[In]Visibility of Death in the Built Environment: [De]Legitimating Traditional Mediterranean Cemeteries in Southern Spain

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All cultures have responded formally to death, at times giving rise to the most representative architectural forms within their built environments. This article focuses on traditional cemeteries on the Mediterranean coast of southern Spain, with the aim of understanding why so few are protected and so many are at risk of disappearing. It first offers an interdisciplinary analysis of social conditions, historical records, heritage legislation, and urban planning polices to explain why these sites have received so little consideration. It then outlines emerging academic studies on the subject that document advances and limitations. Finally, it presents a proposal for the assessment of Andalusian coastal cemeteries within the framework of an integrated reading of heritage.

Death today is a form of delinquency, a deviation and an unthinkable anomaly.

— Jean Baudrillard[1]

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How can traditional built environments such as cemeteries, which provide a setting for a delegitimized activity, be legitimized? As Luis Fernández Galiano has stated: "In these times being dead is not normal. Only violent death as spectacle or media event has symbolic legitimacy: everyday death is shameful."[2]

The unavoidable condition of death as an essential part of life has made it of concern to architecture. As a fundamental value, it has provided a basis for the configuration of built environments since prehistoric times. All cultures have responded formally and

liturgically to the death of their forebears, at times giving rise to the most representative aspects of their architectural heritage.[3]

The early respect that man held for the dead, an expression of fascination in itself, with its powerful images of daytime and nighttime fantasy, could have been possibly what led him to establish a fixed meeting place, and, later, a permanent base. . . . [U]rban life encompasses the historical space that spans from the first funerary tumuli of the primitive dead to the more recent cemetery, the necropolis, in which one civilization after another has met its final end.[4]

As described by Oriol Bohigas, cemeteries are veritable catalogues of architectures (FIG.1).[5] They are also, in ethnological terms, places of expression for the rituals by which communities recognize themselves. The urban character of traditional Mediterranean cemeteries can be differentiated from the rural quality of British cemeteries. Cities within cities, the grouping of niches along the structured streets and squares of Mediterranean cemeteries form an essential part of the traditional urban landscape (FIG.2).

Anglo-Saxon tradition views cemeteries as parks, and incorporates them naturally into everyday life. And in Anglo-Saxon cultures, civil society generally defends its architecture of memory and closes ranks to defend its cemeteries. However, Mediterranean culture in Latin Europe pushes aside reminders of death. Its cemeteries are monofunctional spaces, only visited once it has become unavoidable to do so for burials and commemoration. Such a condition has rendered their survival in the contemporary city harder to justify. And this culture of denial has been reinforced by the increasingly negative connotations surrounding death in modern times:

Today's society, materialistic and demystified, has lost the close rapport architecture maintained throughout time with death, which, as a result, has become the new "social taboo"; not just covered up, it has also become a simple biological fact and a race against time. This now translates into a disinterest and a degree of contempt regarding funerary spaces when compared to other historical moments.[6]

Unlike the recognition received by the architects of monumental cemeteries, the builders of traditional Mediterranean cemeteries on the Malaga coast of southern Spain have remained anonymous, further hindering the processes of evaluation and institutional protection. The relatively recent origin of this type of popular funerary architecture (built in general throughout the nineteenth century) constitutes another obstacle for institutions and communities when considering its heritage value.

Of particular concern in this regard on the Malaga coast today are the trends of deterioration, lack of protection, speculation, and dismantlement that threaten many cemeteries. These have in part been supported by a profound change in the culture of death in this area in a matter of only twenty

FIGURE 1. *Père Lachaise Cemetery, Paris. Cemeteries as catalogue of architectures. Jacques Maes & Mar Loren-Méndez Collection, October 2015.*

FIGURE 2. *Old Estepona Cemetery. Interior view. Jacques Maes & Mar Loren-Méndez Collection, November 2011*

years. Internments — the traditional and historical burial form to which this Mediterranean funerary typology corresponded until the end of the twentieth century — have been replaced by incineration, upsetting the traditional typology.

Urban development and the expansion of cities have, of course, led to the dismantling of cemeteries all over the world. But on the Malaga coast, tourist pressures have further hindered their protection, making measures against their disappearance increasingly urgent. Across the region alarm bells are ringing as building speculators covet the privileged locations currently occupied by traditional niche cemeteries.

This article examines the future of traditional Mediterranean cemeteries on the Malaga coast, reflecting on their value, current condition, and risk of disappearance. In doing so, it presents a summary of the historical and contemporary processes of legitimization and (de)legitimization affecting these places.

The article first provides an overview of the contemporary origins of cemeteries in Europe and of their specific development in towns and villages along the Malaga coast. This is followed by a historical account of the first authors to visit and be moved by their aesthetic singularity. Romantic travelers, with their predilection for the English Cemetery in Malaga, were the first of these. But twentieth-century writers and intellectuals, such as Luis Cernuda and Bernard Rudofsky, later marveled at the pure lines of traditional Mediterranean cemeteries. Typically, it was the gaze of outsiders that first articulated and recorded the value of Andalusian cemeteries.

The study then offers a critical reflection on these cemeteries, considering relevant international and national heritage legislation as well as the ways these places have been treated in local and regional planning policy. This includes a summary of the urban development plans in relevant municipalities and a review of references to the protection of cemeteries in heritage catalogues.

A concluding section will consider lines of research being promoted by public institutions and universities, indicating advances as well as failures and limitations. Finally, the article will present a proposal that defines the value of cemeteries as heritage assets within the framework of the competitive research project "The N340 Roadway Corridor as a Historical Axis of the Andalusian Coast: Methodology for the Characterization of Heritage and Strategies for Sustainable Regeneration," carried out between 2014 and 2015 with FEDER funding.

Despite their immense value as testimonies to society and their singularity as a type of traditional funerary architecture, very few traditional vernacular cemeteries on the Malaga coast are protected, and, critically, their survival is jeopardized by urban planning policy. The article asks: Should the destruction of collective memory be legitimized in this way?

