbetsgivarorganisation, 2020). Not all types are offered by all burial authorities nor all cemeteries. The range offered is determined by factors such as the demand among parishioners. Different burial authorities may have local names and descriptions for the various types of graves (ibid).

In Stockholm, one can choose a grave in the public cemeteries managed either by the Cemetery Administration, the parishes of the Church of Sweden, or by other organizations (Stockholms stad, 2023a). For the cemeteries whose burial authorities are the parishes, some graves have burial rights, some have limited burial rights and others have none. Burial rights are usually held by the person(s) appointed by the estate of the deceased, when use of a new grave is granted (Svenska Kyrkans Arbetsgivarorganisation, 2020).

The types of graves *with burial rights* are kistgravplatser, with space for one or more coffins (or urns), and urngravplatser, with space for one or more urns. The rights include entitlement to decorate the grave and, after obtaining approval from the burial authority, to have a gravestone or other fixed memorial erected or installed (ibid).

Graves *with limited burial rights* include restrictions on the right of the holder of the burial right to determine the appearance and nature of the grave memorial and other aspects of the decoration and arrangement of the grave. This applies to graves for cremated remains called askgravplatser, a niche in a kolumbarium and a niche in an urnmur, literally an “urn wall”, which may have space for one or more urns (ibid).

Types of graves *without burial rights* are askgravlund, a minneslund and a kistminneslund. The burial authority takes care of the maintenance in these areas. Relatives are usually invited to attend the burial of ashes in the type of memorial grove called an askgravlund. The minneslund and kistminneslund are anonymous burial areas, where cemetery staff scatter/bury the ashes or bury the coffin without relatives of the deceased being present (ibid).

According to the Burial Act, the body does not need to be placed in a coffin, but for health and safety reasons for the burial authority’s employees, a coffin is usually used in coffin burials. A coffin must always be used in cremation. No urn is required if the ashes will be scattered in a memorial grove, buried directly in the grave following cremation or scattered over land or water (ibid).

2.4 Funeral ceremony in Sweden

Cremation was advocated in Sweden in the late 19th century, mainly by members of the Swedish liberal bourgeois elite (mainly male physicians, industrialists, engineers, and architects, as well as artists and intellectuals) (Åhren, 2009). After this, the burial tradition in Sweden changed decisively, with cremation becoming more common instead of coffin burial, which is a less space-intensive practice (Grabalov & Nordh, 2020). Many people would also choose to scatter their ashes in minneslund (ibid).

In Sweden, according to the Burial Act, the deceased must be buried in a coffin or cremated within 30 days of death, otherwise an application to the tax agency is required (Stockholms stad, 2022b). People can formulate their wishes about their own funeral freely. The aspects of funerals also depend on the wishes. There can be different forms of ceremonies, or no ceremony. There are funeral services for members/non-members of the Church of Sweden, other faith communities, and a civil funeral, which does not follow the Church of Sweden's or other faith communities' order of service for funerals (Svenska Kyrkans Arbetsgivarorganisation, 2020). The City of Stockholm has 13 chapels for ceremonies that are non-religious and open to all, and 2 crematoria: Skogskrematoriet at Skogskyrkogården and Råcksta krematorium at Råcksta begravningsplats (Stockholms stad, 2022b).

2.5 Swedish cultural attitudes towards death

Prior to the 20th century, the Nordic countries did not have a restrained and rational approach to death (Høeg and Pajari, 2013). In the 19th century, Swedes held beliefs that the deceased would come to visit and lit a candle for them on their birthday, which could not be touched until it had burned completely (Hagberg, 2016). Funerals in early 1900s rural Sweden involved washing the dead, placing the casket in a separate and decorated room, and following the deceased to the cemetery. Burials typically occurred before Sunday church, and the attitude toward death was based on adherence to Lutheran Protestantism. Nowadays, along with the process of modernization, Sweden has been highly secularized where the influence of Lutheranism has decreased, and a secular worldview has taken its place (Åhren, 2009). Today, although most of the

cemeteries are still managed by the Church of Sweden, it also addresses itself to individuals who may not have a keen interest in religion and therefore avoids delving into the specifics of Christian faith and identity. Rather, the Church emphasizes that both religious and non-religious people share common emotions of sorrow and despair. This approach of universalizing emotions is also applied to the practices that the Church promotes (Hutchings, 2017).

In fact, in Sweden, the perception and attitudes towards death and the dead body have changed considerably after the modernization turn towards ideals of science, technology, efficiency, and hygiene, and the professionalization and systemization of the funeral industry (Åhren, 2009). For example, according to López and Cardeña (2022)'s qualitative research, more Swedes nowadays tend to perceive death as “the end” and what afterlife is is unknown, from an apparent scientific and logical perspective (López & Cardeña, 2022). They therefore would rather focus more on living, what life had to offer and have concerns for their loved ones after their passing away (ibid). Death has generally been a taboo subject to talk about in Sweden, for it might create an uncomfortable, sad and negative atmosphere. If it could or must be talked about, the situations would only be the most private and intimate ones (ibid). In addition, Sweden seems to have lost many of its older traditions because of being able to adapt and open to new traditions and customs when the society has been changing quickly. Nowadays the “traditions” are more of an individual (person or family) behavior instead of a common sense in the society (ibid).

Another phenomenon that can be observed in the modernization turn is that the treatment of dead bodies and funeral practices became simplified: ritual acts became fewer and less differentiated. This can also be seen as one of the aspirations of a turn toward social equality in Sweden in the 20th century (Åhren, 2009). As described earlier, people in Sweden from different religious and cultural backgrounds can now choose their preferred funerary rituals. They can choose to use religious and ethnic markers to distance themselves from Swedish culture and establish a shared ancestry, or combine customs from diverse cultural backgrounds to create a new culturally diverse identity through ritual practices (Reimers, 1999). As the main manager of cemeteries

and arranger of funeral activities, The Church has also tried to adjust customs in Swedish society today. For example, they have tried to introduce candle-lighting ritual to the public, such as the tradition on All Saint's Day - "Allhelgona" which has its origins in Catholic and Orthodox immigration rather than in Lutheran theology, in order to allow people of different backgrounds to express the same emotions and mourn. It also challenges the emotional norms of Swedish society that's not bringing the topic of death into the public realm, by extending the moments of common emotional display beyond the cemetery (Hutchings, 2017).

2.6 Cemetery Design in Sweden

The cemetery serves as a site for negotiating cultural needs and normative functions, making it a significant location for expressing societal changes. Architects interpret changes, wants, and needs in society, and translate them into designs that address functional and aesthetic requirements by utilizing the site and its natural features as inspiration (Wingren, 2013). There has been two shifts from the beginning of the 20th century until today, one being a modernist tendency that superseded the symbolic and classicistic design ideals, which in Sweden is embodied in a formal concept overlaid with nature in a humble gesture; the second one is related to the contemporary challenge of a globalized society, which involves the need to give space for different cultural expressions to coexist side by side (ibid).

Architecture competitions played a significant role in shaping cemetery design, with one notable example being the Skogskyrkogården (the Woodland Cemetery) in Enskede, south Stockholm. Designed by Gunnar Asplund and Sigurd Lewerentz in the early 1900s, it is now a world heritage site. Another example is Lewerentz's another masterpiece Östra Kyrkogården (Eastern Cemetery) in Malmö that incorporated classicism, romanticism, modernism and nature as symbol and structuring element. They have influenced later cemetery designs not only in Sweden but also abroad (ibid). These cemeteries, including the ones inspired by them, are mainly based on the concept of "landscape cemeteries," which incorporate forests and pastoral landscapes into the

overall design, but they are also shaped by historical influences, with a ceremonial space and a procession walk being important design elements (Nolin, 2006).

2.7 Cemeteries as recreational spaces - a new challenge

Most recently, there has been a trend of having cemeteries in urban areas as an open and recreational space in Nordic countries, especially those ones with more greenery, along with the process of urbanization when the cities are being densified, and a few interested researchers has produced several existing studies regarding this theme (Grabalov & Nordh, 2020; Rae, 2021; Nordh et al., 2022; Nordh et al., 2023; Grabalov, 2018; Grabalov & Nordh, 2022; Evensen et al., 2017; Skår et al., 2018). The most debated topic within it has been the tension between the recreational daily lifestyles and the solemnity of death and funeral activities. Most cemeteries in Nordic countries are open public spaces for both the living and deceased, so it is conceivable that they carry different functions beyond the cemetery. But when two very different activities meet, there would naturally be conflicts, for example, people might not want joggers or dog walkers passing by while they are mourning their loved ones (Grabalov, 2018; Nordh et al., 2023), even though this shift is already happening, and some cities do have policies that support it (Nordh et al., 2023). This has hence become another challenge for future cemetery designs and plannings in urban contexts, both for newly-built and refurbishments, which involves shifts in many complex factors, including economics, policy, culture, and customs, etc. In the existing literature, there are various studies on the needs, policies, and people's usage and opinions on this topic, but relatively few, if any, mention the relationship between this issue and design with only some cursory touches such as proposing suitable zoning, signage and lighting due to due to conflicts of activities (Evensen et al., 2017, Beebeejaun et al., 2022).

3. Theoretical Frameworks

3.1 Cemetery as landscape

I would like to approach the subject of cemeteries from the perspective of landscape. In *Landscape*, Mitchell (2005) mentions that the term “landscape” denotes the particular configuration or design of objects located on the land, such as trees, meadows, buildings, streets, factories, open spaces and others, and more technically, it refers also to the shape and structure of a place, as well as a form of representation, both as an art and as a complex system of meanings (Mitchell, 2005). To a large extent, we can conclude that, as a (series of) space with specific functions, a cemetery is a form of landscape, and hence cemeteries can be conceptualized from the perspective of research on landscape. Mitchell (2005) also pointed out, the key issue for landscape research is to analyze the interrelationship of landscape as form, meaning and representation, and the starting point is understanding that “any morphology, any patterns, arrangements and looks, any representational act, does not just arise spontaneously in place” (ibid). The landscape is a consequence and manifestation of the cultural requirements of the individuals who create and depict it (Lewis, 1979). His text is mainly a discussion on the production of landscape under capitalism and the social relations and meanings within it, but it is still inspiring to argue that landscape is a concrete materialization of social relations and a representation of ideology (Mitchell, 2005). Here, landscapes are “read and grasped”, and their diverse interpretations are contended (Mitchell, 1996; Duncan & Duncan 1988; Duncan 1990; Lewis 1979). They are interpreted and contested because of the meanings attached to them (Mitchell, 2005).

