

Vernacular tradition in the Cemetery of San Bernardino Tlaxcalancingo, Puebla

Valerdi-María†, Sosa-Jorge, Santiago-Gloria & Artiles-Dora.

Universidad Autónoma de Puebla.

Received July 8, 2014; Accepted December 9, 2014

Abstract

The population of San Bernardino Tlaxcalancingo belongs to the municipality of San Andrés Cholula, Puebla, currently conurbation with the city of Puebla, is a town with deeply rooted traditions.

The aim of this paper is to present a descriptive analysis of the cemetery of San Bernardino, seen as the material object that provides access to the values and social relations; site on which these relationships are present from its establishment in 1911, different types of graves are represented. Similarly in the social aspect manifests integrated into the life of the community space, which becomes the means of knowing its history and where the memory of the place remains to be assumed as a testimonial dimension of vernacular tradition.

Cemetery, values and social relations, memory of the place, vernacular tradition.

Citation: Valerdi-María†, Sosa-Jorge, Santiago-Gloria & Artiles-Dora. Vernacular tradition in the Cemetery of San Bernardino Tlaxcalancingo, Puebla. ECORFAN Journal-Spain 2014,1-1:66-75

† Researcher contributing first author.

Introduction

The word comes from the Greek cemetery koimeterion, meaning bedroom because, according to Christian belief, the cemetery is the bed where the bodies slept until the Day of Resurrection. A Catholic cemeteries are also called "cemeteries", since in the city of Pisa, Italy, for example, due to hygiene measures authority ordered to close the cemetery, which was built in the thirteenth century in the city the ground was covered with a layer of soil, the Pisan galleys had brought from the holy places of Jerusalem and hence the "holy-field" name.

According to prevailing cultural patterns in the twelfth century Europe, the temples were the place chosen to bury extinct. All churches in the cities, from downtown neighborhoods as both basilicas and small chapels located on the periphery, were occupied as cemeteries.

By the late eighteenth one of the main concerns of city authorities century were noted in the existence of graveyards or cemeteries located in courts and chapels of churches and convents, located in the city center (now historic centers), and churches neighborhoods surrounding the trace. Serve this preamble to our topic, the context that occurred from Europe to the location of the cemetery until arriving at that time by the Spanish crown here in Mexico.

For the benefit of public health of my subjects, propriety of temples and comfort of families [...] cemeteries outside the towns will be made, provided that there be no invincible difficulty or large widths within them, in places ventilated and immediate parishes, and distant neighbors houses and chapels will be used to the same cemetery chapels that exist outside of the villages, as has been started practicing some with success. (Cuenya, 2008: s / p)

Based on this new provisions were given, such as that in September 1827 was approved by the Congress of Puebla, the first law on establishment of cemeteries, where is set to the first article the responsibility of the 'populations State ... [to] build as soon as possible cemeteries outside town, and opposite to the winds that dominate the public 'places (Cuenya, op. cit)

The site location issue is that the socio-religious institutions to date are very important in all that relates to the issues and religious holidays so it is considered appropriate to recover any history about it and establishment of the Reform Laws concerning these socio-religious institutions, which have great power in the town.

The law of confiscation of the goods of civil and religious corporations, known as Lerdo Law was issued by Miguel Lerdo de Tejada on June 25, 1856. The first article decrees:

Under the name of corporations all religious communities of both sexes, fraternities and archconfraternities, congregations, brotherhoods, parishes, municipalities, schools understood, and in general any establishment or foundation that has the character of perpetual and indefinite duration.

The law of nationalization of church property was issued by Benito Juárez, as chairman, July 12, 1859 in Veracruz. decreeing that "enter the domain of the nation all the goods that the secular and regular clergy have been running under various titles, whatever the class of properties, rights and shares consisting, name and application that have had".

Another important item for the fifth issue, here "the regular religious orders were suppressed throughout the republic ... well as all archconfraternities, fraternities, sororities congregations or attached to religious communities, cathedrals, churches or any other churches "(ibid, p. 120).