MEDITERRANEAN CEMETERIES IN LATIN EUROPE: ETYMOLOGY, ORIGIN AND EVOLUTON

The word cemetery derives from the Latin *coemeterium*, in turn a derivation from the Greek *koimeterion*, meaning "bedroom" (dormitory), from the verb *koimao*, meaning "to go to bed, to lie down."[7] Introduced by Christians, the term evokes a peaceful place of slumber for the dead, based on a belief in resurrection, where death is interpreted as a transitory stage from which the soul will awaken to enjoy eternal life. The cemetery was once the *necropolis*, the city of the dead. Also noteworthy, in Spanish, is the epenthesis that occurs in the word *cementerio* — by which the phoneme [n] has been added to the interior of the Latin word *coemeterium*, indicating a contamination from the word *caementum*, meaning mortar. Thus, the very material used to build the niches in Mediterranean cemeteries forms part of their name.

The culture of death is invariably linked to religion. This may explain why — despite the great influence in the region of the Roman Empire and its long Muslim occupation — burials in Andalusia generally came to occur within cities and towns. In both Roman and Muslim culture the dead were buried outside the city. However, after the reconquest of al-Andalus by the Christians in the thirteenth century, it became the norm to bury the dead on church grounds. In Mediterranean countries such as Spain or Malta this funerary form predominated until the end of the eighteenth century, supported by the belief that religious associations and brotherhoods could act as intermediaries, transitioning the soul along the pathway to heaven. The religious architecture in these areas thus came to exhibit traces of the world of the dead in the city of the living.

With the advent of the Enlightenment, however, interventions in the urban fabric mainly concerned hygiene. And these eventually led to the separation of funerary practice from church-based religious practice. In particular, in 1784, Charles III of Spain (1716–1788) came to support European trends prohibiting interments inside churches.[8] And in 1787 the Royal Charter decreed that burials should take place outside cities, a directive that influenced the formulation of all subsequent urban planning policy and legislation affecting funerary practice.

The exile of the dead became inevitable. At the beginning of the nineteenth century cemeteries across Europe would need to embody a new architectonic typology. Such extramural cemeteries were typically sited in privileged locations, often in areas of high elevation that were well ventilated and easy to access from town. Two main models emerged. One, the rural cemetery, was inspired by the British tradition of landscape and garden design. It aspired to imitate nature, creating a park suitable for walking and contemplation. The other, the monumental cemetery, typical in France (and of greater relevance to this case study), was of urban inspiration, characterized by a structured layout of streets and squares. The two models ultimately also influenced each other, resulting in such classic sites as Père Lachaise in Paris or Kensal Green and Highgate in London (FIG.3).[9] Replicating the physicality of the city, they also mirrored its social structure. Thus, they combined pantheons designed by well-known architects for the aristocracy, smaller monuments for the bourgeoisie, humble tombs for the worker class, and anonymous common burial grounds — often in independent "neighborhoods" of the cemetery.

With a few exceptions, such extramural cemeteries would gradually become a characteristic feature of the outskirts of traditional towns and villages in Andalusia. Typi-

cal was the development of new areas for the dead on the outskirts of the city of Malaga. A number of new cemeteries were built here at the beginning of the nineteenth century to address conditions of overcrowding and public health. Of these, San Miguel is today the most monumental. But the English Cemetery is notable for its landscape design; stylistically, it also features funerary architecture along Classical lines, with some eclectic elements, including the seashell motif that decorates the well-known *tumbas de las conchas* and adds local color. The cemeteries of San Rafael and San Juan, meanwhile, both respect the simple lines of popular funerary architecture characteristic of traditional towns and villages in the area. The use of all these cemeteries, however, explicitly reflected the structure of urban classes — with the aristocracy and the bourgeoisie burying their dead in the former two, and the proletariat in the latter two.[10]

Unlike the urban center of Malaga, smaller towns and villages in the region were generally connected to agriculture and fishing, and had only a token presence of the aristocracy and the bourgeoisie. Their burial grounds thus contained few examples of monumental architecture. These vernacular cemeteries instead became cities within cities, urban in design, with space so scarce that ornamental gardening disappeared. A more economical burial form also came to predominate at these sites, as niches were stacked into rows of walls three or four stories high (FIG.4). These in turn formed the facades that overlooked a network of avenues, streets and squares, where the use of architectural styles, characteristic of monumental cemeteries, almost disappeared.

Burials in the historic centers of villages and towns also continued (and still take place occasionally) in the area, as Enlightenment ideals were never fully able to outdo the local power of religion (FIGS.5–7). The cemeteries at Casares, Manilva, and Torremolinos, all framed in the tradition of

FIGURE 3. *Père Lachaise Cemetery. The city as a model. Enlightenment rationale and trends in hygiene. Jacques Maes & Mar Loren-Méndez Collection, October 2015*

FIGURE 4. *Old Estepona Cemetery. Detail of niche structure interments. Jacques Maes & Mar Loren-Méndez Collection, November 2011.*

FIGURE 5 (TOP). *Olvera, Cádiz. General view of Olvera from the main square in the old town, adjacent to the cemetery. Jacques Maes & Mar Loren-Méndez Collection, March 2016.*

FIGURE 6 (LEFT). *Olvera Cemetery located in the old town. Interior view. Jacques Maes & Mar Loren-Méndez Collection, March 2016.*

FIGURE 7 (ABOVE). *Olvera Cemetery, Cádiz. Access to the cemetery from the main square in the old town. Jacques Maes & Mar Loren-Méndez Collection, March 2016.*

popular architecture and still operational, are thus situated at the heart of their respective old towns (**FIG. 8**). Indeed, in certain towns, including Mijas and Benalmadena, even the practice of burials by the church continued until the second half of the twentieth century. After that time, however, new pressure from tourism ultimately led to the relocation of cemeteries from urban centers.