When being read and comprehended, landscapes create a sense of distance, and we become detached observers when the world is converted into a distant object to be visually examined (Wiley, 2007). Landscape, as a category of art and a socially conditioned practice of visual perception, is arguably an exceptional manner of looking at and depicting the world from a raised, separated, and perhaps even "unbiased" viewpoint, which may be distinct to European and Western cultures (ibid). From this perspective, landscape is visual, and it is a “way of seeing” (ibid), which allows us to

gain access to the meanings that are represented and materialized by landscape. Here, I suggest that it is appropriate to introduce a phenomenological methodology in order to discuss the observing and understanding of the landscape (more specifically, in this thesis, the cemetery). This will be further discussed later in this section.

3.2 Cultural Landscape

After categorizing the cemetery as a landscape, I intend to introduce the notion of "culture landscape" as mentioned by Carl Sauer (1963) in his essay *The Morphology of Landscape* as the basis concept of this thesis. Wiley (2007) describes, "when Sauer talks about landscape, he is talking about a cultural entity, something human crafted, a modification of nature rather than a natural environment. (Wiley, 2007)" In this essay, he presents a classic definition of landscape as the result of the interaction of cultural and natural forces: "the cultural landscape is fashioned from a natural landscape by a cultural group. Culture is the agent, the natural area is the medium, the cultural landscape the result" (Wiley, 2007; Sauer, 1963). He sought to redirect the geographic discourse of environmental determinism of the time and instead promulgate a cultural geography that shows the formation of diverse landscapes through the interplay of human activities and natural processes, allowing for the exploration of the active role of human cultures in shaping the landscape, rather than merely responding to it (Wiley, 2007). Its task, in Sauer's words, is to describe the morphology - i.e., the shape, form, and structure - of a particular landscape, and thereby to uncover the characteristics, traces, distribution, and effects of the human cultures that inhabit and shape it (ibid).

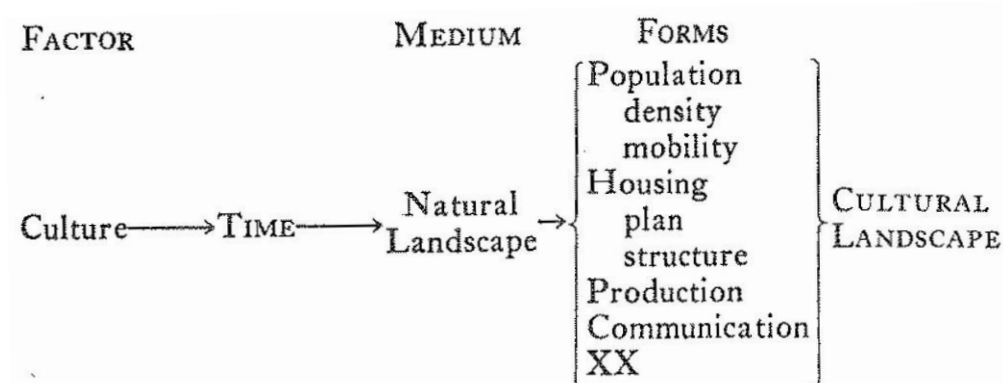


Figure 2. Diagram of how the interaction of cultural and natural forces creates cultural landscape. (Sauer, 1963)

Today, design and planning are a very important part of the process of landscape being formed (production), and the process of which, based on Sauer's theory, is cultural. This is also true for the cemetery as a landscape. We can catch a glimpse of the culture behind the presentation of the landscape, the culture emerged in a particular context and reflected in the landscape. It can also be seen how the culture contributes to the process of forming the landscape.

Culture, on the other hand, is social. Åhren (2009) wrote in *Death, Modernity, and the Body: Sweden 1870-1940* that the symbols created by culture that we find in reality only acquire their meanings in a social context, and therefore, Culture is not a metaphysical phenomenon but a social one (Åhren 2009). In this thesis, in order to avoid confusion over the meanings in terminology, two terms - "Swedish society" and "Swedish culture" - are primarily used, to cover a broader concept of "culture", including the institutions, customs, traditions, etc.

3.3 A phenomenological methodology

Phenomenology, which gained importance in the late 1800s and early 1900s, is a notable division of continental philosophy primarily due to the contributions of Edmund Husserl. Simply speaking, phenomenology is the study of human experience and seeks to understand and clarify events, meanings, and situations that occur naturally in daily life (von Eckartsberg, 1998a; Seamon, 2000a). There have been many styles of phenomenology as there are phenomenologists (Spiegelberg, 1982), but in general, a phenomenologist focuses on individual occurrences of the phenomenon, hoping that over time, these instances will reveal more general traits and features that truly capture the essential nature of the phenomenon as it exists and holds significance in the real lives and experiences of individuals (Seamon, 2000a).

As mentioned above, we can reach the knowledge and meaning embedded in the landscape through visual observation from a distance. In this scenario, the knowledge and meanings are perceived by us, detached subjects who possess specific experiences and thoughts. We are not creatures in a world but points of view upon it, as spectators looking at it from a distance, or above (Wiley, 2007). This approach is the starting point

of Husserl's phenomenological theory, which is known as "transcendental", since he believed that consciousness and its essential structures existed in a pure and isolated "realm," distinct from the constant flow of particular experiences and thoughts (Seamon, 2000b). But some later thinkers, including Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty, have argued that it is questionable because Husserl grounded his conception of reality on speculative, cerebral reflection rather than on actual human experience taking place within the world of everyday life (Schmidt, 1985). Heidegger proposed an existential correction to Husserl's philosophy where he believed that consciousness was not distinct from the world or human existence, and its essential structures are in human experience rather than as pure, cerebral consciousness (Seamon, 2000b).

Merleau-Ponty, on the other hand, developed upon it by emphasizing the subjectivity of our bodies, and the understanding of the world is through engaged experience rather than transcendental detached reflection. Prior to our consciousness and thinking, our body exists in the world, and so it is also *of* the world, with a sense of spatiality. His theory makes the observer and the observed landscape intertwine - our observation and thoughts are made possible by the fact that our bodies are part of space. We do not perceive the landscape by "seeing", but through an "attunement" with the landscape (Wiley, 2007).

The connection between phenomenology and human geography is thus explicit, as both address the relationship between people and the environment we live in. The application of phenomenology to geography, on the other hand, has emerged since the 1960s. In *An inquiry into the relations between phenomenology and geography*, Relph (1970) attempted to evaluate how certain concepts of phenomenology are directly relevant to geography. He noted that both phenomenology and geography regard human beings as the ultimate point of reference for all the objects and facts of nature. First, both believe that objects of nature are utensils - they are only meaningful in terms of their utility or disutility for humans, and were only encountered and discovered in the context of human practices (Relph, 1970). Second, the world can be comprehended through the lens of human attitudes and intentions towards it, and changes in these attitudes consequently result in changes in the world (ibid). It is important to apply this kind of

human-centered perspective approach to geography study, as it offers new perspectives on comprehending the interconnection between human beings and the natural environment in geography while maintaining their coherence and significance by avoiding the reduction of experiences to mathematical symbols and physical laws, which had been broadly used in other subjects, such as anthropology (ibid; Tuan, 1971).

The phenomenological method is its most unique core. It describes the everyday world of human beings' direct experience, and through which we can identify the fundamental qualities or "essences" of the perceptual patterns related to the specific phenomena under investigation. Relph (1970) depicted three stages of the phenomenological method: 1) a careful description of the phenomena without making prior assumptions about them, and the study of the "general essences" of the phenomena. "The red color of a rose", for instance, would be a general essence of color; 2) a study about how the phenomena can appear within their fields of relationships and meanings, given the fact that the phenomena are perceived in different ways based on the perceiver's experience and their intentions; 3) an investigation into how the phenomena are formed and experienced within an individual's consciousness, which may require the identification of changes in attitudes throughout time. For example, a person's image of a city would transform from confusion to order as they become more familiar with it (Relph, 1970; Spiegelberg, 1982). They should build a description of all possible meanings of the whole structure of the observed phenomena (ibid).

Seamon (2000b) concluded four specific phenomenological methods when it comes to studies on the living environment:

- 1) First-Person Phenomenological Research

First-person phenomenological investigation involves utilizing the researcher's own personal involvement with the phenomenon as a foundation for examining its distinct attributes and properties. It can also be a starting point where the researcher becomes aware of their "preconceived notions and biases" that would be avoided when interpreting the phenomena.

2) Existential-Phenomenological Research

The basis for generalization in existential-phenomenological research is the specific experiences of specific individuals and groups involved in actual situations and places (von Eckartsberg, 1998a). For von Eckartsberg (1998b), At the core of this method is the examination of the data collected from research participants in response to a question posed by the researcher that serves to focus and guide their recall and reflection.

3) Hermeneutic-phenomenological research

Hermeneutics refers to the theory and application of interpreting, specifically the interpretation of texts, which may be any material objects or expressions that possess human meaning, such as a public document, a diary, a personal journal, a poem, a song, a painting, etc. The hermeneutic methodology appears to touch and allow the object to disclose itself to our perception, to articulate its own narrative into our comprehension (von Eckartsberg, 1998b). However, it is important to note that since there are many ways to interpret the text, the process of interpretation is never fully conclusive but rather an ongoing process.

4) Commingling Methods

This approach involves multiple methods mentioned above.

(Seamon, 2000b, p.12-17)

In addition, Seamon (2000b) also discussed the reliability of phenomenological descriptions and interpretations, mainly in response to positivist criticism. The most important question is, what criteria can be employed to verify the reliability of phenomenological descriptions and analyses?

We first need to acknowledge an existential fact that human interpretation is always only partial (Seamon, 2000b). Based on this, he argued:

In this sense, reliability from a phenomenological perspective cannot be defined as some equivalence of measurement based on some predefined scale of calculation separate from the experience and understanding of the researcher. Rather, reliability can only be had through what can be called intersubjective corroboration—in other words, can other interested parties find in their own life and experience, either directly or vicariously, what the phenomenologist has found in her own work? In this sense, the phenomenologist's interpretations are no more and no less than interpretive possibilities.

