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L'Autre mort. Une approche ethnohistorique de la diversité religieuse dans les cimetières espagnols

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Résumé de l'article

Les cimetières constituent des espaces sociaux regroupant de nombreuses significations symboliques, à la fois à travers leurs dimensions matérielle et immatérielle, mais surtout comme lieux de représentation et de construction de l'identité et de l'altérité de chaque communauté. Cet article explore comment la diversité religieuse a trouvé sa place dans les cimetières espagnols. Bien que cette question est avant tout rattachée à celle de l'immigration et à celle de la présence de groupes religieux provenant d'ailleurs, la diversité religieuse représente depuis longtemps un défi pour les coutumes et les pratiques funéraires espagnoles. Nous soutenons que les débats qui entourent le traitement de l'« Autre mort » sont inhérents au patrimoine funéraire espagnol. En nous intéressant à quatre espaces dédiés aux sépultures de non-catholiques morts en Espagne, nous montrerons la manière dont certaines séparations symboliques fondées sur l'identité persistent aujourd'hui dans ces espaces et comment la société espagnole s'ouvre à l'idée de considérer les lieux de sépulture comme un patrimoine commun.

The Other Dead

An Ethnohistorical Approach to Religious Diversity in the Spanish Cemeteries

L'Autre mort

Une approche ethnohistorique de la diversité religieuse dans les cimetières espagnols

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ABSTRACT ■ Cemeteries become social spaces where many symbolic meanings converge both in their material and immaterial dimensions, and perhaps above all, in their expression of communities and their construction of identities and otherness. This article explores how religious diversity has found its place within Spanish cemeteries. Although this debate is linked to contemporary immigration and the religious groups it has brought, religious diversity has challenged Spanish funerary customs for a long time. As we will argue in this article, the debates around where to put the “other dead” are an inherent part of funerary heritage in Spain. By looking at four spaces dedicated to the burial of non-Catholics who died in Spain, we will attempt to show how some symbolic and identity-based constants related to the separation of graves persist today and how Spanish society is opening up to considering burial spaces as part of a common heritage.

RÉSUMÉ ■ Les cimetières constituent des espaces sociaux regroupant de nombreuses significations symboliques, à la fois à travers leurs dimensions matérielle et immatérielle, mais surtout comme lieux de représentation et de construction de l'identité et de l'altérité de chaque communauté. Cet article explore comment la diversité religieuse a trouvé sa place dans les cimetières espagnols. Bien que cette question est avant tout rattachée à celle de l'immigration et à celle de la présence de groupes religieux provenant d'ailleurs, la diversité religieuse représente depuis longtemps un défi pour les coutumes et les pratiques funéraires espagnoles. Nous soutenons que les débats qui entourent le traitement de l'«Autre mort» sont inhérents au patrimoine funéraire espagnol. En nous intéressant à quatre espaces dédiés aux sépultures de non-catholiques morts en Espagne, nous montrerons la manière dont certaines séparations symboliques fondées sur l'identité persistent aujourd'hui

dans ces espaces et comment la société espagnole s'ouvre à l'idée de considérer les lieux de sépulture comme un patrimoine commun.

KEYWORDS ■ Cemeteries, funerary practices, immigration, religious groups.

MOTS CLÉS ■ Cimetières, pratiques funéraires, immigration, groupes religieux.

Introduction

As Francisco Javier Rodríguez Barberán (2005) states, cemeteries are spaces of “inhabited memories.” They reflect historical, political, cultural, and religious changes in a society and can be used to trace the history of groups and people as social and cultural beings. Cemeteries, then, become social spaces where many symbolic meanings converge, both in their material and immaterial dimensions; perhaps above all, they are spaces where communities can express their identities and their construction of otherness.

This article explores how religious diversity has found its place within Spanish cemeteries. Although today this debate is linked to immigration and the presence of foreign religious communities, religious diversity has challenged Spanish funerary customs for a long time. Undoubtedly, most of the different funerary traditions present in Spain today have their origins in other countries. The transnational relations that these migrants maintain with their countries of origin also play an important role in their funerary practices, those that have to do with the repatriation of the deceased, as will be discussed below. The concept of transnationalism appeared during the nineties and has since become a central one in migration studies. It emerged from the consciousness that migrants live and die across borders while maintaining significant links with their countries of origin, even if these are distant from where they have settled. Nonetheless, evidence of cultural and religious diversity in Spanish funerary practices existed long before recent immigrants arrived. As will be argued in this article, debates on the issue of where to place the “other dead” are an inherent part of the funerary heritage in Spain.