Of these places, the International Cemetery in Benalmadena was unique in that it contained both a Catholic area with niches of traditional Mediterranean typology and a second area open to all religious cults that was closer in typology to the British landscape tradition. In an interview, the mayor responsible for the eventual relocation of the Benalmadena cemetery, Enrique Bolin, recognized the influence of

FIGURE 8. *Torremolinos Cemetery located inside the town. Access and interior view. Ana Quesada-Arce, September 2016.*

Malaga's English Cemetery in its design.[11] This had also been where his ancestor, a former Swedish consul, John Bolin, was buried.[12] Mayor Bolin mentioned the inclusion of foreigners and non-Catholics in the Old Benalmadena Cemetery in his memoirs as a reflection of the plurality of society on Malaga's Costa del Sol. However, he also remarked upon its dire condition as a cause for its removal from the town.[13]

   In other places, new burial grounds were developed at locations outside the town. The Marbella Cemetery, maintained inside the castle until the end of the nineteenth century, was thus replaced by two new cemeteries built by the municipality: the San Bartolomé Cemetery on its outskirts in 1885; and, shortly after, the Cemetery of San Pedro de Alcántara, linked to the agricultural community founded by

the Marquis of Duero, in 1860. And, elsewhere, Estepona became one of the first coastal towns to comply with the directives of Charles III. By 1802, the preparatory work for a new cemetery had already begun, and the first burial in it took place in 1832.

   In general terms, traditional Mediterranean cemeteries share a number of common features. As shown in the accompanying images, different variations exist, but all comprise a network of main avenues and side streets (FIGS.9,10). Upon entry, a main square provides access to the different sections of the cemetery, with variations in the use of landscaping and paving (FIG.11). Vertical niche structures define the facades that border the avenues, streets and squares. Situated off a main access road to the nearest

FIGURE 9. *Old Estepona Cemetery. Layout of streets. Jacques Maes & Mar Loren-Méndez Collection, November 2011.*

FIGURE 10. *San Pedro de Alcántara Cemetery, Marbella. View of secondary streets. Jacques Maes & Mar Loren-Méndez Collection, June 2015.*

FIGURE II. *Old Estepona Cemetery. Main access square. Jacques Maes & Mar Loren-Méndez Collection, November 2011*

town or city, such places are separated from their surroundings by a wall and a main access gate **(FIG.12)**. And they are sited in privileged locations, the benefits of which are discernible from the inside **(FIG.13)**.

FIGURE 12. *San Pedro de Alcántara Cemetery, Marbella. Access gate. Jacques Maes & Mar Loren-Méndez Collection, June 2015.*

FIGURE 13. *San Pedro de Alcántara Cemetery, Marbella. Privileged enclave. Jacques Maes & Mar Loren-Méndez Collection, June 2015.*

Urban settlements across the Mediterranean region today generally exhibit similarities due to the spread of the Roman Empire. However, they vary in the expression of cultural and religious practices associated with death and its formalization. For example, in countries neighboring Andalusia, such as Morocco and Tunisia, Islamic religious law calls for the burial of the body in a grave without a coffin, with the grave aligned to the *quibla* (Mecca) and only a simple marker. Such practices are clearly incompatible with the niche cemetery form. Traditional Christian internments also have regional variations. For example, although traditional Italian Mediterranean cemeteries have niches, internments prevail, and cemeteries are more spacious.

Within this spectrum of approaches, as this case study illustrates, popular cemeteries in southern Spain reflect the local vernacular architecture. They are comprised of simple whitewashed volumes that replicate the urban grid, and that mirror its social stratification. As such, they can be singled out as a distinct and important architectural typology.

LEGITIMIZATION OF CEMETERIES IN THE OUTSIDER GAZE

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, cemeteries had only begun to appear on the outskirts of Spanish cities when they came to captivate the gaze of travelers. This was especially true of the English Cemetery in Malaga. Distinctly landscaped and thus linked to a British tradition of garden design, it was mentioned in the writings of such famous figures as Richard Ford, George Denis, and Thomas Debary. Among early women travelers, Lady E. Mary Grosvenor visited both the English Cemetery and the Catholic Cemetery of San Miguel in 1840. And the Australian, Margaret Thomas,

true to the spirit of Romanticism, at the end of the nineteenth century described the English Cemetery of Malaga as a place so beautiful it almost rendered death agreeable.[14]

The Romantic vision was profoundly influenced by a rejection of the new technologies brought about by the industrial revolution. It was in this context that the exoticism of Spanish autochthonous architecture, so unlike northern European architectural heritage, captivated visiting foreigners. It was the city itself, its atmosphere and streets, that generated the sought-after sensorial experience, and it was natural that cemeteries would feature in these perceptions. The Hispanist Majorie Grice-Hutchinson, in her book *The English Cemetery in Malaga and Other Studies*, quoted such Romantic views, highlighting those of Hans Andersen, who had visited the English Cemetery in Malaga in 1862.[15] Anderson described it in his 1864 publication *In Spain*:

> *I could well understand how a splenetic Englishman might take his own life in order to be buried in this place. I, however, thank heaven I am not splenetic, and shall have great pleasure in seeing more of this blessed beautiful earth. I did not make any attempt on my life but I wandered in a little Paradise — this charming garden. . . . Passion-flowers flung their tendrils over many grave-stones, pepper-trees waved their drooping branches amidst this place of repose. Here stood a single palm, there a gum-tree, and in the centre of all this vegetation was a neat, small house, within which refreshments were to be had; pretty children with laughing eyes were playing there. The whole cemetery was encircled by a hedge of wild cacti, over which one beheld the wide, heaving ocean. I fancied at sunset that I could discern the African coast.[16]*

At the end of the nineteenth century, after a series of economic setbacks, Malaga also began to promote itself abroad as a tourist destination. Weather had become a new reason for travel; and just as the benefits of fine weather and sunshine were equated to good health, so did hygiene become a matter of utmost importance. In this context, Luis de León, in his account *Malaga, Winter Resort*, dedicated an entire chapter to its necropolis, noting that the location of cemeteries should be an essential concern of travelers. He further expounded on the beauty of the English Cemetery: "Rather than a mansion of pain, it seems more like a garden of delights."[17]

Already a tourist destination by the beginning of the twentieth century, the Malaga coast also became a place frequented by painters and writers. One of these, Luis Cernuda (1902–1968), an outstanding Generation of '27 poet, played a significant role in the creation of a tourist imaginary.[18] As resorts on the Malaga coast began to develop, he wrote various poems inspired by its cemeteries, including "Town Cemetery," "An Elegy Foretold," and "The Other Cemetery" — as well as providing a translation of Friedrich Hölderlin's "The Cemetery."[19]

