



Encyclopedia of Cremation

By Lewis H. Mates

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The Encyclopedia of Cremation is the first major reference resource focused on cremation. Spanning many world cultures it documents regional histories, ideological movements and leading individuals that fostered cremation whilst also presenting cremation as a universal practice. Tracing ancient and classical cremation sites, historical and contemporary cremation processes and procedures of both scientific and legal kind, the encyclopedia also includes sections on specific cremation rituals, architecture, art and text. Features in the volume include: a general introduction and editorial introductions to sub-sections by Douglas Davies, an international specialist in death studies; appendices of world cremation statistics and a chronology of cremation; cross-referencing pathways through the entries via the index; individual entry bibliographies; and illustrations. This major international reference work is also an essential source book for students on the growing number of death-studies courses and wider studies in religion, anthropology or sociology.

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Editorial Review

Review

'...Treatment is admirably interdisciplinary, integrating sociological, psychological, historical, legal, theological, scientific, engineering, and artistic perspectives, along with political and economic dimensions of the practice...Recommended.' Choice 'The book will be invaluable for those who are taking the increasingly popular Death Studies courses in Colleges and Universities. It is a useful reference book for those with responsibility for cremation, cemeteries and burial practice. It is likely to prove a fascinating read for most anyone who picks it up.' Liturgy Newsletter 'This is one of the most fascinating books I have been given to review... This book is a valuable compendium of information on cremation and crematoria, and it will be of interest to those involved with the study of, and provision of services for, the processes and activities that surround death. It will also be of interest to those concerned with the theology or anthropology of death... this is a very good book on an important subject.' Reference Reviews 'It is to the credit of the editors that they have brought together under a single title such a diverse collection of essays, explanations and obituaries. Many of these make for fascinating reading... It is impossible - at least for this reader - not to be educated in unexpected areas through browsing the 230-odd entries; the international coverage is impressive both in breadth and depth... The book represents a fine collection of writings from all around the world that will be of interest to anybody concerned with cremation.' Pharos International '... a well-conceived and well-produced volume that will be helpful in the contemporary debate regarding the morality of the practice of cremation. This topic is certainly an issue that thoughtful Christians ought to pursue, and this text will aid those who choose to do so.' Faith & Mission '... an interesting work... Often one aspect of the topic is looked at from different viewpoints... This will be useful for those institutions that teach death studies. It may be of some use in courses in religion, sociology, and anthropology.' American Reference Books Annual 'The book contains all you could ever need to know [...] about its subject... A review cannot do justice to the variety of riches which a reader will find in this book. Douglas Davies and Lewis Mates are to be congratulated on this innovative and valuable book, both for their own contributions and their marshalling of so much expertise from throughout the world.' Anaphora '... an erudite and fascinating introduction to myriad aspects of its subject... provides a useful means of satisfying niggling and marginal enquiries that would otherwise be difficult to answer.' Bereavement Care 'One is familiar with an urn containing the ashes of the dear departed on the mantelpiece of the Victorian parlour; possibly less expected is an Encyclopedia of Cremation on the coffee table. Yet this remarkable book really does deserve better than relegation to the reference shelves. The introduction alone is a brilliant exercise in cross-cultural comparison. Information contained in the entries is historical, theological, mythical, economic, political, international, sociological, architectural, symbolic - and quite fascinating. ... this wonderful volume convinces us that we can indeed learn far more than we might have imagined about the living from what they do with the dead.' Theological Book Review '... awesomely comprehensive... not only details the history and practice of cremation worldwide, but offers a breadth of entries which would fascinate any death studies reader...' Mortality

About the Author

Douglas J. Davies is Professor in the Study of Religion at Durham University, UK. Lewis Mates formerly Golders Green Research Assistant at Durham University, UK.

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