In the last century, the changing face of cemeteries has been a direct consequence of social changes, rather than mutations in the ritualization of death and memory. At present, Spain has begun to accept its transformation into a plural society, integrating its diversity to recent historical memory, and also bringing in the contributions of new immigrant groups. This transformation affects the construction of Spanish identity and that is reflected in how burial spaces and cemeteries are managed, as well as in considerations regarding cultural, historical and artistic funerary heritage.

The separation between graves¹ and different burial spaces is seen today as a positive example of the recognition of diversity. However, it was considered quite differently at other historical moments and has led to bitter debates within Spanish society. Analyzing four spaces dedicated to the burial of non-Catholics deceased in Spain (the English Cemetery in Málaga, the older Muslim cemetery in Barcia, the Hebrew tombs in the Cemetery of Sant Andreu del Palomar in Barcelona, and the Muslim cemetery of Seville), this article shows not only how some symbolic and identity-based constants related to the separation of graves are still present, but also how Spanish society is opening up to the idea of considering burial spaces as part of a common heritage. Our analysis includes the ethnographic and historical study of cultural and religious diversity management in Spanish cemeteries as well as the study of repatriation among Muslim migrants (Morera & Solé Arraràs 2018, 2014; Morera & Tarrés 2012; Solé Arraràs 2015, 2010; Tarrés & Morera 2013a; Tarrés *et al.* 2012).

Placing the “Other Dead” During Spanish History (9th-20th Centuries)

Mortuary practices have been regulated in Spain since the 9th Century. At that time, a twelve-step perimeter was established around churches to be used as parish cemeteries (Bango 1992). Burying the deceased in a space next to a place of worship for the living was a means of reinforcing the religious community. These perimeters, because of their status as sacred land, also served as space for asylum and worship (Lauwers 2005: 11). It was forbidden to bury apostates, members of heretic groups, those that had committed suicide, or followers of non-Christian religions. People who were denied a Christian burial were buried, or thrown, into areas outside of town walls where organic litter was gathered to produce manure called *muladares*. Jewish communities in medieval Christian Hispania established their own cemeteries outside at a certain distance from towns. As much as possible, they were located on high slopes facing east, as is the case of the Jewish cemetery in Segovia. In Muslim Hispania, ancient Roman tradition continued and cemeteries were placed outside the walls and alongside roads (Lirola Delgado 2006: 85). In some important cities in Al-Andalus, such as Granada, cemeteries were also set aside for non-Muslim foreigners.

After the 16th century, all non-Catholic cemeteries in Spain were closed. The Inquisition prosecuted any action suspected of being Judaic, such as the wish to be buried outside the town. The custom of being buried only in sacred ground (churches, cemeteries, parishes, etc.) continued

until the 18th century. During the 18th century, many European cities began debating issues related to public sanitation and ordered the construction of cemeteries outside their walls. Spain followed this European tendency and by the end of the 18th century, the enlightened King Charles III demanded that all cemeteries be constructed outside of city walls for hygienic reasons. The 1787 Real Orden (royal decree) established that cemeteries had to be placed in “open spaces and attached to parishes, and far away from houses.” However, this practice did not become common until the second half of the 19th century (generally due to do high mortality rates caused by epidemics), and continued up until after the Spanish Civil War (Quirós Linares 1990; Santonja 1999).²

From a legal point of view, some authors maintain that the Real Orden was a first step towards secularization. Others hold that it was not the intention of the Spanish State to promote the secularization of the society but rather that it was to end traditional practices in order to restore “the old ecclesiastical discipline in the use of cemeteries” (González Cruz 1993: 408). Later secularization, then, is consequence of the historical evolution of the country and the rise of political dissent. Disagreements over funerary practices focused on who should build these new cemeteries and under whose jurisdiction they should fall. This is because the 1787 edict (and others that followed) ordered new cemeteries outside city walls to be built with funds provided by municipalities and parishes. The financial problems of many town governments led to opposition to these new practices, especially considering that the Church obtained custody of these cemeteries and could go on charging for burials. The issue of non-Catholic deceased remained unresolved, despite the fact that the 1667 Treaty of Madrid (*Tratado para la Conservación y Renovación de Paz y Amistad entre las Coronas de España y de la Gran Bretaña*) established a precedent that allowed there to be dedicated cemeteries for British subjects.

Economic and political changes after the 18th century attracted increasing numbers of foreigners to Spain, many of them non-Catholics, and it became necessary to deal with the problem of what to do in the case of death. Diplomatic delegations, especially the British, managed to obtain dedicated spaces where their subjects could receive a dignified burial. Ferdinand VII issued an edict in 1831 allowing segregated cemeteries outside towns to be created as long as they corresponded to certain conditions: “be enclosed by a wall, not having a church, chapel or any other temple or cult indication, whether private or public [...], in agreement with local authorities” (Real Orden, November 13, 1831). The Malaga English Cemetery was the first to be opened, in 1831. Other graveyards were opened later in cities where there was a British consulate

and where agreements were concluded with local authorities, as in La Coruña, Santander and Madrid.