(Seamon, 2000b, p.18)

He then draws on the four qualities proposed by Polkinghorne (1983) to help judge the credibility of phenomenological interpretation, vividness, accuracy, richness, and elegance:

First, vividness is a quality that draws readers in, generating a sense of reality and honesty. Second, accuracy refers to believability in that readers are able to recognize the phenomenon in their own lifeworlds or they can imagine the situation vicariously. Third, richness relates to the aesthetic depth and quality of the description, so that the reader can enter the interpretation emotionally as well as intellectually. Finally, elegance points to descriptive economy and a disclosure of the phenomenon in a graceful, even poignant, way.

(Seamon, 2000b, p.19)

Here, the question is not subjective interpretation but rather the power to convince.

With the aim of this thesis of establishing a link between the planning and design of cemeteries within Stockholm city and Swedish society, including institutions, customs, traditions, etc., phenomenology can serve as an appropriate guiding theoretical framework. Based on accessible data, including drawings, official documents, articles, etc., and data obtained from on-site fieldwork observation and personal experience, a combination of first-person phenomenological research and hermeneutic-phenomenological research will be employed to conduct a phenomenological analysis of selected cases, according to Polkinghorne's four qualities as standards.

4. Research Design

4.1 Method

4.1.1 Case studies

This thesis is based on case studies. Case study research involves conducting an in-depth analysis of a particular case or cases, resulting in knowledge that is specific to the context. We cannot acquire knowledge and experience detached from specific contexts, while cases give us access to them (Flyvbjerg 2006). Since the data obtained is not in numerical form, analyzing the material enables the researcher to extract significance and obtain a more comprehensive comprehension of the phenomena. (MacCallum et al., 2019). This thesis selects cases in Stockholm city, where different phenomena can be observed due to the variety of cemeteries and the diversity of the buried deceased.

As described in Theoretical Framework section, the case studies here are based on phenomenological methods for studies on the living environment Seamon (2000b) proposed, and more specifically, a combination of First-person approach and Hermeneutic approach. Under these two, more particular methods are applied for each approach respectively.

4.1.2 First-person approach

The first-person approach is firstly applied in the phenomenology-based case studies of this thesis. The primary research method employed is fieldwork, which allows for direct observation and understanding of the specific contexts under investigation. The fieldwork was conducted on-site at each cemetery, utilizing a non-participant and unobtrusive observation method, which was divided into two parts: 1) observation of the planning and design aspects of the cemetery; and 2) observation of the human activities within the cemetery, in order to gather data on the phenomena related to the planning and design itself, as well as their outcomes in terms of usage.

To ensure objectivity and minimize observer bias, theoretical or preconceived notions were not imposed on the events being analyzed (Angrosino, 2004). Therefore, when recording the data (i.e., the content of the next section), neutral language was used to the extent possible, in order to describe the phenomena without assumptions. In addition, the fieldwork was conducted with little to no case-related material being collected, to avoid preconceived perceptions and/or opinions about the cases.

The fieldwork was carried out over a period of week 14 to week 16 in April 2023. Each selected cemetery was visited at least once, and if needed, certain ones were visited again for further observations of the phenomena. It is important to note that the observed and recorded phenomena were limited to this specific time frame. Most of the cemetery visits took place during the first two weeks (week 14 and 15), when the weather in Stockholm was not ideal (especially for activities in outdoor spaces) with temperature fluctuating around 0 degrees Celsius as well as occasional rain and snowfall. This factor may have influenced the number of visitors, their behaviors, and my own interpretation of the cemeteries.

There are two layers in the fieldwork. The first layer involves on-site experience and reflections emerged on-site, with relevant data recorded in the form of images and texts. I spent varying amounts of time in each cemetery, ranging from half an hour to two hours, depending on their size, while continuously recording data. The tools used for recording were an action camera as well as a cell phone (for images and text documentation). The use of a compact action camera aimed to minimize my influence as the recorder on the awareness of those being observed in the fieldworks. The second layer involves reviewing the recorded images after visiting and documenting more detailed findings and perceptions to provide contextualization for the data (phenomena). This contextualized data is presented as an open-ended narrative description, enabling the establishment of connections between cemetery design and planning and Swedish society in subsequent analyses.

4.1.3 Hermeneutic approach

Hermeneutic is generally translated as “to interpret” or “to understand”, whose aim is to uncover the meanings and intentions that are hidden in the text (Blaikie, 2004). It has been outlined in the theoretical frameworks section. The "text" here, as stated above, may be any material objects or expressions that possess human meaning, such as a public document, a diary, a personal journal, a poem, a song, a painting, etc. The conclusion section that comes later in this thesis is an attempt at interpretation of the data collected.

The interpreted contents, in addition to the data obtained during fieldwork, consists of texts obtained in other existing materials. They include information covered in the background section and relevant data about the cases, from academic literature, historical materials and policy documents, etc. The main source of information is the Internet, in addition to books and archives, ranging from official websites of the government and parishes, websites of relevant architectural offices and other private agencies, academic websites, etc.

4.2 Selection of cases

As outlined in the background section, Stockholm currently has 11 cemeteries managed by the Cemetery Administration (see Appendix 1), in addition to several others managed by the Church of Sweden, Jewish, Catholic, and other parishes and foundations. The focus of this paper primarily revolves around the 11 cemeteries managed by the Cemetery Administration, with the inclusion of six cemeteries managed by the Church of Sweden, as depicted in Figure 3. The cemeteries managed by the municipality are represented in red, while those managed by the parish are indicated in orange.

The selection of the 11 cemeteries managed by the Cemetery Administration was primarily based on considerations of cemetery size and diversity of the deceased. However, not many of them are located in or near areas of Stockholm with high population density, while there are no cemeteries managed by the Cemetery

Administration in the city center, which includes the densely populated regions of Kungsholmen, Södermalm, Norrmalm, and Östermalm (as depicted in Figure 4).

Among them the data of Norra begravningsplatsen is missing, as it is geographically located in the municipality of Solna. Considering that Solna has a similar scale to that of Hässelby-Vällingby (with Solna having 85,450 citizens and an area of 20.5km², and Hässelby-Vällingby having 76,992 citizens and an area of 19.6km²), both areas are considered to be in equivalent conditions (Stockholms stad, 2023d; SCB, 2023).



Figure 3. Maps of 11 cemeteries managed by the Cemetery Administration and 6 selected cemeteries managed by parishes. (own work)

Therefore, in order to examine the conditions of cemeteries situated in densely populated downtown areas, the design of the case studies for this thesis incorporates parish-managed cemeteries. These cemeteries were chosen based on their ability to fulfill the study objectives, with the exclusion of the extremely small kyrkotomt (a small cemetery plot by a church, as outlined in Appendix 2). Ultimately, six parish-managed cemeteries were selected for inclusion, as depicted in Figure 4.

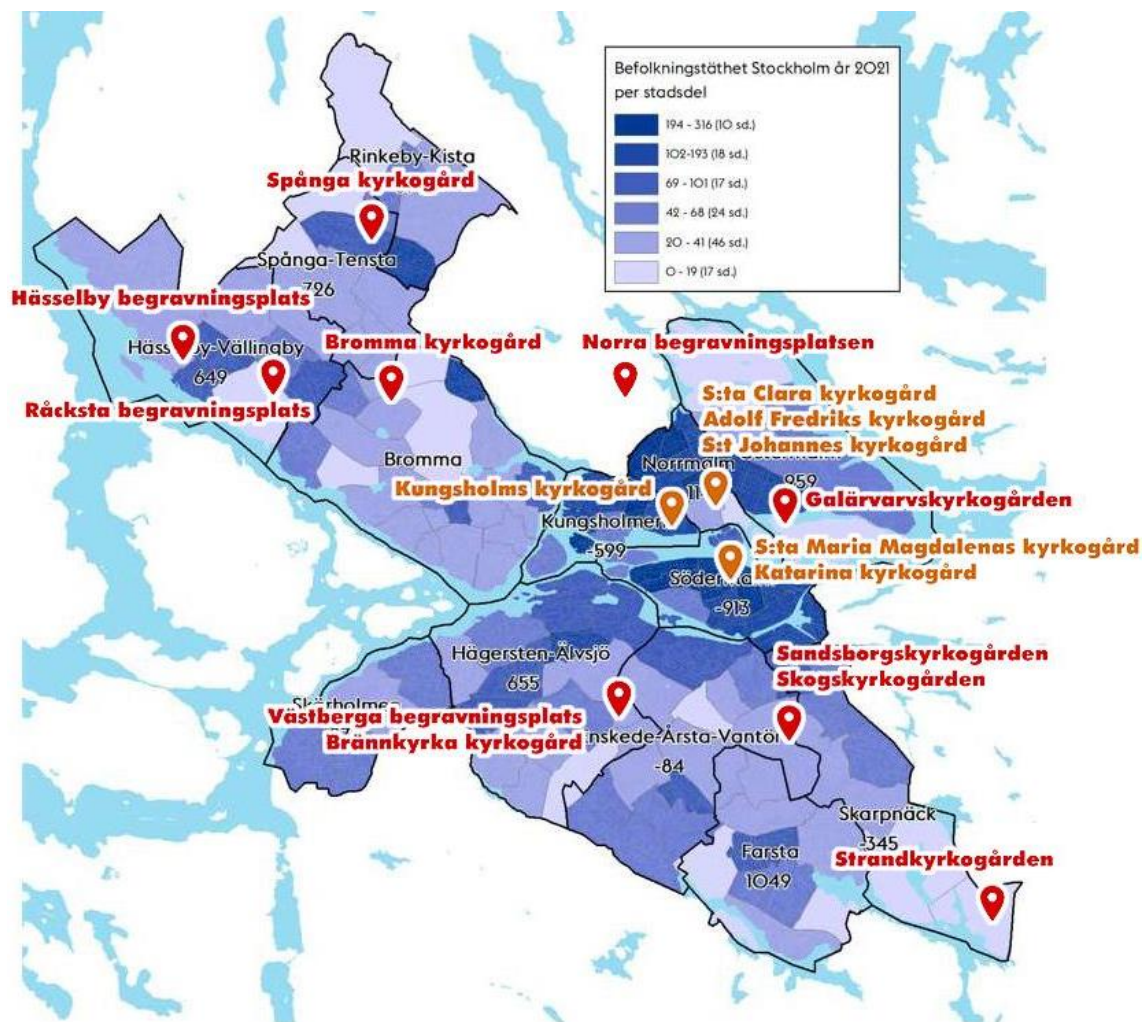


Figure 4. Relationship between the locations of the cemeteries and the population density of Stockholm city districts. (Stockholms stad, 2022c; own work)

5. Case Studies and Findings

5.1 Fieldwork

Between weeks 14 and 16 in April, I conducted visits and observations at a total of 17 cemeteries in Stockholm. This included 11 cemeteries managed by Stockholm Municipality and 6 cemeteries managed by parishes. The purpose of these visits was to document my impressions and experiences regarding the phenomena related to the planning and design of the cemeteries, as well as the visitation patterns observed at these sites. Each cemetery was visited at least once, with the duration of each visit ranging from half an hour to two hours.