Article 27 of the Constitution of February 5, 1857, in addition to legalize ownership and accommodate the expropriation for public use, provided:

No civil or ecclesiastical corporation, whatever their nature or object name, will have legal capacity to acquire property or managing real estate itself, with the exception of buildings used immediately and directly to the service or object of the institution (ibid ., pp. 118-119).

It is pertinent to note that the town sometimes people who do not profess the Catholic faith have problem bury their family, even when they are the celebrations of the Patrons of the head and neighborhoods have to give your feedback to the festivities because the religious festival is very important for the inhabitants, whether or not Catholic, so the social aspect manifests integrated into the life of the community, in this case the pantheon of the town space.

The cemetery as objects of cultural interest

The groupings of different types of burials, translated into the various graves physically expressed are the "graveyard" and the combination of material and symbolic cultural elements give meaning to the funeral space

The cemetery is a city and is defined to fill a need that responds to a practical motivation construction, however this enter a number of categories such as social and cultural object, is a "cultural context" in accordance with Minetti (2011):

"Ex ante familiarity with the subject: family, property, religion-religion, death, beauty and actually time-space, which are interrelated in such a way, that the time is the historical and cultural uniqueness of the cemetery, as a material and symbolic part of a community" (Minetti, 2011: 130 apud Weber, 1990 [1904]: 57).



Figure 1 Location of the Pantheon in San Bernardino Tlaxcalancingo (Recovered by the authors of Google Maps, 2014)

We can do the questioning about the intention that a graveyard from being an object of "cultural interest" is seen as a cultural text. Return to the notion of "practices that have given organization, given by institutions or tradition [...] and that set standards of conduct and selection criteria to perform the relevant corporate transactions [...] wakes, funerals, funerals defined by specific rites established by the liturgy [...] and architectural styles current "(Minetti, op cit: 131), and these elements can speak of" texts "that are read from access to the meanings, values and relationships social"

Those who through different times present, and through observation become precisely in texts where history and social relations is read, becoming specific cultural heritage of a place that reflects the historical memory and place .

San Bernardino Tlaxcalanzingo: community

The town San Bernardino Tlaxcalanzingo is located in Atlixco-Puebla Federal Highway km6-km9, in the municipality of San Andrés Cholula, which is part of the rural urban subsystem Puebla - San Martín Texmelucan; is a metropolitan auxiliary board with the city of Puebla, however it is a town that retains its deeply rooted social institutions, this being one of the reasons why religious spaces (including in them the funeral areas) are part of their everyday and consequently it is important for them their upkeep and maintenance.

It has approximately 38,000.00 inhabitants, bordered on the north by Emiliano Zapata of Cd. De Puebla, south to the town of San Antonio Cacalotepec, to the west with San Andres and San Pedro Cholula and the East with the Puebla-Atlixco highway (via Atlixcáyotl). The auxiliary board consists of 6 districts: Galiotitla, Tecmanitla, Xinaxtla, Xochitepec, Cuayantla, Xicotzingo and a colony called Coyotepec. The main activity is agriculture, the main crops being corn, beans and nopal also poultry are raised.

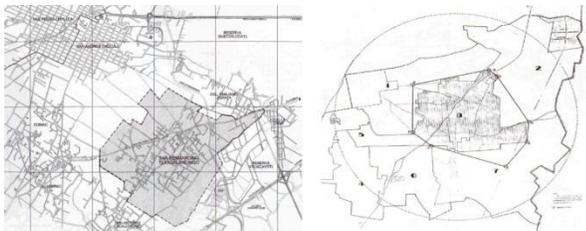


Figure 2 The city and the neighborhoods of San Bernardino Tlaxcalanzingo



Figure 3 Feast Day of the Dead

Netzahualcoyotl

San Bernardino has very seated roots and traditions and particularly in the Day of the Dead (fig. 3). Flowers, incense, alcoholic drinks, candy, balloons, candles are some of the ornaments bearing the tombs of the Pantheon in this community, and people very early arrive coloring tombs lie in this place.