After the 1854 revolution, Spain's Progressive Biennium began. During this period, a new law (1855) was enacted allowing for the establishment of civil cemeteries, or cemeteries for "dissidents from Catholicism" as well as for the transport, disposal and dignified burial of non-Catholics. The principle of religious freedom derived from the 1869 Constitution permitted the establishment of private cemeteries, such as the Jewish cemetery in Ceuta. However, several laws enacted during the second half of the 19th century show that this rule was generally not followed. Civil cemeteries were usually placed "in a corner within the municipal or Catholic cemetery ... those 'undeserving of an ecclesiastical burial' were buried next to the cemetery walls, whether inside or outside [...], but in practice these plots were turned into rubbish dumps or grim pieces of wasteland, with a sullen and desolate appearance made worse by their small size and general abandonment" (Jiménez Lozano 1978: 102-103).

The reign of Alfonso XII (1902-1931) was a unique period for religious minorities. During this period, mosques were built or repaired, in North-African Spanish cities, and synagogues and Hebrew cemeteries were opened next to civil graveyards in cities such as Madrid (1922) or Seville (1932). Cemeteries became municipalized during the Second Republic. The declaration on the secularization of cemeteries, signed in 1932, and its later repeal in 1938, exemplifies the ideological swings characteristics of Spanish society. The removal of the walls that separated civil cemeteries from Catholic plots, and the reinstatement of the same walls a few years later, is emblematic of this period. Who was deserving or undeserving of a dignified burial became a matter of political debate after the 1932 decree. In the motivating statement of the bill, the unification of religious and non-religious burials was explained using a somewhat paradoxical reasoning:

To be dissident, which was subject to punishment even in time of death, because depriving a burial on sacred land was seen as that... Cemeteries will always be sacred, no matter the religious ceremonies that will take place in them, because their sacred character has been captured by the land in which people are buried. Hence the aura of religious mystery surrounding death, with respect and reverence that raises a feeling of eternal separation in the soul.

It is obvious that this debate took place in a society that considered itself exclusively Catholic, and where religious dissidence was understood within the framework of non-compliance with Catholic prescriptions.

As regards the Catholic hierarchy's reaction, Tarragona's Cardinal Francesc Vidal i Barraquer questioned the need for these special cemeteries: "Since Catholics are the vast majority or almost the total population of the country, this separation is unfeasible because the exceptional cases in which ecclesiastical burial has to be denied to the deceased are not frequent enough to justify the existence of another cemetery" (Vidal i Barraquer 1932: 26). Cardinal Vidal i Barraquer suggested continuing what hitherto had been common practice and was endorsed by canonical law:

the common practice until today amongst us has been to reserve a non-blessed space in the corner of the Catholic cemetery or next to it but separated from the rest of the graveyard and with an independent door to the outside. It must be advised that canon law does not require that much: what is fundamentally required is that the space be different, that it can be easily distinguished from the Catholic cemetery, and not be blessed, that it is not sacred land (*ibid.*: 27).

Finally, once again the rebuilding of cemetery walls, to separate the dead, did not prevent other separate spaces from being created. During the Civil War, for example, many people who were executed (on both sides) were buried outside of cemeteries, and often in common graves. Today, many of these mass graves are being exhumed, which continues to show decades later the complex symbolism involved in the representation of a dignified death (Fernández de la Mata 2011; Ferrándiz 2014, 2011).³

These discussions aside, during the Civil War numerous graveyards were created for the burial of troops of *regulares*, soldiers coming from Morocco and fighting for Franco, according to Islamic burial principles. These cemeteries were closed after the war and although most have disappeared, others were reopened during the eighties and are used by Muslim communities today in Spain; for example, in Seville or Granada (Moreras & Tarrés 2012).

Franco's regime (1939-1975) gave the management and maintenance of municipal cemeteries as sacred spaces back to the Catholic Church, but did not remove the sections that had been designated for civil burials. These spaces began to group together the dead of different religions, although discreetly, because they were buried in separate enclosures. Discretion was the main criterion that maintained these distinct enclosures, within the homogeneity of Catholic symbolism.⁴

When democracy was finally restored, this legal framework regarding the rules for burial in municipal cemeteries was annulled in 1978. According to the new Constitution, discrimination for religious reasons

in relation to funerary rituals was prohibited. The new law allowed for the presence of chapels or places of worship, and required that city councils re-establish the integrity of the cemeteries as a space of both civil and religious burial. A law on religious freedom of 1980 recognised the right to receive a “dignified burial, with no discrimination for religious reasons” (article 2b). In 1992, Jewish and Muslim communities signed legally binding Cooperation Agreements with the State that explicitly reserved plots of land for them in municipal cemeteries and gave them the right to establish their own cemeteries.