The primary aim of these visits was to gain insights into the cemeteries within the urban context of Stockholm and to identify key phenomena that are interconnected with Swedish society. It is essential to acknowledge that the documentation is limited to my personal perception and may not always precisely reflect the actual situations. Additionally, it should be noted that the weather conditions during the visits may have influenced the number of visitors, their activities, and my own perception of the cemeteries. In response to specific data collection requirements, some cemeteries were revisited as needed. The documentation of the visits is presented in Table 1.

For the purpose of comparison, the sizes of the cemeteries were categorized as follows: those smaller than 5 hectares or with fewer than 5000 graves were classified as "small"; those larger than 5 hectares or with more than 5000 graves but smaller than 15 hectares or with fewer than 10000 graves were classified as "medium"; and the remaining cemeteries were classified as "large". The term "visitors" refers to visitors besides grave visitors (who visit to commemorate, do tomb sweeping or grave tending, or other similar behaviors) and staff, i.e., general visitors or passers-by (because there were both grave visitors and staff in every cemetery). The former includes visitors such as tourists and those who stay for short or long periods of time, while the latter are those who do not do anything in particular in the cemeteries, but simply move through them directly. Slow strollers are considered as general visitors.

The status and activities of visitors in different cemeteries were also documented as shown in the table (moving on foot was not specifically noted as it was the most common behavior). The number of visitors was based on my perception and was mainly compared to the size of the cemeteries.

	Number of graves/Size	Planning and design	Visitors (besides staff and grave visitors)
Katarina kyrkogård	N/A/ 2.65ha, Small	The cemetery is located in Södermalm area in the center of the city, with entrances on all sides, making it easily accessible. The site's terrain slopes upward from south to north, with the Katarina Church located at the northern end. Straight paths form the axes of the site, connecting various entrances and spatial nodes. The western side of the cemetery has more old gravestones, generally larger in size, while the eastern side has mostly new graves. The askgravplats (ash burial grave) and minneslund (memorial grove) are in the southwest corner of the site. The site is generally rich in greenery, with an unused green area in the northeast corner.	Many; General visitors and passers-by; Families with baby strollers, dog walkers, bikers, people who were resting and socializing.
S:ta Clara kyrkogård	N/A/ 1ha, Small	The cemetery is located in the center of the city, next to the central station. But in a more secluded location, hidden between the surrounding high buildings. The site is primarily the church, and the cemetery is only a very small part of it.	Some; General visitors and passers-by; Families with baby strollers, people who were resting and socializing.
Kungsholms kyrkogård	N/A/ 1.3ha, Small	The cemetery is in the Kungsholmen area in the center of the city, near the city hall. The terrain is high in the north and low in the south and is relatively steep. There are many tall trees and a lot of open green space. Several paths connect the church and the entrances. There are not many graves in the site, and they are relatively old. The minneslund (memorial grove) is in the eastern corner.	Some; General visitors and passers-by; People who were resting and socializing.

Adolf Fredriks kyrkogård	Approx. 120/ 1ha, Small	The cemetery is in the center of the city, with a rigorous and rectilinear plan. The site is centered on the Adolf Fredrik Church, with cemeteries around it, and mainly old graves. There are some benches in the area. the south side of the site has a height difference of about 1.5 meters from the sidewalk outside the site.	Some; General visitors and passers-by; Families with baby strollers, people who were resting.
S:ta Maria Magdalenas kyrkogård	Approx. 200/ 1.4ha,Small	The cemetery is located in the Södermalm area in the center of the city. On its northern side is a main road and there is a height difference of 2.5 to 4 meters between the site and this main road. The footpaths spread out in four directions with the Church of Saint Mary Magdalene at the center of the site. The footpaths are regularly lined with trees and some benches, with a carefully designed circle-shaped urngravplats (urn grave) on the west side of the site and a minneslund (memorial grove) to the southwest.	Some; General visitors and passers-by; Dog walkers, people who were resting and socializing.
S:t Johannes kyrkogård	Approx. 220/ 2.3ha, Small	The cemetery is in the center of the city on a site with a large difference in elevation between the east and west sides, with the church at an elevated point within the site. On the west side of the site are most of the graves, which are generally older; on the south side there are vacant green spaces and trees.	Some; General visitors and passers-by; People who were resting and socializing.
Galärvarvs kyrkogården	Approx. 1300/ 0.9ha, Small	The plan is simple, with only one main path, and the chapel is located by its side. The urn grave is on a small hill with a stele. On the south side is the Estonia memorial, commemorating the sinking of the MS Estonia.	Many; General visitors; Families with baby strollers, people who were socializing.
Hässelby begravningsplats	Approx. 1500/ 1.5ha, Small	The plan is rectilinear, with the chapel at the end of the central axis. The cemetery blocks are divided by half or full human-tall shrubs. there are almost no large trees in the site, only some at the edge and in the urn grave area (which is close to the woods on the west side of the site).	Few; passers-by.
Brännkyrka kyrkogård	Approx. 2000/ 1.5ha, Small	There is a small forest on the northwest side of the site where the minneslund (memorial grove) is located. The church is at the center of the site but close to the parking lot and the forest so it is perceived to be on the edge of the cemetery. There are only tall trees at the border of the site. To the east of the cemetery are the parish buildings, which is outside the cemetery.	Some; passers-by.

Spånga kyrkogård	Approx. 4000/ 4.5ha, Small	The size of the site is perceived as larger than its real scale. The difference in the planning between the old part of the cemetery to the southwest and the new part to the east and north is noticeable: the new part seems to be designed more intentionally, with a regular and geometric path network and a symmetrical landscape design. There are tall trees around the site, on the minneslund (memorial grove) and on both sides of the new section's central axis.	Some; passers-by.
Västberga begravningsplats	Approx. 5000/ 4.5ha, Small	The plot is flat and has a long triangular shape. There are many tall trees and some benches. The paths are generally about 3 meters wide and suitable for walking. The chapel and other buildings are located on the north side of the cemetery.	Some; passers-by; People who were socializing.
Sandsborgs kyrkogården	Approx. 8000/ 12ha, Medium	The cemetery is in a site with height differences. The plan is organic and the paths are curved and wide (about 5 meters). The greenery is varied. The askgravlund (a collective ashes burial ground) is carefully designed as a spatial node. Jean Nicou (a merchant and benefactor) and his family's grave is at the top of a hill, with a very solemn design. The church is located in the center of the site on a higher ground. With it as the center, its northern and southern sides are relatively symmetrical in layout.	Some; General visitors and passers-by. People who were socializing.
Bromma kyrkogård	Approx. 9500/ 7ha, Medium	The cemetery has a linear gridded plan, with the church in the center and trees along the paths. The minneslund (memorial grove) is on the north side of the church in a small field. In the southwest corner is an area of noticeably newer plan like a mini park, with curved paths and a small spatial node.	Some; General visitors and passers-by; Families with baby strollers, people who were resting and socializing.
Strandkyrkogården	Approx. 20000/ 25ha, Large	The southern side of the cemetery is covered with forest with trails passing through it. The northern side of the cemetery is wide open, with few tall trees, carefully planned with cemetery blocks with organic shapes, and an area for meditation on the lower level of the terrain on the western side. The minneslund (memorial grove) is set at the boundary of the forest which can be accessed from a small trail, with a view of Drevviken Lake. There is no chapel on the site, but cemetery blocks for citizens of different religions and beliefs.	Some; General visitors; Families with baby strollers, dog walkers, joggers, cars.

<p>Råcksta begravningsplats</p>	<p>Approx. 30000/ 17ha, Large</p>	<p>To the southeast of the cemetery is a forest that is not used for cemetery purposes. To the south, there is a large area under construction for a new planned area. The other parts are planned according to the shape of the site and divided into rectilinear cemetery blocks. The minneslund (memorial grove) is located in the central forest. The chapel, crematorium, and office are located in the northwest corner, with buildings in a distinct modernist style.</p>	<p>Some; General visitors; Dog walkers, people who were socializing.</p>
<p>Norra begravningsplatsen</p>	<p>Approx. 33000/ 62ha, Large</p>	<p>The cemetery is very large and contains several hills. It is divided into many sections, including Jewish and Catholic burial areas. Aside from some symmetric and radial road networks on the south side, most paths are irregular and curved. The greenery is varied, with many open and vacant spaces. The minneslund (memorial grove) is located at the top of a hill on the west side with a view of the city. The site has wide main roads for vehicle access, as well as narrower walking paths. In areas with less graves, it feels like an ordinary park.</p>	<p>Many; General visitors; Families with baby strollers, dog walkers, joggers, bikers, cars, people who were resting and socializing.</p>
<p>Skogskyrkogården</p>	<p>Approx. 100000/ 102ha, Large</p>	<p>As its name indicates, most of the cemetery is covered by forests, except the north side with more open areas. Several axes clearly divide the cemetery into different areas, with rectangular cemetery blocks distributed among them. Modernist buildings with different functions and ceremonial spaces are scattered throughout the cemetery, complementing the landscape design, which includes the arrangement of trees and changes in elevation across the site. The Catholic burial area is in the southwest, while the Mandeian, Jewish, Bahá'í, and Muslim burial areas are placed in the southernmost corner. As a cultural heritage site, the cemetery has complete infrastructure, with wide motor lanes and narrower pedestrian pathways, and even bus routes. Walking through the cemetery, one can feel the continuous changes in the landscape.</p>	<p>Many; General visitors; Families with baby strollers, dog walkers, joggers, bikers, cars, buses, people who were resting and socializing, skiing children.</p>

Table 1. Phenomena observed from fieldwork, regarding planning & design as well as visitation.