In "An Elegy Foretold," Cernuda touchingly described the Torremolinos Cemetery — then a small cemetery situated in a suburb west of Malaga, the provincial capital. His interpretation of heritage, transmitted through his poems, would eventually also influence people's appreciation of the layout and the scenic qualities of cemeteries in general. Unlike the Romantics, and from an artist's perspective, Cernuda was one of the first to proclaim an interest in the everyday local qualities that so fascinated tourists:

> *On cemeteries in towns:*
> *Behind the open walled-in gate*
> *The dark earth bears no trees, no grass,*
>
> *Only old men gather on wooden benches*
> *To silently sit in the fading afternoon,*
> *With houses all around, shops nearby, kids*
> *Play in the street and trains*
> *Pass by tombstones. It is a poor area.[20]*

Traditional cemeteries in the Mediterranean region of Andalusia were also later featured in the New York Museum of Modern Art exhibition "Architecture without Architects." In the 1963 show, curated by the architect Bernard Rudofsky (1905–1988), they were presented as examples of intelligent, serene architecture, from which contemporary designers (specifically in the U.S.) might have a lot to learn.[21] Rudofsky's own photographs of these places would also later appear in his publication *The Prodigious Builders*.[22]

The towns of Casares, Sayalonga, and Almuñecar, whose cemeteries were depicted in the exhibition, are all located on the Andalusian Mediterranean coast. Beginning in the early 1960s, Rudofsky had made a point of visiting such traditional towns and villages, shunning stopovers in monumental cities.[23] His subsequent arguments in favor of their design qualities highlighted the value of difference as a sustainable and versatile condition. But he also saw the aesthetic and phenomenological dimension of such places as having contemporary relevance, specifically as it overcame stereotypes that prevailed in the image of Spain at the time.

Located in the province of Malaga, the municipal boundaries of the village of Casares reach the coast, but its historic center is in the interior, approximately fourteen kilometers from the sea. Here it occupies a steep topography, providing a classic example of what Rudofsky classified as "Hill Towns," and he photographed it often before his death in the 1980s. The cemetery in Casares, a city within a city, sits firmly on an incline and echoes traditional architectural wisdom, altering the topography and offering a viewpoint over nearby vineyards to the distant sea. A heritage assessment of such a place must transcend considerations of architectural form to focus on the capacity to construct a landscape.

Rudofsky was also interested in the what Eric Hobsbawm has referred to as the "transversal" condition of tradition.[24] By highlighting the value of funerary architec-

tures in different parts of the world, he thus sought to transcend the static dimension of tradition, specifically as related to geographical belonging. Instead, he situated the modest cemeteries of Mediterranean villages in an international framework, praised the essentialism of their forms and the wisdom of their siting, and related them visually and typologically to other structures of vertical stacking in funerary architecture around the world. He also highlighted the absence of lavish ornamentation, including the type of statuary and decorative gardening encountered in monumental cemeteries.[25] As he wrote, "Andalusian architecture is confronted with other vernacular landscapes around the world, presenting it as universal Heritage rather than exotic local samples anchored to a specific milieu."[26]

LEGAL FRAMEWORK: THE HERITAGE PROTECTION OF TRADITIONAL ARCHITECTURE

In Spain, legislation in the field of heritage was first formulated on the basis of Enlightenment precepts, gestating between the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In the second half of the last century, legislation for the protection of heritage led to the integration of heritage management within the urban planning and development process, as contemplated in the first Land Law (Ley del Suelo) in 1956, and in the current Spanish Historical Heritage Law of 1985 [Ley 13/1985, del Patrimonio Histórico Español LPH85]. The latter third of the twentieth century also saw the transfer of heritage and urban planning competencies to regional governments, resulting in a greater appreciation of the individuality of each region as well as the decentralization and promotion of the singularity and diversity of heritage.

On the other hand, the fragility of traditional architecture in Spain and its deterioration over the last sixty years has largely been due to the scant social and institutional recognition given to vernacular heritage since the 1950s. Traditional architecture under Franco was associated with underdevelopment, a pervasive attitude that prevented adequate protection measures. Furthermore, in the legal system of protection, vernacular architecture presents specific conditions that hinder its integration into the cumbersome system of laws and regulations. *De auteur* and monumental architecture respond to a well-defined project with identifiable values, facilitating the protection of individual structures. In contrast, the adaptive and flexible nature of traditional architecture is still far from being understood or incorporated into heritage protection policy-making.

Internationally, of course, the current transformation of the concept of heritage has given rise to new perceptions of traditional architecture. These led to its explicit consideration in the UNESCO Charter of the Built Vernacular Heritage, ratified in Mexico in 1999. In Spain, National Heritage Plans are created through the Institute of Cultural Heritage [Instituto de Patrimonio Cultural]. The first of these was the Cathedral Plan, formulated at the end of the 1980s. This was only followed, however, some thirty years later, by the 2014 National Plan for Traditional Architecture.

In addition to the late consideration given to such architecture in Spain, traditional construction methods themselves — a basic aspect of heritage value — have no place in current legislation overseeing building regulations [Código Técnico de la Edificación].[27] Indeed, this legislation actually prevents the legal use of traditional construction systems in vernacular architecture.

On the Malaga coast, an additional problem is that tourism has now set the agenda for local development at the expense of vernacular heritage. Traditional settlements have thus been so profoundly transformed that identifying and characterizing extant elements of traditional architecture has become problematic.

Equally disappointing are the heritage protections in current municipal development plans for towns and villages along the Malaga coast.[28] Although the recuperation of the urban fabric has been one of the main objectives of urban planning and development at an international, national and regional level since the mid-1960s, this concern has had little impact on the coastal towns and villages in Andalusia. One reason is that very few municipalities on the Mediterranean coast have integrated local heritage-protection catalogues into their development plans. Such a principal, effective heritage-conservation tool is considered too restrictive to the development of tourism. And those agencies that have taken such an essential step have only rarely seen vernacular architecture as worth protecting. As a result, coastal cemeteries receive no form of heritage protection, and are regulated only with regard to matters of health and safety or as potential sites for nonresidential use **(FIG.14)**.