This historic and legal context set a precedent for the current debates and proposals regarding religious diversity in Spanish cemeteries (Tarrés & Moreras 2013b).

Rethinking the Separation Between Graves

While every society and culture has clear norms for burying their deceased, the question of where to place the “other” is not always considered. Traditionally, deciding *where* to bury these “other” deceased appears to have been a more pressing question than *how* they should be buried.

In order to better understand the relevance of the spatial dimension, we must take into account the ambivalent relationship between cities and cemeteries as places for the living on the one hand, and for the dead, on the other. This ambivalence gets expressed in three main different ways. First, it is expressed through the reproduction of social forms and meanings in the city and the cemetery. In Michel Ragon’s words, “the necropolis is the reverse of the metropolis, a perfect reproduction of the living’s socio-economical order”⁵ (Ragon 1981: 51). This suggests that cemeteries are spaces where social differences are revealed; they are spaces with central zones and peripheries. Second, ambiguity arises in the physical and symbolic separation that exists between the two spaces. Dead people are kept at a distance from the living and in spaces that are clearly differentiated. Third, it arises in the construction of identity and social belonging, establishing symbolic and material limits between those who belong to this society and those who do not (Baudry 1999: 69).

At present, Spanish law safeguards the principle of non-discrimination for religious or ideological reasons when receiving funerary services. In practice religious communities have the legal right to have their own cemeteries; they can also have (or rent) graves, mausoleums, and niches as well as the right to reserved areas in municipal cemeteries. In the past, different communities employed various means to obtain spaces for burying their deceased; the use of discretionary reserved plots in municipal cemeteries has not always been the primary option. Catholic religious

congregations have graves, tombs or niches where they bury their members; some families have mausoleums and have buried their relatives according to their own funerary customs; in yet other cases, sections that used to be civil cemeteries have been given a new name. In sum, the rules and frameworks providing different burial spaces for minority communities arise from a historical context where diverse ways of granting a dignified burial had already developed. Perhaps one of the most interesting cases regarding the dignified burial of members of other religions (and one that was promoted by public institutions) was the re-opening of cemeteries that had been created for burying Moroccan soldiers who fought alongside the troops of the insurgent army during the Civil War (1936-1939) so as to serve the Muslim Spanish population.

At present, best practice protocols for the public management of religious diversity usually favour reserving spaces for different groups as a means to integrate and normalise religious diversity in cemeteries. Implicitly, they all share the principle of accepting certain religious doctrinal criteria, according to which it is mandatory to establish a separation between the graves of followers of different religions. The most common examples are those of Islam and Judaism. The principle of separation is taken for granted without considering that, firstly, it is applied in societies where these religions are prevalent, with separate burial sites being provided in recognition of the religious minorities' right to specific burial sites and specific rites and rituals. Secondly, it is acknowledged that religions allow certain acts that are not usually permissible in special circumstances; for example, in Islam, the principle of *darura*, whereby certain aspects of Islamic funerals are foregone out of necessity or to an inability to adhere to certain rules and rites.⁶

The demands made by religious minorities for separate burial plots represent the quest for recognition of certain rights. In this context, situations arise regarding individuals' rights to be buried according to their beliefs that must be actualized in accordance with the community leaders or the organization that manages the plot. All this, defined in legal terms as 'subrogation,' poses some real questions, as it can create arbitrary situations where some organizations can manage who can or cannot have access to these plots in public premises. For example, with regard to the separation of believers of different religions, it is possible to establish criteria that determine who can be buried on a specific plot. But which authority can legitimately deny burial in that space to a member of that religious community? And according to what criteria? Can individuals be excluded for not following the moral principles of a particular religion? Or for having died from a drug overdose or suicide? In such contexts, the interpretation of norms and laws by community leaders may result in

some members of the minority community being denied their individual funerary rights. Municipal authorities have not always accepted that a religious entity could be in charge of supervising the burial of a member of their community on an assigned plot in the cemetery. In 2001 the municipality of Terrassa (Barcelona) refused to hand over the right to decide who could be buried in the municipal cemetery to the local Muslim community, while a year earlier in Valencia, this condition did not pose a problem (Moreras & Solé Arraràs 2014).

The paradox of this situation is that it is taken for granted that citizens who are linked to certain religious communities (namely due to their place of origin) should be buried according to the rites and rituals of their religious community. At a time where secular funerals are increasingly popular, it seems that the possibility of a secular burial for those who are identified as members of religious minorities is not considered.