Based on the fieldwork, phenomena of both cemetery planning and design, and the visitation of cemeteries are summarized and described below.

5.1.1 Planning & Design

In general, regardless of the size of the cemetery, the basic planning strategy is establishing a network of routes interspersed with various cemetery blocks, and strategically locating infrastructure, such as chapels and crematoriums, in suitable positions. Every cemetery has at least one chapel (or church) and utility buildings, and very often the chapels and/or churches are located at the end of an axis or the center of the route network. Most of the site treatments of cemeteries are related to the topography. The cemeteries generally appear to be rather practical, without a lot of decoration, such as landscape vignettes, architectural ornamentation, etc., and except for the buildings on the site, there are not too many facilities for people to linger, such as benches, etc. The arrangement of vegetation varies from one cemetery to another.

To elaborate on these, there are 4 points worth pointing out regarding the planning and design of the cemeteries:

First of all, the size of the cemeteries greatly influences their planning and design. This includes the arrangement of the route network, the types of graves, and whether there are cemetery blocks for different groups, etc. When a cemetery is small, the paths are relatively narrow and the route network is not too complex, most of them are planned in the form of rectilinear grids. Vehicles do not have access to small cemeteries, and the general situation is setting a parking lot outside the cemetery. If there is a church on the site, the cemetery will be planned centered around it. As for the types of graves, the common small cemeteries have at least kistgravplats (coffin grave) and urngravplats (urn grave), and some have askgravplats (ash burial grave), askgravlund (ash grove) and/or minneslund (memorial grove). Most of them do not have grave areas designated for particular groups. In the cases where citizens of different backgrounds are buried in small cemeteries, their graves are usually located with others (see Figure 5).



Figure 5. In Spånga kyrkogård, the deceased of different backgrounds are buried alongside others. (own photo)

As cemeteries become larger, they will have wider internal roads, potentially more curved paths, and more topographic treatments and subdivisions within the cemeteries. Large cemeteries are equipped with motorways and more facilities, such as the addition of chapels and crematoriums. The largest cemetery, Skogskyrkogården, which is a world heritage site, even has a visitor center and bus routes. In terms of grave types, the types mentioned above are usually found in a large cemetery and there are cemetery blocks available for groups of different religions and beliefs. Among them, Strandkyrkogården is different in that it does not contain a chapel, but has the most burial areas for people of different religions and beliefs (see Figure 6). When the size of a cemetery reaches a certain level, different spatial nodes (a spatial structure of connection and transformation between other spaces) are generated correspondingly with multiple subdivisions of the cemetery (see Figure 7).



Figure 6. Burial areas for the deceased of different religions and beliefs in Strandkyrkogården. (own photo)



Figure 7. Spatial nodes in Norra begravningsplats and Bromma kyrkogård. (Google maps, 2020; own photo)

In the case of large cemeteries, they naturally become vast green spaces in the city, thus making them feel more like parks when the burial areas are not too dense. According to the observations on visitors (see next part), to some extent, if these spaces are looked at from a different perspective, rather than being "cemeteries", most of them are "parks that have been occupied by burial areas".

The second is the relationship between the planning of these cemeteries and the site's physical characteristics. A notable phenomenon is the interaction of the cemeteries and the topography as well as the natural environment of their sites (It is likely that both adaptation and alteration are involved). For example, the plannings of the site of

Kungsholms kyrkogård and S:t Johannes kyrkogård, including the positioning of the churches and the arrangement of the cemeteries, are based on the shape of topography (see Figure 8); and larger cemeteries can create different landscape experiences within their sites, e.g., the contrast between open areas and forested areas in Strandkyrkogården and Räcksta begravningsplats (see Figure 9). There are elements of forested landscapes in several cemeteries. Whether they have existed in the site from the beginning or are carefully designed, they provide a unique atmosphere to the cemetery. This atmosphere creates a spiritual solemnity and comfort, which is a distinct feature in Swedish landscape design (Andersson, 1997). Furthermore, it was discovered during the visits that the minneslund (memorial grove), besides being a type of grave, is also a very interesting landscape phenomenon. It is in many cemeteries (if there are any) an "organic" presence, that is to say, it usually involves curved paths and rich vegetation, especially tall trees. Most of them have been carefully designed, and as Figure 10 shows, sometimes have specific topographical characteristics, such as being placed on high ground or with views in large cemeteries.



Figure 8. Topographical height difference of the site of S:t Johannes kyrkogård. (own photo)



Figure 9. An open field and Muslim graves in the forest of Strandkyrkogården. (own photo)

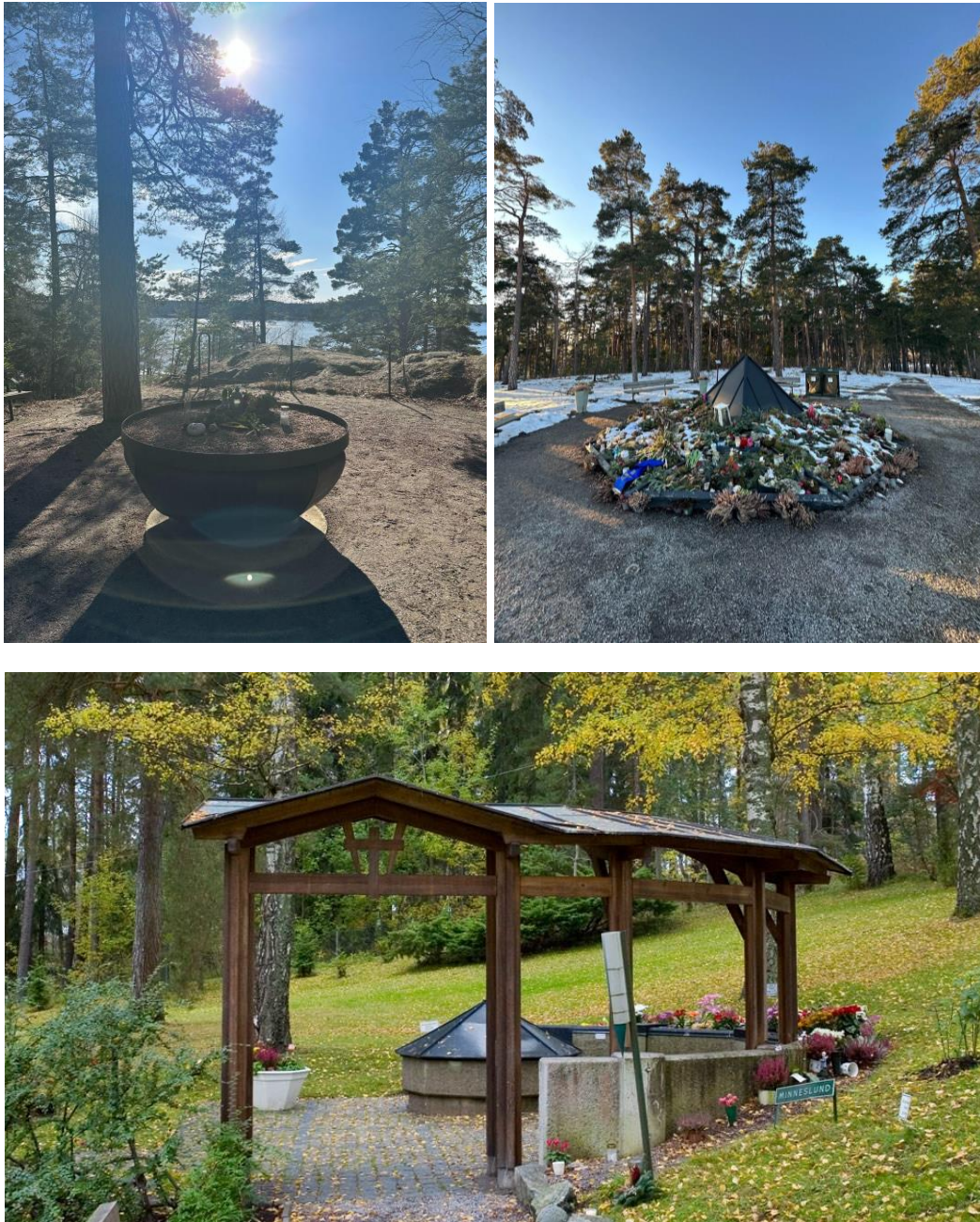


Figure 10. Minneslund (memorial groves) with careful design, on high ground or with views. (Stockholms stad, 2023e; own photo)

Third, the arrangement of the gravestones. Some of the older gravestones were larger and varied in shape and were slightly more freely placed in the cemeteries (see Figure 11). The newer ones (regardless of the type of grave) are mostly similar in size and color, and are placed regularly (see Figure 12). Some gravestones have interesting features and more unique designs that are probably related to the personalities and interests of the deceased (see Figure 13).



Figure 11. Freely placed old gravestones in Katarina kyrkogård. (own photo)



Figure 12. Regularly placed new gravestones in Hässelby begravningsplats. (own photo)



Figure 13. Gravestones with personal features and designs. (own photo)

Lastly, the burial areas for different groups are usually arranged according to the requirements of specific religions and beliefs, e.g., in Norra begravningsplatsen, the Catholic and Jewish cemeteries are separated from the rest of the cemetery by tall shrubs, with their own entrances respectively. In Strandkyrkogården, on the other hand, although there are no specific divisions, the burial areas are separated from each other by certain distances, and there are different installations, monuments, and signs indicating the specific groups they serve.

5.1.2 Visitation to cemeteries

As for the visitation to cemeteries, since this thesis intends to build a link between the design and planning of cemeteries in Sweden and aspects of Swedish society, the visiting to cemeteries and relevant behaviors of people would serve as a medium, as they reflect citizen's reactions to the planning and design of cemeteries. As mentioned above, the "visits" here are those other than grave visits and activities of staff, and they exist in all cemeteries to a greater or lesser extent, with a diversity of the age and gender of the visitors. Generally, regardless of their specific activities, visitors were more respectful of the burial area and did not set foot in areas where there were no designated paths and where there were graves. Passers-by tended to move through the cemetery at a relatively fast pace, and most of those who stayed usually spent more than half an hour. Activities engaged in by people who stayed included resting, talking, strolling, jogging, walking/playing with dogs, sightseeing, etc.