Despite these trends, the San Miguel Cemetery and the English Cemetery in the city of Malaga have been awarded maximum protection, as stipulated in the heritage protection catalogue incorporated into that city's 2010 urban development plan (the PGOU, or Plan General de Ordenación Urbana de Málaga). The English Cemetery subsequently also obtained maximum protection at a regional level, being designated an Asset of Cultural Interest and a Listed Monument by the Junta de Andalucía in 2012. The San Miguel Cemetery has been included in the General Catalogue of Historical Andalusian Heritage [Catálogo General de Patrimonio Histórico Andaluz].

Meanwhile, however, in Marbella, the Courts of Justice overturned the few legal measures in its urban development plans that safeguarded the San Bernabé and San Pedro de Alcántara cemeteries. And such actions raise concern regarding the relationship between cataloguing and planning. Although planning tools are considered the most effective instruments for regulating territory, heritage catalogues seem to have had little impact on the territorial models proposed by local planning authorities. Managing a heritage-protection catalogue independently from the local planning process,

TOWN	CEMETERY / DATE	ANDAL. REGISTRY / HERITAGE LOCAL PROTECTION	IMAGE
Manilva	Cementerio de Manilva / XVIII Century	Yes / No	
Estepona	Cementerio Antiguo de Estepona / Beginning of the XIX Century	No / No	
Casares	Cementerio de Casares / Middle of the XIX Century	Yes / No	
Marbella	Cementerio de San Bernabé / End of the XIX Century	No / No	
San Pedro de Alcántara	Cementerio de San Pedro de Alcántara / End of the XIX Century	No / No	
Fuengirola	Cementerio Antiguo de Fuengirola	Demolished	
Benalmádena	Cementerio Internacional Benalmádena / Middle of the XX Century	No / No	
Mijas	Cementerio Nuestra Señora de la Cabeza / Middle of the XX Century	No / No	
Torremolinos	Cementerio de Torremolinos	No / No	

FIGURE 14. *The legal heritage assessment and protection of cemeteries on the Malaga coast. Ana Quesada-Arce, July 2016.*

however, is impossible. At the very least, conflicting interests between the two authorities may exacerbate tensions. It is therefore fundamental that dialogue be constant between planning and protection authorities, and that it be carried out within a legally binding framework.

Another problem is that the health and safety standards of cemeteries are regulated by their own sectorial norms.[29] As mentioned, these were initially based on directives set by Charles III at the end of the eighteenth century. When residential land use and cemeteries were seen as no longer compatible, these established precise distances between the city of the dead and the city of the living. Over the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, however, new development encroached on the space between the city and the cemetery. As a result, cemeteries now form part of the urban fabric, occupying the first periphery — thus contravening regulations, and posing a threat to their permanence. Such circumstances almost led to the closure of the San Miguel Cemetery in Malaga.

Conflicts with recent development have directly contributed to the loss of cemeteries elsewhere in the region however. For example, the 1994 Estepona Urban Development Plan failed to protect that city's old cemetery. Instead, it proposed construction of a large new burial ground to the north of the motorway, on classified greenbelt land, with the aim of dismantling and transferring the Cementerio Antiguo from its established location at the center of the town. In 2000, the Old Estepona has closed down, burials ceased, and the transfer of remains to the new cemetery began. This has today led to a gradual but inevitable decrease in its use and the deterioration of its aesthetically pleasing urban landscape of avenues, streets and squares. Today, the Special Plan for the Protection of the Historic Center of Estepona does not even include a cemetery within its demarcated zone.[30]

The Old Fuengirola Cemetery represents another glaring example. Dismantled and relocated, the former site now contains a zoo, garages, and housing.

Given such actions, public bodies have been criticized for unscrupulous practices with regard to traditional architecture. But an underlying problem is that general attitudes fail to recognize relatively recent architecture as heritage at all. And considering these views, it has been difficult to generate a positive assessment of the heritage value of popular cemeteries.

ASSESSMENT AND PROTECTION: ACADEMIC RESEARCH AND INSTITUTIONAL COMMITMENT

Although studies of monumental cemeteries still prevail, recent interest within the academic community in smaller, traditional Andalusian cemeteries is facilitating a reassessment of their heritage value. As a result, research related to their conservation has begun, and public awareness of their value has begun to increase.

In the 1970s Andalusian cemeteries were in a general state of abandon — an ongoing situation made worse by an absence of critical thinking related to this area of architectural production. However, after Franco's long dictatorship (1939–1975), and with the creation of regional governments starting in the 1980s, the new democratic regime in Spain initiated a process of transformation and urban development. Among other things, this required that existing cemeteries be adapted to the needs of an increasing population. In response, the new Andalusian government set out to catalogue and improve the state of the cemeteries within its regional jurisdiction. This took place within the framework of a general plan of action to enhance their value, conserve civil architecture, and incorporate them into an overall vision of regional heritage. The small inland town of Casabermeja, twenty kilometers from the city of Malaga, was the first municipality to benefit from regional government grants specifically destined for the restoration of cemeteries.

At the same time, in collaboration with the University of Seville, the Andalusian government developed a catalogue of cemeteries, leading to the exhibition and publication in 1993 of *Cemeteries in Andalusia: Architecture and Urban Planning*.[31] This volume described a significant number of popular Mediterranean cemeteries, featured a series of surveys carried out by the university's School of Architecture [Escuela Técnica Superior de Arquitectura], and included a professional photographic record. The project testified to the modernization of heritage concepts, especially as related to anonymous architectures. Thus, in addition to listing monumental cemeteries, the study included anonymous cemeteries in smaller towns and villages. With their interlocking, whitewashed volumes structured along rational lines, these are typically structured around a grid of streets and squares, implanted in the territory like a residential estate. Many such places could be found in well-preserved inland towns and villages already catalogued for their heritage value. However, many fewer were to be found in coastal municipalities, whose surroundings had already undergone substantial transformation due to the rapid development of tourism.