Managing Diversity in Funerary Rituals: Four Examples

The management of funerary matters has changed throughout history and different socio-historical contexts. For centuries, the Catholic Church took care of the management of death in all its aspects, whether through priests and brotherhoods or by religious orders created specifically for this purpose, whilst excluding non-Catholics. Over the 20th century, this management was put in the hands of city councils. Funeral spaces and cemeteries for “others” started to appear. Nowadays funeral service businesses have become responsible for managing services around death (funeral homes, cemeteries, shared management of cemeteries with the city councils, etc.). These enterprises are creating new funerary rituals (e.g., civil ceremonies) and helping redefine certain aspects of traditional funerary rituals. At the same time, they also address and adapt to the demands of religious minorities. The following section highlights four examples of how cemeteries have been reconfigured for the burial of the “other deceased.”

The English Cemetery in Malaga

The death of a non-Catholic in Spain created a problem for the family and those close to the deceased. The corpses of non-Catholic foreigners, as well as Protestant Spaniards, non-believers and those who had committed suicide were abandoned in fields, thrown into the sea and so forth.⁷ This situation continued until the 19th century when the royal edict of 1831 was proclaimed in response to pressure from the British community.

The English Cemetery in Málaga, Andalusia, was opened by an initiative of the British consul there, William Mark, who was concerned about the situation of British subjects after their deaths. In 1829, he obtained a piece of land from the Málaga authorities and in 1831, it became the first English cemetery in the Iberian Peninsula. The original cemetery is situated in what is today is an inner area surrounded by white walls. The chapel, reconstructed in 1891, became the Anglican Church of Saint George. Over time, the cemetery opened up and new conceptions on the limits of the community were adapted, allowing for the burial of non-English and non-Anglicans such as Jews, English Catholics, etc. In 2004, the cemetery was closed as space for burial, although thanks to the construction of a columbarium, it is still possible to leave ashes there.

While the British Consulate managed the cemetery up until the 20th century, the maintenance and upkeep of such cemeteries was the responsibility of British expatriate communities. Hence, these spaces became key sites for the development of a sense of British identity and belonging in the area. However, at the same time, problems emerged regarding the management of these sites. By the end of the century, the cemetery became a problem due to differences of opinion between the actors responsible for its financial upkeep (the English community, the British community, and the city council). In the year 2000, the British Consul of the city proposed a non-profit organization, the *Fundación Cementerio Inglés de Málaga*, whose aim was preserving, maintaining, and managing the cemetery as part of the heritage of Málaga. In 2006, the Foundation became the owner of the land and it has subsequently focussed on maintaining the grounds and promoting its patrimonial value.

The English Cemetery in Málaga is a living space, inhabited and traversed regularly by members of the community, as well as visitors and tourists. An Anglican service is held in Saint George's Church every Sunday. It is the place chosen for various celebrations and commemorative dates, such as Remembrance Day for those who died during wars. At the same time, it is a space dedicated to the whole population of Málaga; the area surrounding the first cemetery was designed as a botanic garden for use by the whole city (Grice-Hutchinson 2006: 31). It is part of the Botanical Itinerary promoted by the city council since 2006.

The *Fundación Cementerio Inglés de Málaga* has enhanced the cemetery's patrimonial value remarkably. For example, it has promoted the graveyard's inclusion in the European Cemeteries Route and has organized events such as guided tours, night walks and concerts that help to make it known to the people of Málaga. Since 2012 the cemetery has been officially recognized as a Monument of Cultural Interest by the Cultural Spanish Heritage register. The Anglican, Protestant, and Evangelical

communities that have settled in Spain are conscious of the importance of existing funerary sites, as well as the risks involved in maintaining these sites. Traditionally, they have been little valued by local administrations and the social majority. In recent years, many English cemeteries have disappeared: for example, in Ares (Pontevedra) and Cartagena (Murcia). A movement concerned with the preservation of these spaces has developed in recent years. The English Cemetery in Málaga has become an example to be followed by Protestant and Evangelical communities in other parts of Spain; for example, the English Cemetery of Linares (in the province of Jaen in Andalusia). The cemetery was created by British mining companies and is still in use and is part of the European Cemeteries Route.

The Muslim Cemetery in Barcia (Asturias)

The first Muslim cemeteries in the Spanish peninsula were built during the Civil War (1936-1939) to bury Moroccan soldiers who had fought in support of the insurgents led by General Francisco Franco. The exact number of Muslim graveyards, known as *cementerios moros* (Moorish cemeteries), is unknown, as are their exact locations, since many have disappeared. A number of factors contributed to the establishment of these cemeteries, notably the social and religious policy developed during the Spanish protectorate in Morocco (1912-1956) towards the “indigenous” population and the logistical framework designed for dealing with the physical and spiritual needs of colonial troops. Muslim hospitals were not uncommon at the time and many, like the one in Burgos, built cemeteries next to their facilities. Moreover, State wished to thank these troops for their services to the nation by respecting their religion and Islamic funerary rituals.