First, two basic aspects of a cemetery - its location and size - primarily influence the number of visitors. When a cemetery is in a more densely populated area, the number of visitors will increase correspondingly. More accessible entrances (clearly located, without many steps to enter, etc.) and the routes can run through the site, and paths that run through the site will also bring in more visitors, especially those who crossed through. The traffic accessibility of the cemetery site is also a factor affecting visitation. For instance, both being large cemeteries on the periphery of the city, Strandkyrkogården has only one bus stop nearby, so most visitors arrive by car; while

there are multiple bus stops close to Norra begravningsplatsen, hence more visitors went by foot or bike.

When cemeteries are large and the graves are not densely placed (e.g., Norra begravningsplatsen and Skogskyrkogården), there would be more open spaces without cemetery blocks, resulting in more general visits to the cemetery. There, visitors seemed to engage in more types of activities than in smaller cemeteries, including jogging, cycling, etc., and there were children playing in the snow and even sledding on the hills inside the site of Skogskyrkogården. Moreover, the larger a cemetery is, the more visitors tend to stay for a longer period of time, meaning that most people who enter a larger cemetery intentionally, rather than needing to cross it instantly to another place. When cemeteries are smaller, on the other hand, walk-through behavior is more common than staying. This is rather evident in cemeteries in downtown urban areas.



Figure 14. Some activities in cemeteries observed during fieldwork. (own photos)

Secondly, cemeteries or cemetery blocks with many graves and very rigorously arranged, present a more serious atmosphere, which may keep most visitors away. But some visitors still stopped to look at some of the graves located by the paths outside those blocks. In contrast, minneslund (memorial grove), which has a more "organic" design, is more welcoming to visitors.

Thirdly, as shown in Figure 15, there are signs at the cemeteries reminding visitors to respect the burial grounds of the site, and some cemeteries specify specific rules indicating what activities are allowed and what are not. In fact, people do show respect, and if there is some free green space in a cemetery, people may walk in, stroll, sit down, or have a picnic there. But it also includes the aforementioned activities such as children's sledding, which is not an activity clearly defined to be permitted or not. Another phenomenon is related to dog walking. Usually, cemeteries require dogs to be leashed and state that the cemetery is "not a dog park" (see Figure 16). It is very common to walk dogs in cemeteries, and there are no cases of dogs off leash found during fieldwork. Sometimes dogs will come into the burial area and sniff around, but the owner will quickly lead them away. At Katarina kyrkogård it was observed that there was an owner and leashed dog playing in the vacant green area, and the dog was still running around rather freely with the leash (see Figure 16). This case may be a behavior in the ambiguous area of the cemetery rules, because although the dog was leashed and under control of the owner, it still had the ability to run to the burial area.



Figure 15. Signs reminding visitors to respect the burial grounds as well as specific rules. (own photos)



Figure 16. A sign saying that the cemetery is not a “dog park”, and an owner playing with his leashed dog in Katarina kyrkogård. (own photos)

Additionally, in the fieldwork, it was observed that if there were benches in the site, most people who sat down would primarily choose to sit on them. When there are not enough seats, people will more often choose to sit on the edge of a building such as the church or other suitable structures in the site rather than on the grass.

5.2 Phenomena in existing texts

In this part I examined various texts (different material objects and expressions) concerning the case cemeteries and about burials in Sweden, including official documents of the parishes, and historical maps provided by the municipality, etc. Among those texts, the main findings are as follows:

First, many cemeteries have been expanded and newly built along with the urbanization process and population increase, and more gravestones and blocks of non-Swedish backgrounds and non-Lutheran deceased have appeared in a number of cemeteries. For example, with the increase of the local population, Spånga kyrkogård has undergone two major expansions in 1923 and 2002, as well as the addition of a minneslund in the 1980s (see Figure 17). The identities of the buried deceased in the cemetery have also become more diverse:

In the case of Norra Begravningsplatsen, for example, the "Mosaic cemetery in Norra Begravningsplatsen", now called the Northern Jewish Cemetery, was built in 1857, after the Swedish parliament decided to expand religious freedom in 1779 and the first Jewish cemetery appeared in Stockholm in 1776 (Judiska Församlingen i Stockholm, n.d.); In 1847, a cemetery for Catholics was built next to the oldest part of the cemetery. Before that, there was no separate cemetery for Catholics in Sweden (Kultur-departementet, 2015).



Figure 18. Norra begravningsplatsen's expansion 1817-1845-1860s, comparing with the boundaries of which in 1817. (Carpelan, 1817; Lantmäteriet, 1845; Stockholms stadsarkiv, 1860s)

The second is the attention to detail design. Many documents show that the small details in the cemeteries were carefully designed by specific designers, including sculptures, reliefs, watering vessels, vegetation, and minneslunds (Stockholms stad, 2023b; Ericson, 2006; Stockholms stift, 2015b, 2015c, 2015f). Minneslund and its variant, askgravslund, began to be commonly introduced into cemeteries in the late 1950s, especially in the 1970s. This is closely related to the introduction of cremation at the end of the 19th century (Grönwall, 2018). In 1887, the first crematorium in the Nordic countries, the so-called provisional crematorium, was built right next to Norra Begravningsplatsen. The descriptions of minneslund's designs have commonly emphasized the use of natural elements in the elaborate landscape design, and often appear in the texts together with the term "contemplation" (Stockholms stift, 2015a, 2015b, 2015c, 2015f).

The designs of many of the cemeteries are also based on the topography and landscape of the site itself: The designers of Räcksta Begravningsplats, garden architect Gunnar Martinsson and architect Klas Fåhraeus, aimed to preserve the existing forest and meadow landscape and connect them to the cemetery (Ericson, 2006); The minneslund in Brännkyrka kyrkogård made use of the flat site between two existing hills (Stockholms stift, 2015c); In the expansion proposal for Spånga kyrkogård in 1923, in addition to a harmonious connection to the old cemetery, the architect Knut Nordenskjöld also intended to utilize the existing terrain and vegetation to naturally incorporate the new cemetery into the surrounding landscape (Stockholms stift, 2015f); An ambition of the design of Bromma kyrkogård's minneslund was to build in a meadow that should be left almost untouched, but only bordered by traditional shrubs (Stockholms stift, 2015b).

The last is the openness and recreational character of cemeteries. This is mentioned in multiple texts, with the most prevalent feature being "park-like". The texts indicate that the establishment of a regulation was related to it. In the early 19th century, as Sweden's population was growing, cemeteries were under increasing pressure, especially within the cities. There was even little time for the previous corpses to decompose before another burial. In 1815, the Swedish Parliament adopted a regulation to build new cemeteries with chapels outside the cities and to reduce the use of cemeteries within the cities for hygiene purposes, following the practices of continental

European countries (Grönwall, 2018). In Stockholm, this regulation directly led to the construction of Norra Begravningsplatsen. Not only was the cemetery itself planned in the French classical style (a style of garden that follows the concept of symmetry and strives to establish control over natural elements), but as a result of this regulation, cemeteries in the city have also changed their character towards being more park-like, especially those located in densely populated areas of the city center, as they eventually became accessible green spaces there (Stockholms stad, 2023b; Stockholms stift, 2015i).

The designs of many cemeteries within the city that have been later expanded since then have also developed more or less in the direction of the style of park. For instance, the Parish's document about Kungsholms Kyrkogård says, "Kungsholms Kyrkogård has a clear park character that historically belongs to the park tradition of the late 1800s and early 1900s (Stockholms stift, 2015e)." In 1946, the building authority rejected a proposal to build an urn grave or a columbarium in the cemetery, as they believed that the cemetery should "be preserved as parks for the benefit and enjoyment of the parishes and the city's inhabitants (ibid)." Similar incidents also took place in St. Johannes Kyrkogård, although those burial forms inevitably end up appearing in these cemeteries. In more detail, some cemeteries have recreational areas as well as playgrounds for children (see Figure 19)(Stockholms stift, 2015e, 2015g, 2015h, 2015i).



Figure 19. Playground in Norra begravningsplatsen. (Ellgaard, 2020)

6. Discussion and Conclusion

Cemetery can be understood as a type of landscape. By embodied experience and observation, the phenomenological perspective enables us to approach the meanings of the landscape through the phenomena it exhibits. As a matter of fact, these meanings themselves arise from human practices and are integrated in the landscape; at the same time, the landscape, on the other hand, can only possess its integrated meanings when they are comprehended through human attitudes and intentions towards it. In the course of the previous sections of the study, the thesis employed the phenomenological approaches summarized by Seamon (2000b) to capture the phenomena in the cemeteries in Stockholm, whereas this section is devoted to the interpretation of those phenomena, to answer the research questions raised in the thesis.

Through a hermeneutic-phenomenological approach, based on the above findings obtained from case studies carried out via first-person phenomenological approach and existing texts, as well as the contents described in the background section, we can take cemeteries in Stockholm as an example to establish some connections between 1) cemetery design and planning, and 2) Swedish society, through the concept of "cultural landscape". According to Sauer's theory, culture acts upon the natural landscape to produce the landscape we eventually see - the cultural landscape. In the case studies above, we can observe different manifestations of social and cultural aspects in the phenomena from the way people use the cemeteries and the relevant existing texts, and thus make connections between them and the physical design and planning.

Overall, contemporary Swedish society has been greatly influenced by the modernization turn in the late 19th century (as in many other countries), and this is reflected in the design and planning of cemeteries. Most of Sweden's cultural evolution has been relatively continuous, and the new forms of expression have developed in a spirit of agreement rather than confrontation, and in the process, the landscape has existed as a sounding board (Andersson, 1997). It is therefore possible to analyze Swedish cemeteries as forms of a cultural landscape. Through the interpretation of the phenomena found in the case studies, the conclusions elaborate on 3 aspects respectively: The openness of Swedish cemeteries; Burial types and identities of the deceased; and Landscape design.

It is important to note that although this thesis intends to identify common "Swedish features" of cemetery planning and design, the history that took place on each site makes each cemetery unique in its own way.

6.1 The openness of cemeteries

From what was observed, it was clear that the cemeteries in Stockholm were not overly restrictive to visitors, as there is no physical space restriction within the sites, apart from the fences and shrubs at the boundaries of the cemeteries, and the burial areas are also completely open. Most of the routes within the cemeteries are designed to run through the site, allowing access to all areas, and in larger cemeteries, vehicles are allowed to enter unhindered.