In 1991 the regional government of Andalusia also hosted the First International Conference on Contemporary Cemeteries [I Encuentro Internacional sobre los Cementerios Contemporáneos], a gathering of experts in Seville at which historical, architectural, urban planning, sociological, and public health issues related to cemeteries were discussed. The event aimed to be of international scope and to raise public awareness regarding the artistic, architectural, historical and anthropological heritage value of Andalusian cemeteries.[32] The wide range of papers presented did provide an international dimension, although this was largely limited to the "Western world." However, because the event was directed at experts, the conference failed to achieve its primary aim: to raise public awareness. The same applied to the later publication of selected presentations, which focused on mon-

FIGURE 15. *Tamara Montes de Oca, "Patrimonio. Ruta por el Camposanto. El cementerio antiguo como lugar de visita obligada," in* Estepona *(November 3, 2012) pp.10–11. Report on the activity organized by Mar Loren-Méndez and Ana Quesada Arce for PICATT (Plataforma de Investigación, creación y acción de los territorios turísticos).*

umental cemeteries in large cities.[33] Even Rosario Camacho's contribution to this volume, discussing Malaga's cemeteries, had a monumental focus.[34]

In fact, only one text in the volume, dedicated to Mexican cemeteries, explicitly focused on popular architecture.[35] This testified to the consideration given at an international level to the commemoration of death in Mexico as heritage. However, unlike the powerful physicality of cemeteries on the Malaga coast, the heritage value of traditional Mexican funerary practice is mainly associated with its intangible dimension, based on the celebration of the Day of the Dead.[36] Indeed, in 2003, UNESCO specifically proclaimed the indigenous festivity dedicated to the dead a "Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity." And, as the present authors have previously noted, while the celebration of the Day of the Dead is a tradition shared by the Spanish in their cemeteries, it is rarely practiced by younger generations, who may prefer to appropriate foreign practices such as Halloween (**FIG.15**).[37]

Another significant conference dealing with the heritage value of cemeteries was the First International Heritage Conference on Cemeteries [I Jornadas Internacionales de Cementerios Patrimoniales], held in Malaga in 2011. It specifically considered "European cemeteries as a resource for culture and tourism, their value in times of incertitude, and their recuperation as heritage sites."[38] Presentations at this event thus highlighted the potential of tourism as a means to safeguard the heritage of cemeteries. On this occasion, however, none of the papers dealt specifically with the problems faced by traditional cemeteries on the Andalusian coast.

At a European level, the Association of Significant Cemeteries in Europe (ASCAE) has also promoted funerary heritage.[39] However, its list of significant cemeteries does not include any of the popular cemeteries on the Malaga coast. The ASCAE list does include the English Cemetery in Malaga mentioned above, Granada's Municipal Cemetery, and Cordoba's Nuestra Señora de la Salud Cemetery — all located in provincial capitals in Andalusia. But in the province of Mala-

ga, the only cemetery belonging to a smaller population center that is given any consideration by the ASCAE is in Monturque. And this designation apparently reflects the Roman ruins situated in this exceptionally well-conserved inland village.

The ASCAE did recently acquire official certification from the Council of Europe for its European Route of Cemeteries, a project with clear cultural and tourist appeal. There also exists a guide to cemeteries in Spain, which, remarkably, aims to identify each and every cemetery on Spanish soil. However, this ambitious initiative was instigated by an independent group of women who aspired to raise public awareness, encouraging participation and the contribution of documentary evidence related to cemeteries.[40]

Such initiatives relating to cataloguing, rehabilitation, conferences and publications are all fairly recent, however, beginning in the 1990s. And most such research has also been monographic — which is undoubtedly necessary, but which has failed to fully incorporate cemeteries into an integrated heritage narrative. As seen above, such studies are also predominantly concerned with monumental cemeteries in big cities. Furthermore, when traditional cemeteries are included, they are usually situated inland, belonging to villages and small towns that are already classified for their heritage value. These cemeteries are thus already protected as assets within a heritage ensemble, and are fully integrated into their small built communities and the surrounding landscape. This suggests that popular cemeteries are more likely to be valued when they are located in a historic enclave with an existing cultural or archaeological heritage narrative.

PROMOTING AN INTEGRATED APPROACH TO HERITAGE ASSESSMENT: A CASE STUDY

To fully appreciate their value, traditional Mediterranean cemeteries need to be interpreted within the open semantic and methodological framework that currently characterizes heritage studies. Heritage assessment in general has recently widened in scope to include more extensive spatial contexts. This should allow the assessment of cemeteries to extend beyond a mere evaluation of their physical elements as architectural ensembles. Expanding on the monographic studies that have predominated to date, cemeteries might thus be incorporated into an integrated reading of heritage, using territory and the city as the basic elements of interpretation.

The methodology proposed in the case study "The N-340 roadway corridor as a historical axis on the Andalucian coast" assesses heritage by applying such an integrated approach. In particular, the study considered the national road that runs parallel to the Mediterranean coast as occupying space with an important historical narrative.[41] As part of preparatory work for the study, an interdisciplinary methodology was developed to define the heritage assets that characterize roadway corridors in general — specifically as these relate to

the type and relationship of heritage assets to the road.[42] The N-340 corridor study was then grant-aided by the European Regional Development Fund within a framework of research aimed at involving heritage experts from different fields of spatial analysis, from civil engineering and geography to architecture and urban planning.

Of interest with regard to the N-340 road today is that it occupies space long used to connect Europe to Africa. This was the case well before construction of the present road began in the nineteenth century. The heritage territory studied therefore consists of an extensive elongated area — denominated the corridor — whose function and transformation has been greatly defined by the transiting roadway. As the researchers explained:

> *Focused on the southern section of the Costa del Sol, the study thus illustrates the complexities that arise in assessing a coastal corridor that has been highly transformed, the result of radical alterations undergone especially since the 1950s, with the massive and ongoing development of tourism (Morales 1982; Galacho Jiménez 1996; Mesalles and Sumoy 2002).[43]*

Within such an integrated approach, the heritage value of the cemeteries of the Malaga coast was assessed based on their historical relationship with the surrounding territory, its built environment, and inhabitants — with the roadway infrastructure providing a continuous structuring element. Mostly built during the nineteenth century, these cemeteries constitute an essential part of contemporary coastal heritage. Located outside existing population centers explicitly in response to health and safety standards, they thus once defined the modern outskirts of towns and cities, and so represent a significant feature for understanding the surrounding territory. As privileged enclaves, they also often bordered ancient pathways, certain sectors of which have since been used to build roads for motorized traffic.