These cemeteries were built as distinct facilities and were separated from cemeteries for the Spanish population. Muslim cemeteries in use today have their origins in these Civil War graveyards, and often have been re-opened by initiative of individuals or Muslim communities formed by converted Spaniards. Of the seven Moorish Cemeteries that remain, five have been recovered and all but one are linked to Municipal Cemeteries (Griñón’s cemetery in Madrid was managed by the Moroccan consulate but temporally closed in 2014). The remaining Muslim cemeteries are located in the cities of Seville, Granada, Griñón (Madrid), Burgos, Zaragoza and Leon (Tarrés & Moreras 2013b).

During the insurgent advance from Galicia to Asturias, a military garrison was established in Barcia, in the municipality of Luarca in Asturias. Due to high mortality rates amongst the Moroccan soldiers

during the military campaign in April, 1937, a Muslim cemetery was built, although it appears that the number of deceased turned out to be lower than expected. The graveyard, about 4,000 m², consists of two different spaces: the area for burials that is surrounded by a wall and also a building that was left unfinished (according to some it was a mosque while others assert that it was used for ritual bathing of the bodies). The entrance giving access to the cemetery has a pointed horseshoe arch that makes the graveyard stand out. Today, some of the slate tombstones that indicated where the tombs were have disappeared and it is no longer possible to distinguish them. The identities of the deceased are also unknown, although an investigation carried out by a neighbour, Ángeles González, seems to indicate that the deceased came from the Melilla Tabor (Moorish battalion) (Álvarez *et al.* 2006).

Until the end of the seventies the cemetery was well maintained, but it subsequently fell into a state of abandonment. Over the subsequent 25 years it became a marginalized site in public memory. At the end of the nineties the local population, through two associations (*Asociación de Vecinos de Barcia-Leiján* and *Asociación Green*), persuaded the city council to take care of cleaning and maintenance of the cemetery. This led to a confrontation with other actors in 2009, when the mayor, in an effort to promote tourism, outlined his plan to repatriate the remains of Muslims buried there to Morocco. His plan to turn the facility into a tourist attraction obtained support from the Consejería de Cultura in the autonomous government of Asturias and from the tourism industry in the area. However, the plan provoked opposition amongst the local neighbours:

They wanted to exhume the Moors to take them to Morocco, but we didn't let them, they are our Moors, they stay here, we won't allow them to take them, they are our Moors and it's our cemetery. All the neighbours have played there when we were children, it was one of our playgrounds, it's ours, it belongs to the village (Barcia resident).

The Muslim community of Asturias also protested and their leaders, who included several Spanish Muslim converts, expressed their wish to preserve the graves and re-establish the cemetery as place for “burial and honouring their ancestors” (*La Voz de Occidente*, 13th June 2009).

The Moorish cemetery of Barcia is thus becoming a recognizable symbol of the cultural heritage and identity of the area, but with the understanding that Islam is not part of it. Consequently, the site has been stripped of its religious nomenclature, with the use of “Moor” rather than “Muslim.” The exclusion of the Asturian Muslim community from the management and use of the site has led some to claim that their culture

and heritage has been appropriated in order to fit other socio-cultural narratives.

Jewish Tombs in the Cemetery of Sant Andreu de Palomar (Barcelona)

For Jews, access to their own cemetery is an important need since by their religious norms, they must be buried in a “common place.” Historically, there have been many Jewish cemeteries in Spain and they are considered as part of the national historical and archaeological heritage.⁸ Nevertheless, in contemporary Spain functioning Jewish cemeteries, or plots, have become scarce. The oldest, dating from the late 19th century, are found in the North African cities of Melilla (the Jewish cemetery is located alongside a municipal cemetery, although usufruct and management is carried out by the Jewish community) and Ceuta (here the Jewish cemetery is a private, segregated space). In Peninsular Spain, the permission to construct early Jewish cemeteries was granted by Alfonso XIII. These cemeteries were usually connected to civilian premises, as is also the case in Madrid and Seville.

In Barcelona, the first documented Jewish funerals date from 1931, in the cemetery of Les Corts, the first to offer the Jewish community a differentiated space for burial. In 1951, the Jewish Community of Barcelona negotiated with the city council for permission to bury their dead in the cemetery of Sant Andreu de Palomar. The most recent Jewish cemetery is in the cemetery of Collserola. Located in the municipality of Cerdanyola del Valles, it acts as inter-municipal cemetery serving the greater Barcelona metropolitan area.