In Sweden, it is above all certain that a cemetery is indeed a space open to people, and in the urban context, it is even "a green lung in the city that is deliberately designed for visitors" (Kyrkogårdsförvaltningen, 2008). The open green spaces of the cemeteries seen in the fieldwork also exemplify this, especially in the larger cemeteries (later in this section, the landscape design of Swedish cemeteries is touched upon, and the "naturalness" of the cemeteries will be explained). There is a clear connection between such openness and people's acceptance of it and the cultural attitudes towards death in Sweden discussed in the Background section. The rational attitude of Swedish society towards death enables the visitors, whether those who stayed in the cemeteries or simply traveled through them, to appear to have a casual attitude toward their visits. An example is that if they choose to stay, even if there is no place to settle, like a bench, they will still find a way to fit themselves, and it doesn't make any difference that the setting is a cemetery.

The public is free to enter a cemetery and carry out permitted activities, but by law, in fact, it is not a "public space" (Kyrkogårdsförvaltningen, 2008). Even though, as mentioned in the previous section, many cemeteries are designed in a direction that situates them as parks, in terms of the arrangement of vegetation, the design of path networks, for instance, it is nevertheless (naturally) indeed different from an ordinary

park. What distinguishes a cemetery from a park is the atmosphere - the cemetery has a kind of dignity that a regular park often lacks (ibid). Grabalov & Nordh (2020) discussed the spiritual aspects of cemeteries in Scandinavian countries that make them “philosophical parks”, which distinguish them from other green spaces in the cities (Grabalov & Nordh, 2020). This correlates with phenomena observed during the fieldwork, including a general attitude of respect for burial areas in cemeteries and reminders on cemetery signage.

This point can be addressed from an institutional viewpoint. First, there is the formal system, including laws, rules, and regulations. As discussed above, documents indicate that the concept of the cemetery as an "open space" was not new. The regulation passed by the Swedish Parliament in 1815, through which the main burial areas were shifted to the periphery of the city, in fact indirectly contributed to making cemeteries park-alike within the city, especially cemeteries of churches (kyrkogårdar).

On the other hand, there is a commonly recognized concept in Sweden - "Allemansrätten (the Right of Public Access)", a right protected by the Swedish constitution, often referred to in English as "Freedom to roam". It appeared after World War II, and ensures that people can move freely in the nature in Sweden (Naturvårdsverket, 2005). However, Allemansrätten is in fact not a law, and the constitution does not specifically describe what a person can and cannot do, which is only sparsely explained in other legislation (Bengtsson, 2004). What is permitted and appropriate in a particular situation is therefore determined by the policies and rules of the particular context and by people’s own judgment (Naturvårdsverket, 2005). Thus, to some extent Allemansrätten lies on the blurred border between formal and informal institutions. Returning to the topic of cemeteries, since it is not clearly stated whether access to cemeteries is a right protected by Allemansrätten, on one side, because most cemeteries contain green spaces and are open to people, it is common for people to see them as spaces with free access (even though there are customary constraints); while on the other side, the authority of cemeteries (the parish or the Cemetery Administration) takes on the responsibility of regulating activities within cemeteries. Apart from the signage observed in fieldwork above, there are other parishes in Sweden that explicitly

indicate that activities in their cemeteries are not protected by Allemansrätten, such as Danderyd parish (2023) and Sköllersta parish (2016).

This mindset of public access in Sweden has inevitably influenced the design of cemeteries. The preconceived notion of the openness of cemeteries has led to the design of cemeteries grounded in their original function - memorial sites for the living and burial places for the dead - and taking the qualities of park into account, integrating functions recognized by both formal and informal institutions, thereby produces what Grabalov & Nordh described, as "philosophical parks" (Grabalov & Nordh, 2020). Moreover, regarding the "qualities of park", in terms of the design and planning, in addition to good accessibility, the landscape design in Sweden tends to give the cemeteries a "naturalness" (which will be discussed later in this section) that makes them more approachable.

6.2 Burial types and identities of the deceased

By the 20th century, urbanization brought more people to the cities and the identity of those buried in cemeteries became diversified. Class, gender and religious differences diminished as the society developed (Åhren, 2009). The 20th century Swedish Social Democratic ideal of the "People's Home" (Folkhemmet) extended into the realm of death was a driving factor (ibid). It was a vision of society that the party had put forward at the time, an idea of "Sweden as a home for all Swedish citizens". In the People's Home, everyone would live well. No one would be poor, and no one would have to starve (Stockholmskällan, 2022). Funeral services began to be arranged for members of religions other than the Lutherans, and there was no longer any difference between the funerals of people from different social groups or ages and between urban and rural areas (Åhren, 2009).

Today, due to the social changes mentioned above, including the increased immigrant population in Swedish cities today, including Stockholm, it can be noticed that a number of cemeteries have a wide range of deceased people with different backgrounds buried close to each other, while at the same time they also have a diverse range of

burial areas for different groups of people. Most of these burial areas emerged with the expansion of cemeteries in the context described above. They are often found in larger, newer cemeteries. Apart from their arrangement being based on the requirements of their respective faiths, there is no obvious pattern to their placements in the cemeteries. However, it is noticeable that they are planned in such a way that they are also well integrated into the cemetery environment, and most of the time they are considered as "merely another cemetery block" rather than a "cemetery area for a specific group". This has some relevance to the landscape design discussed in the next section.

Along with the changes in the size as well as the structure of the demographic, different types of burials were also introduced. The advocacy of cremation led to the emergence of burial types such as minneslund (memorial grove), urngravplats (urn grave), and askgravplats (ash burial grave) from the 1950s onwards. The fact that they do not occupy as large an area as traditional burial methods also offers some design possibilities. As can be seen in the texts reviewed for this thesis, their proliferation in the 1970s gave many architects and designers the opportunity to develop their work, especially the meticulous design of the minneslund. We can see the link between this phenomenon and an old Swedish religious space - sacrificial groves, which as religious archetypes are monuments of a kind that are frequently met with in Sweden and they are usually located in places commanding an extensive view and yet not far removed from people's everyday life (Andersson, 1997). As discovered in the fieldwork, most of the minneslunds have a rich landscape setting, and many of those in larger cemeteries are located on high ground with views, as do some of its variants urngravplats and askgravplats.

As for the setup of burial apparatus, including tombstones and other structures, the law in fact does not specify the standards of appearance of them and other objects on the grave. The Burial Act (Begravningslagen) states simply that 26 §. The holder of the burial rights decides on the appearance and nature of the burial apparatus; 27 §. Before installing a burial apparatus, the lessor shall examine whether it is such as to be authorized; and 28 §. Once a burial apparatus has been set up, it may not be removed without the consent of the lessor. Consent shall be given unless there is a risk of undignified treatment of the burial apparatus (SFS 1990:1144). The specific setup is left

to the person responsible for the burial of the deceased to communicate with the funeral home (Begravningsbyråer), which cooperates with a number of agencies that make gravestones in Sweden (Sveriges Begravningsbyråers Förbund, n.d.). Most people's gravestones are therefore limited to the options that these agencies can offer, which contributes to the phenomenon that the newer graves observed in the fieldwork have a relatively similar appearance. However, the decorative appearance of individual graves is supported by law: even if the size, color, and material of the gravestones do not vary too much, they may still have personalized arrangements and designs.

6.3 Landscape design of cemetery in Sweden

One of the foundations of this thesis is that a cemetery is first and foremost classified as landscape, hence cemetery design is a kind of landscape design. In the background section, two shifts in cemetery design since the 20th century are touched upon: 1) a modernist tendency that superseded the symbolic and classicistic design ideals; and 2) the need to give space for different cultural expressions to coexist side by side (Wingren, 2013). The latter of which was discussed in the previous part in this section. As for the former, in Sweden, it is embodied in a formal concept over layered with nature in a humble gesture, and at a later stage, the design of cemeteries is mainly based on the concept of "landscape cemeteries," which incorporate forests and pastoral landscapes into the overall design (Nolin, 2006). The phenomena identified in case studies in this regard are closely related to this, as evidenced by the design of some cemeteries based on the topography and vegetation of the site and the design of spaces with spirituality. This section will mainly elaborate on this aspect.

Besides common ideals like efficiency, order, and hygiene, Sweden's turn to modernity also included some other ideals such as community, solidarity, and closeness to nature (Åhren, 2009). This last point can be reflected in the design of cemeteries. During the 19th century, Swedish cemeteries adhered to the rectangular plots and straight paths of the Latin tradition - a kind of City of the Dead. However, in the early 20th century, a new type of cemetery emerged that reconnected with the Swedish appreciation of nature and incorporated the forest as a design concept and theme (Andersson, 1997).

The first part of this section refers to the constitutionally protected right - *allemansrätten* - which is an indication of the importance of the element "nature" in Swedish culture. *Allemansrätten* is rooted in a perspective of nature that goes beyond a simple sensory experience and encompasses a spiritual connection to the environment. Swedes hold a belief that nature is an integral component in the pursuit of spiritual comfort (Andersson, 1997). Therefore, the cemetery as a space with its own spiritual attributes becoming integrated with the natural environment is rather innate. On the other hand, the forest is a very common natural landscape element in Sweden, with two-thirds of its land covered by forests (SCB, 2013). In the times before Christianity, deceased individuals were either buried or burnt on a funeral pyre in the natural environment, which in Sweden was typically either the forest or the sea (Andersson, 1997).