A total of six cemeteries along the coastal corridor were assessed: the Old Estepona Cemetery [Cementerio Antiguo de Estepona], the San Pedro de Alcántara Cemetery, the San Bernabe Cemetery in Marbella, the Torremolinos Cemetery, and two cemeteries in the city of Malaga: San Juan and the English Cemetery. Of these, the Old Estepona Cemetery requires the most urgent attention, given its advanced state of deterioration. It is situated on high ground, to the north of the N-340 road, and is one of the rare nineteenth-century spaces still existing in the Estepona municipality. Inseparable from the memory of the place, it is undoubtedly of architectural and urban heritage value. Indeed, it is where, even today, despite its condition, a significant aspect of the community can be identified. However, its deterioration over the last few years has been directly related to the prohibition of burials there since the start of the twenty-first century. This situation has led to a gradual abandoning of its niches,

which has affected its overall landscape. This has resulted in fewer people congregating there, a condition that presages its inevitable closure. The study warned of this danger, and proposed that the Old Estepona Cemetery be listed as a protected heritage asset. This might prevent its total disappearance and reactivate its use.

Rather than adopting a fragmented approach to conservation, and in order to avoid simplistic classification, the N-340 corridor study proposed heritage configurations that might include the area's traditional cemeteries. After identifying, localizing, and giving a historical account of each of them, the study then attempted to integrate them into specific heritage configurations or sequences, in which natural, cultural and historical features combine to produce a cohesive narrative. This integrated approach emphasized the particular historic or geographic rationale behind each heritage sequence.

Heritage sequences were defined as sections of the roadway corridor that contained high concentrations of heritage assets due to a combination of factors. Among these were geographical conditions, existing features of the area prior to road construction, road infrastructure, and the waves of transformation that the construction of the road brought about. Defining heritage in this way facilitates the incorporation of minor assets such as traditional cemeteries, because they acquire greater interest when viewed as part of a sequence. These complex configurations also include assets of interest across multiple disciplines, including geography, agriculture, architecture, urban planning, or civil engineering.

For example, the Old Estepona Cemetery was located within an urban heritage sequence that also includes the historic center of Estepona, a coastal tourist resort (fig.16). Here, the N-340 road has responded to the needs of a specific period in history, and is now an urban thoroughfare, transformed by a sprawling built environment. The significance of such a heritage sequence thus may be seen to lie within the fields of urban and architectural heritage, rather than those of the natural environment or features of the road itself.

figure 16. *Estepona City Center heritage sequence in the* Costa del Sol *N340 corridor on the Malaga coast (showing heritage assets). Photographs by N-340 Research team (April 2015) (except center and top right: Google maps (March 2015). Website design by Jacques Maes https://n-340.org/patrimonio, January 2016.*

PROCESSES OF LEGITIMATION: THE RIGHT TO BE

Death, as an unavoidable part of life, plays an essential role in the narrative of territories. Cemeteries are reflections of the society they are part of, and they reproduce the history of cities and territories. Indeed, the commemoration of death can be seen as an original feature of cultural landscapes, responding to the need to establish a location for a population's forebears. The drastic change in the spiritual aspirations of Western society that took place during the twentieth century, however, has been consolidated in the current century: death, no longer a transcendental event, has now become a mere biological fact, a social taboo. This change has profoundly affected the value that society, institutions and architects attribute to funerary design.

Traditional cemeteries on the Malaga coast constitute a singular, yet obviated, formalization of the culture of death, mirroring urban life. Yet the safeguarding of Mediterranean cemeteries is problematic because of their condition as anonymous, monofunctional spaces, built over the last two centuries. They are therefore fairly recent architectures, often occupying strategic enclaves on the outskirts of coastal tourist resorts. As such, they are subject to pressure from urban speculation, and their protection is often perceived to be an obstacle to development.

However, the touristic offering of sun and sea might alternatively be complemented by a cultural offering, in which cemeteries are integrated into an updated and holistic reading of heritage. Thus different assets may be integrated into one single historical, geographical and social rationale. An integrated assessment of cemeteries within the new framework of semantic and methodological openness that currently characterizes the field of heritage studies is, however, critical to overcoming their invisibility, and facilitating something more than a narrow, monographic evaluation of funerary architecture.

Steps to safeguard the physical presence of cemeteries within cities include their incorporation into heritage and urban planning processes and the amendment of existing regulations governing construction materials to ensure that restoration work is compatible with traditional building methods. An analysis of health and safety norms is further essential to meet the standards required to fully integrate the use of cemeteries within the contemporary urban fabric.

The intangible dimension of cemeteries is also of critical relevance, and in this sense, the survival of cemeteries relies on their continued use. The presence of an active community of visitors, attending to a cemetery's landscape, transforming it through floral arrangements and social interaction, is essential if it is not to become a museum. From a design standpoint, the fact that incinerations are becoming more popular than burials may further allow the original niche structures of traditional Mediterranean cemeteries, originally designed for coffins, to be used as columbarium walls containing urns,

as is the practice now in the San Miguel Cemetery in Malaga. Cemeteries solely containing ashes are also exempt from the directive that stipulates a physical separation between inhabited areas and internment grounds. This initiative meets the standards set by health and safety regulations and facilitates the continued presence of the city of the dead within the city of the living, allowing cemeteries to continue to function today as urban spaces in their own right.[44]

The question, "Is the destruction of collective memory legitimate?" could be followed by, "Can we imagine a 'bill of rights' to protect built environments?"[45] A strictly local and conservative perspective needs to make way for an assessment of heritage in the wider context in order to preserve the real value of this form of traditional built environment. However, as part of this effort, paternalistic views of endangered vernacular environments, such as those developed by authors such as Henry Glassie, must be overcome.[46] Having accepted that what lasts in tradition today is paradoxically its transient nature, it is indeed this modern condition which makes it possible to [re]define its immutability. As Nezar AlSayyad reaffirmed in the edited 2004 volume *The End of Tradition?*, "We must recognize that what lasts in tradition today is the 'transient, the fleeting, the contingent, because that is the new way to find 'the eternal and the immutable.'"[47]

In order to do so, and inspired by Oleg Grabar's reflections, this article has highlighted the need for cemeteries to be part of wider narratives that underpin the construction of historical memory.[48] The research has thus sought to extend beyond a limited expert discourses, and commit to an interdisciplinary approach that can reach wider sectors of the population. This could lead to the elaboration of a powerful mythology, provoking fascination and a necessary reappropriation of cultural diversity in the Mediterranean tradition of funerary practice, preserving it beyond its physicality.[49]

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15. Grice-Hutchinson, *El cementerio inglés, p.15*.