The Jewish graves of Sant Andreu are located in a space initially conceived as the civil cemetery for non-Catholics and infants. Measuring 970 m², it is a triangular shape located next to the exterior wall in the northeast of the main cemetery. Its design and organization were the subject of a number of different projects between 1919 and 1951. The first expansion of the cemetery began in 1919 and created separated areas for Protestants and infants. Each section had a separate entrance but from 1973 on, these were merged into a single cemetery space. It was not until 1951 that niches were incorporated to replace the original graves. In the section where Jewish graves are located, there is a total of 469 niches and 170 graves in the ground, alongside the tombs of deceased people from different religions. The city council granted the Jewish community the property of their graves located in this section. Although people buried there in accordance with Jewish funerary rites since the 1940's, it is not officially considered a Jewish plot (unlike the cemeteries of Les Corts or Collserola). These graves are still however an important symbol of Jewish

identity for the inhabitants of Sant Andreu.⁹ The diversity of geographical origins of the deceased buried in this cemetery is a testimony of the heterogeneity that has always defined the Jewish community in Barcelona.

Though most of the graves keep the feet of the deceased facing east in accordance with Jewish burial rites, some of the bodies seem to have been oriented so as to maximize limited space. In the corner where the old outside gate used to be, two tombstones house the remains of deceased members of the community from the early 1940's. The remains of these deceased had been buried elsewhere in other cemeteries in Barcelona and the Jewish Community of Barcelona moved them so they could be buried according to Jewish rites. Notably, the cemetery also contains a *geniza*, or a place where retired Torah scrolls and other sacred writings no longer in use are to be deposited in accordance with religious prescriptions.

The Islamic Cemetery in Sevilla

The Muslim cemetery of Seville was inaugurated in 1936 at the beginning of the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939). Since the city of Seville was occupied by the insurgent army in the first months of the war, there were few soldiers buried there, five at most. The city council closed the cemetery in 1944, and the plot was used for storing utensils for the general maintenance of the municipal cemetery (Tarrés 2006; Valencia 1995).

Initially the cemetery occupied a plot divided into two. The first space had an entrance area, a space for the ritual bathing of the deceased (rarely used), and twelve tombs for adults marked with bricks on the ground. The second space, separated from the first by a wall in which the founding plaque was found, had seventy-two spaces for graves of adults, and a palm tree placed in the direction of Mecca (*qibla*).

The initial 200 m² have been expanded to reach currently around 650 m², and a capacity of just over a hundred graves. In the last extension (in 2017) a space for general ossuary has been added. The tombs are oriented perpendicularly with respect to the entrance of the plot.

The Muslim cemetery is located in the northwest corner, next to the outer wall; it has an independent entrance, and is connected to the municipal cemetery by a back door. In the official plan of the cemetery of San Fernando this section is called the "Arab cemetery." The entryway consists of a wooden door under a pointed horseshoe arch with geometric decoration. The sloped roof was built with ceramic tiles. Above the door, the decoration consists of two lances on separate vases that cross the crescent, symbol of Islam.

In 1983, the Islamic Community of Seville-Umma (the first Muslim community organized in the city, and composed mainly of Muslim con-

verts), requested that the necropolis be reopened; in 1987 the city council annulled the decree of closure. It became the first Muslim cemetery reopened in the democratic era. It was established that the Muslim cemetery would be governed by the general norms of the municipal cemetery of San Fernando, which also assumed the administrative direction and supervision of municipal services. The Islamic Community of Seville-Umma, assumes the management of the space in perpetuity, and its leaders are in possession of its keys. This cemetery is reserved for Muslims residing in Seville, and burial is done without a coffin, under the decree of 2001 of the regional government of Andalusia, which allows this type of burial for religious reasons. The small size of the cemetery and the increasing number of Muslims in Seville has led to efforts to have a larger Islamic cemetery created so that it can serve the entire metropolitan area.

Conclusion: When There Is no Place for the Other Dead

These four cases bring us back to the issue of how societies bury their dead and where, as well as how they deal with their “other dead.” It involves determining where those to be buried apart from others should be laid to rest. This separation may be based on the form of death (suicide, for example), behaviour during the deceased’s lifetime (homosexuals, criminals, etc.) or their religious and cultural affiliation (members of other minority religions). In order to answer these questions, we have had to return to the historical controversies that turned Spanish cemeteries into spaces of exclusion, or at least of strict separation between tombs. Whereas this separation generated intense debate in Spain several decades ago, it is now considered a good practice for recognizing religious pluralism.

While it is not a universal practice, repatriation of the corpse is the preferred choice of many immigrant groups, notably for those of Moroccan origin and other Muslim groups. Managing the process is always complex and costly (and not only from an administrative or economic point of view but also because it means deferring funerary rites) and as a result has led to community initiatives to organize the transfer of the deceased to their country of origin.¹⁰ As Françoise Lestage argues (2008), this mobility can be considered a component of transnational relations.