The new Swedish cemetery design of the 20th century departed from here. The earliest is the Karlskoga cemetery west of Stockholm, while the most famous is the Skogskyrkogården in Enskede, Stockholm, designed by Gunnar Asplund and Sigurd Lewerentz. Skogskyrkogården did not follow the established rules of previous cemetery designs, indicating to visitors how they should feel and act, but rather, as observed in the case studies, scattered burial areas in the woods, with a network of paths running through them (see Figure 20 & 21). Their approach was to adjust the design to the existing landscape, which was very different from the mainstream approach to cemetery planning at the time. Nevertheless, their design eventually created an approach to cemetery design that was deeply rooted in national traditions as well as the authentic landscape of the country (Andersson, 1997). Such an approach has been followed by subsequent Swedish architects, and many of the cemeteries in the case studies have exhibited this trait. In fact, except cemeteries, landscape design in Sweden has always been a matter of selecting sites and then emphasizing and extracting the essence of their inherent qualities, rather than changing them (*ibid*). This approach to landscape design to some extent places the presence of nature before human activity, and the quality of the cemetery is to add a spiritual layer of human civilization on top of the nature. With this feature, despite being carefully planned, Swedish cemeteries still present a "natural" manner: with rich topographical variations, routes are not always rectilinear, and besides spaces requiring special care, the landscape maintains a "wildness". Human interventions, like graves and chapels and other constructions, are coexisting with the

nature. In relation to the first two parts of this section, first, such cemeteries that are presented with a sense of nature appear to be more approachable because of their qualities of nature, combined with the Swedish tradition of being close to nature; secondly, this nature-related design language does not conflict with the majority of faiths and religions, hence there is a strong inclusiveness that allows the deceased of all backgrounds to rest peacefully in such environments.

The cultural, institutional, and demographic factors of Swedish society discussed above, especially the modernization turn in them since the 19th century, have had an impact on cemetery design and planning in Sweden today. Together, these impacts have resulted in the Swedish cemeteries that we witness today as cultural landscapes - open, diverse, and closely connected to nature (especially forested spaces).



Figure 20. Scattered burial areas in the woods and paths running through them. (own photo)



Figure 21. The forested areas in Skogskyrkogården and its network of paths running through the woods. (Stockholms stad, 2020; Celsing Arkitektkontor AB, n.d.)

6.4 Future directions for cemeteries in Sweden

Having built the connections above, we can therefore understand how the Swedish cemetery as a cultural landscape has been formed by Swedish society, taking the phenomena of and about the cemeteries in Stockholm as an example. Today's Swedish cemeteries can be oases where busy pedestrians can feel a moment of peace; they can be sanctuaries for families and friends to take a walk or hang out; they can also be places for reflection and contemplation when spiritual comfort is needed, as Grabalov and Nordh (2020) call, "philosophical parks" (Grabalov & Nordh, 2020). The Råcksta begravningsplats in the case studies will, after the undergoing expansion, besides a new block for 1400 kistgravar (coffin graves), also create a contemplation zone, a tranquil space in the site (see Figure 22). This is a tangible representation of the development of the cemetery as a "philosophical park".



Figure 22. The planned contemplation zone in Råcksta begravningsplats. (Stockholms stad, 2022d)

Concerning the planning of new cemeteries, in Oslo and Copenhagen, policy makers and practitioners now acknowledge the philosophical and spiritual dimensions of cemeteries and have started to promote the development of cemeteries as such (Grabalov & Nordh, 2020). Although there is no specific material supporting it, this seems to be evident in the trend in the Swedish context as well. For instance, a new

large cemetery under construction at Järva in the Akalla area of Stockholm, which can be found on the Stockholm municipality's website, will be built as "a cemetery for everyone, regardless of faith and belief. The cemetery blocks with graves are built as islands in the landscape and walking, cycling, barbecuing and jogging will remain central" (Stockholms stad, 2023c). It is an example worth discussing about the future of cemetery planning in Sweden, which proposes a new typology where the recreational and burial functions of a cemetery are intentionally juxtaposed. The conflict over the use of burial space and other spaces brought about by the openness of the cemetery has been addressed in a new manner: having burial blocks designed as islands surrounded by natural areas with meadows and gravel roads (see Figure 23). Skår et al.'s (2018) study on urban cemeteries as parks in Oslo, Norway, also shows that citizens express a preference for separating the different functions in the cemetery so that other visitors would not disturb the mourners (Skår et al., 2018). In fact, this area was chosen for the new cemetery precisely because it had already been designed in the 1970s to be a recreational area for Stockholmers, where people nowadays perform different activities such as disc golf, paragliding, barbecue and jogging, and the municipality intends to make use of this and incorporate the functions of the cemetery with recreational purposes (ibid). The sledding activity mentioned at the beginning of this thesis in winter will also be allowed in this cemetery (Sehlin, 2021). On the other hand, we can see from the Design Program (Kyrkogårdsförvaltningen, 2016) that the cemetery also inherits the overarching language of the landscape design of the Swedish cemetery (even if the design firm is Danish) - the existing natural elements of the site are placed in an essential position, especially the forest, and the spirituality of the site emerges from this (see Figure 23).



Figure 23. "Blandskogen" & "Ceremonibyggnad" ("The hybrid forest" & "Ceremony building"). Separated cemetery blocks and cemetery buildings integrated in the nature. (Kyrkogårdsförvaltningen, 2016)

This may well mark a major direction for the future development of Swedish cemeteries: the creation of open cemeteries for all people - both the living and the dead of different backgrounds - integrated in natural contexts. And we can now clearly see the cultural driving forces behind it. In terms of the relationship between Swedish cemetery design and planning and Swedish society, there is plenty for designers, planners, sociologists, and geographers to explore and develop further for the sake of the people in the city, both living and dead. This may involve 1) how to further reduce the exclusion of minority groups from their perceptual experience as identified in the CEMI report mentioned in the background section, for instance, according to Swedish legislation, specific authorization is required to scatter cremated remains on flowing water, a practice observed by Hindus and Sikhs; the absence of weekend services can pose challenges for timely burials in the case of Muslims and cremations for Hindus (Beebeejaun et al., 2022); 2) how to better deal with the tension between spaces for recreational activities (especially sports activities) and burial areas; 3) how to embrace all the changes while staying genuine to the design approaches and languages rooted in the Swedish contexts, etc. Whilst some of them can be directly intervened by design and planning, most of them would require policies and institutional support in the future.

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8. Appendix

Appendix 1. List of cemeteries managed by Stockholm Municipality

	Number of graves/Size	Types of graves	Available for:	Designers
Galärvarvs kyrkogården (est. 1742)	Approx. 1300/ 0.9ha	Askgravplats Minneslund	Only for people who were registered in Stockholm at the time of their death, except burial in minneslund.	Fredrik Blom Miroslaw Bałka
Hässelby begravningsplats (est. 1928)	Approx. 1500/ 1.5ha	Kistgravplats Urgravplats Minneslund	Only for people who were registered in Stockholm at the time of their death.	Knut Nordenskjöld Uno Söderberg
Brännkyrka kyrkogård (est. Middle Ages)	Approx. 2000/ 1.5ha	Kistgravplats Urgravplats Minneslund	Only for people who were registered in Stockholm at the time of their death.	Göran Bergquists
Spånga kyrkogård (est. late 12th century)	Approx. 4000/ 4.5ha	Kistgravplats Urgravplats Minneslund	Only for people who were registered in Stockholm at the time of their death.	Gustaf Petterson Knut Nordenskjöld Uno Söderberg Erik Lundberg
Västberga begravningsplats (est. late 19th century)	Approx. 5000/ 4.5ha	Kistgravplats Urgravplats	Only for people who were registered in Stockholm at the time of their death.	Konrad Elméus

Sandsborgs kyrkogården (est. 1895)	Approx. 8000/ 12ha	Kistgravplats Urnggravplats Askgravplats	N/A	Valfrid Karlson Peder Clason Anna Petrus Lars Israel Wahlman Jan Wahlman
Bromma kyrkogård (est. 1160s)	Approx. 9500/ 7ha	Kistgravplats Urnggravplats Askgravplats Minneslund Askgravlund	Only for people who were registered in Stockholm at the time of their death.	Jan Wahlman
Strandkyrkogården (est. 1996)	Approx. 20000/ 25ha	Kistgravplats Urnggravplats Minneslund Burial areas for different religious communities Natural graves	N/A	Göran Bergquist
Råcksta begravningsplats (est. 1970s)	Approx. 30000/ 17ha	Kistgravplats Urnggravplats Minneslund Muslim graves	N/A	Gunnar Martinsson Klas Fåhræus
Norra begravningsplatsen (est. 1815)	Approx. 33000/ 62ha	Kistgravplats Urnggravplats Minneslund Askgravplats Catholic cemetery Jewish cemetery	N/A	Carl Gustaf Blom-Carlsson Gustaf Lindgren Gunnar Asplund Sigurd Lewerentz Lars Israel Wahlman Jan Wahlman
Skogskyrkogården (est. 1920)	Approx. 100000/ 102ha	Kistgravplats Urnggravplats Minneslund Burial areas for different religious communities	Anyone	Gunnar Asplund Sigurd Lewerentz Johan Celsing architecture office

Appendix 2. List of cemeteries managed by parishes in Stockholm City

Adolf Fredriks kyrkogård	Olaus Petrikyrkans kyrkotomt
Allhelgonakyrkans kyrkotomt	Oscarskyrkans kyrkotomt
Bergshamra kyrkotomt	S:t Eriks kapells kyrkotomt
Djurgårdskyrkans kyrkotomt	S:t Görans kyrkas kyrkotomt
Engelbrektskyrkans kyrkotomt	S:t Jacobs kyrkas kyrkotomt
Enskede kyrkas kyrkotomt	S:t Johannes kyrkogård
Essinge kyrkas kyrkotomt	S:t Matteus kyrkas kyrkotomt
Finska kyrkans kyrkotomt	S:ta Birgittas kyrkas kyrkotomt
Gustaf Adolfskyrkans kyrkotomt	S:ta Clara kyrkogård
Gustaf Vasa kyrkas kyrkotomt	S:ta Maria Magdalenas kyrkogård
Hedvig Eleonora kyrkogård	Sofia kyrkas kyrkotomt
Hjorthagskyrkans kyrkotomt	Spånga kyrkas kyrkogård
Hässelby villastads kyrkas kyrkotomt	Stefanskyrkans kyrkotomt
Högalidskyrkans kyrkotomt	Stora Sköndalskyrkans kyrkotomt
Katarina kyrkogård	Storkyrkans kyrkotomt
Kista kyrkas kyrkotomt	Söderledskyrkans kyrkotomt
Kungsholms kyrkogård	Tyska kyrkan S:ta Gertruds kyrkotomt
Mariehällskyrkans kyrkotomt	Uppenbarelsekyrkan i Hägerstens kyrkotomt
Markuskyrkans kyrkotomt	Västerledskyrkans kyrkotomt
Mikaelskapellets kyrkotomt	