16. H.C. Andersen, *In Spain* (London: R. Bentley, 1864), p.105.

17. L. De León, *Málaga, estación de invierno* (Madrid: Tipografía de las noticias, 1894).

18. The Generation of '27 [*Generación del '27*] was a group of poets emerging in Spain between 1923 and 1927 who incorporated the views of the European vanguard in art and literature.

19. F. Hölderlin, *Poemas* (Madrid: Visor Libros, 1985).

20. L. Cernuda, *Poesía completa* (Madrid: Siruela, 1999), pp.295–96. Written in the 1940s and published for the first time in L. Cernuda *La realidad y el deseo* (collection of his poems, up-dated in various editions until 1962, the year of the last Siruela edition). Translated by C. Stewart.

21. The exhibition "Architecture without Architects: A Short Introduction to Non-Pedigreed Architecture" opened on November 11, 1964, and closed on February 27, 1965. In 1960 Rudofsky had been invited to propose a series of photographic exhibits by Arthur Dexler, the director of the Department of Architecture and Design at MoMA. Four were in fact designed as traveling exhibitions, and the MoMA did not plan to show them in New York: "Roads" (1961), "Stairs" (1963), "Architecture without Architects" (1964), and "Streets, Arcades and Galleries" (1967). The last was eventually cancelled. For more, see M. Loren-Méndez, "Uprooting Andalusian Traditional Architecture: Visual Strategies on Bernard Rudofsky's Subversive Discourse," in *IASTE Working Paper Series*, 258 (Berkeley, CA: University of California, 2014), pp.44–73, specifically note 1, p.72.

22. B. Rudofsky, *The Prodigious Builders: Notes toward a Natural History of Architecture with Special Regard to Those Species That Are Traditionally Neglected or Downright Ignored* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1977).

23. As I have previously written, "Rudofsky's itineraries were marginal, like the architecture in his exhibit, and his slides show few well-known monuments in capital cities, showing a special interest in Andalusia since his first itineraries in 1963." Loren-Méndez, "Uprooting Andalusian Traditional Architecture,", p.49.

24. As Eric Hobsbawn has written, "Tradition is transversal: it is as much a part of 'traditional' societies as it is of 'modern' ones, making geography less an issue of distance than of difference/sameness." E. Hobsbawn, "Introduction: Inventing Traditions," in E. Hobsbawn and T. Ranger, eds., *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), p.5. As quoted in N. AlSayyad, *Traditions: The "Real," the Hyper, and the Virtual Traditions in the Built Environment* (London and New York: Routledge, 2014) p.55.

25. Andalusian cemeteries on the Mediterranean coast occupy a privileged place both in Rudofsky's book *The Prodigious Builders* (p.81, fig.54; p.164, fig.130) and in his personal slide collection. See "Bernard Rudofsky papers 1910–1987," Folder 15, Research Library, The Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles, California.

26. Ibid.

27. The Código Técnico de la Edificación, approved in 2006, sets out the building regulations that govern the process of construction in Spain.

28. All current local and urban development plans, as well as subsidiary norms for the municipalities in the relevant areas of study have been consulted.

29. These are regulated by specific sectorial legislation, including the Regulations of the Mortuary Health Police, 1.; by Decree 263/1974, 2 at national level; and by Decree 95/2001 at regional level; as well as by further subsequent modifications.

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34. Camacho, "Moradas de la muerte en el mundo contemporáneo."

35. F.J. López Morales, "Arquitectura funeraria popular en Mexico," in *Una Arquitectura para la muerte*, pp.115–22.

36. For more, see the research of Stanley Brandes: e.g., S. Brandes, "Iconography in Mexico's Day of the Dead: Origins and Meaning," *Ethnohistory*, Vol.45 no.2 (Spring 1998), p.181; and S. Brandes, "Sugar, Colonialism, and Death: On the Origins of Mexico's Day of the Dead," *Comparative Studies in Society & History*, Vol.39 No.2 (April 1997), p.270.

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39. www.significantcemeteries.org (May 2016). Significant work relating to cemeteries is also being developed in Ibero-America, with national networks and the Ibero-American Network of Heritage Cemeteries.

40. www.guiadecementerios.com (June 2016).

41. "The N340 roadway Corridor as a Historical Axis of the Andalusian Coast: Methodology for the Characterization of Heritage and Strategies for Sustainability," M. Loren-Méndez (main researcher and director). Research team at https://n-340.org/proyecto/equipo), November 15, 2014–June 30, 2015. Project and contract from I+D+i call for proposals 2012–2013. Agencia de Obra Pública (AOP), Consejería de Fomento y Vivienda, Junta de Andalucia. FEDER European Funding.

42. This methodology is outlined by M. Loren-Méndez, R. Mata, R. Ruiz, and D. Pinzon-Ayala in "An Interdisciplinary Methodology for the Characterization and Visualization of the Heritage of Roadway Corridors," *Geographical Review* (version of record on-line July 23, 2016).

43. Loren-Méndez, Mata, Ruiz, and Pinzon-Ayala, "An Interdisciplinary Methodology for the Characterization and Visualization of the Heritage of Roadway Corridors."

44. Future studies could research into interments that comply with the requisite health and safety standards.

45. O. Grabar, "Why History: The Meanings and Uses of Tradition," *Traditional Dwellings and Settlements Review*, Vol.4 No.2 (Spring 1993) p.19.

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48. "Hence, the suggestion of a bill of rights for the manmade environment would, at least, assure preservation in documents if such preservation is impossible in fact. One must recognize that most things made by man will die in their physical appearance, but they can be allowed to die in dignity, and that they can be remembered and recalled when needed." Grabar, "Why History," p.26.

49. This reflection came up in a conversation on December 19, 2016, in Kuwait, with Tanu Sankalia, an architect and director of the Interdisciplinary Urban Studies Program at the University of San Francisco.