Returning the corpse is seen as the will of the deceased, and the culmination of a process of reintegration to a place where his or her life began. However, matters become complicated when the deceased has expressed a desire to be buried in a different country from the one where they were born. While confirming the deceased person’s wish to be part of the society where they immigrated, this creates the problem of how that society can provide space for diverse funerary rites and rituals. This

is especially challenging when the deceased has expressed specific religious or ritual demands.

Death in the context of migration also raises the issue of how much responsibility is to be assumed by family, friends and acquaintances, and the reference community in general. Apart from religion, the decision regarding the place of burial is a way of linking oneself to a reference group and to a reference territory. This reference group and territory is, on the one hand, the country, family or town of origin; and, on the other hand, the migrant community that is mobilized to organize the repatriation. Using Françoise Lestage's (2008) notion of "reappropriation," this process takes place in the country of origin, as with the return of the body, and also in the country of settlement. Taking over the repatriation of a body is a way of reinforcing the communities of migrant groups and could in itself be considered as part of a transnational funerary ritual. Systematic repatriation of corpses and the shifting of part of the funerary ritual to the country of origin is the result of migrant communities assuming the responsibility of maintaining ties with their country of origin, and relates to how migrant communities represent themselves as having a temporary character.

The unavailability of specific burial areas, then, is not the only reason that explains the preference for repatriation of dead bodies among certain migrant groups, but, paradoxically, it makes migrants present through their absence.¹¹ In this instance, the process of repatriation challenges the ability of the host society to generate a consistent sense of belonging for all those who chose to immigrate to it.

The aforementioned examples of sections in cemeteries for religious minorities lead us to consider how a plurality of ways of living and dying is generated and how these are linked to the ways we construct our notion of heritage. The process of and developing a socio-political heritage invokes a collective "us." And in this process, incorporating of the heritage of "others" is ongoing. Furthermore, this process of rethinking heritage is generated at a time when Spanish society is also developing processes for the internalization of its own historical plurality. Clearly, this process is marked by the tension between the state's desire to establish a hegemonic memory and the consideration of recent history in regard to minorities. Recovering that memory in funerary spaces coincides in time with the demands of religious minorities to have a distinct place reserved for their dead.

While it is too early to judge a process that is still underway, it is apparent that minority groups are now claiming spaces that were once relegated to discrete peripheral areas of Catholic cemeteries. The fact that this process has been on-going over a long period of time shows that

Catholic hegemony in Spain was never complete. In terms of heritage, a process of due recognition of these burial spaces can help communities reclaim spaces as their own, and also incorporate these narratives into the collective memory.

Notes

1. In this article, we will use the term “grave” in a general way to refer to any place where a dead body rests. These graves can take different forms such as niches (cavities in a wall), graves in the ground, monuments, etc.
2. “Municipal cemeteries did not exist until the end of the 18th century. The oldest I know of is the one built in Cartagena in 1774, set aside for Moorish slaves ...” (Fernández de Velasco 1935: 134).
3. Many Spanish towns have attempted to honor those who died during Civil War, installing plaques or memorial monuments in their local cemeteries. Some have done this in an attempt to balance out the existence of mausoleums or monoliths for those who had fallen and that were erected during the Franco dictatorship, and the lack thereof on the other side. Other towns have raised monuments to all who died during Civil War regardless the side.
4. In another article we have analyzed the configuration of the funerary heritage of religious minorities in Spain (Tarrés & Moreras 2013a).
5. All translations belong to the authors.
6. Islamic doctrine forbids burying a Muslim amongst the graves of believers of other religions. See Brahami (2005).
7. Some exceptions originated as a result of armed conflicts. For instance, in the city of Tarragona there is the “Fossar de los Jans” (“Grave of the Jans”) created following the 1709 siege of the by British troops. See Adserà (2002).
8. For example, in the case of Barcelona, which currently has four cemeteries for burial according to Jewish rite, the oldest dates from the 11th century and is located in the mountain of Montjuïc (“Jewish Mountain”).
9. In 1997 the proposal by the company managing funerary services in Barcelona (Serveis Funeraris de Barcelona) to build a morgue inside the cemetery was blocked by the neighborhood. One of the main arguments of residents was based on the claim that the funerary heritage of the cemetery was also their own heritage. The project was rejected by the city council in 2002.
10. We have studied this organization amongst Senegalese migrants in Catalonia in Solé Arraràs (2015).
11. We have discussed elsewhere other motivations for the preference for repatriation. See: Moreras & Solé Arraràs (2014, 2011); Solé Arraràs (2015, 2010); Tarrés *et al.* (2012).

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