Figure 4 Outside the Pantheon in San Bernardino Tlaxcalanzingo

It tells the story that centuries ago a man came to the town and said to the officers of the church, if they had an order to bury the dead would the people go, then went and began to sort the tombs address eastward. To date, the villagers continue with the tradition of Day of the Dead, visiting each year and letting arranged graves where they rest their families.



Figure 5 Central Hall of San Bernardino Tlaxcalanzingo

The cemetery is located in a regular spot in May 2014, with funding from the auxiliary board were carried out restoration work on its facade. Now access has a small parking lot at the entrance arch that was the original entrance is located, whose materials were stone and brick (Figs. 4, 5). This intervention was made with the approval of CONACULTA and INAH and contribution of the Chair Assistant 2011-2014.

It has different types of burials, highlighting tombs, graves with headstones and some chapels which add 330 graves, leaving space available for 50 passages over (fig. 6). Despite having a regular line in reality only highlights the main avenue, right by the diversity of types of graves.

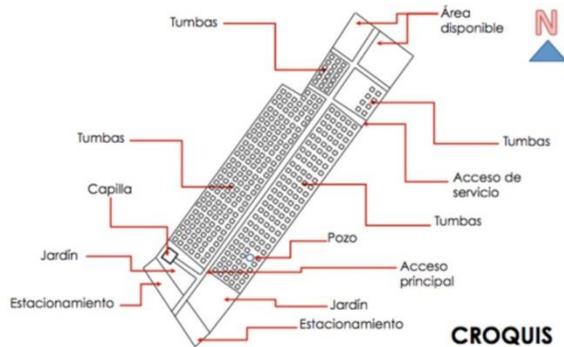


Figure 6 Sketch of the distribution of the Pantheon in San Bernardino Tlaxcalanzingo

It has a well of water, has a central avenue distributed to private spaces of the pantheon. The oldest tomb dating from 1911 belongs to Esteves Rita (Figs. 7).



Figure 7 Pantheon oldest tomb SBT (P.Islas-G. Daniel, 2014)

About the types of graves that exist in the cemetery were divided into 5 the mounds (fig. 8) predominate on the site and in some cases have been covered by natural vegetation, however the town has used other types of places to bury their dead gravestones, tombs and chapels angels (Table 1), which is initially displayed the photographic survey



Figure 8 Overview of the Pantheon (P.Islas-G. Daniel, 2014).

Kind of Tumbs	Tipology	Materials
	Mound of earth	Land w/ cross
With concrete sardinel	Earth and concrete	
Headstones	Revoked-Marble	
Graves with Angels	marble	
Chapels	Brick, stone, revoked, marble	

Table 1 Types of burial of the Pantheon of SBT.

Sardinel graves with cement



Figure 9 Graves with concrete curb

Graves defined as the structure that rises to bury the remains of one or more individuals, and comes from the Latin word *sepulcrum*, and this is the most common type in funeral spaces.

A variant is the tomb that only consists of the burial which is limited by the sardinel concrete, and the whole place has an important role by the number of times it has been used (Figs. 9).

However it is very simple and it does not denote any interpretation since there has iconographic elements to do a reading in relation to the memory of the place. Similarly in terms of concrete as a material used in the sardinel is a constant as limiting the burial space, denoting the time of its construction, the twentieth century.

Graves with marble headstone and cross



Figure 10 White marble tombs

Another typologies within the San Bernardino cemetery are the graves with stone and marble cross, these are generally displaced the floor level and in which are placed in vases many occasions, the material is usually marble although often public and rural cemeteries materials such as tile or simply plastered cement are used, but in this case there is a predominance of white marble (Figs. 10a-b), and is also crowned by a cross of the same material and with a crucifix metal; is noteworthy that were previously widely used bronze crosses, which are unfortunately because of looting.

Presence of Angels

Angel's theme is widely used in cemeteries at local, national and international level. Etymologically the word "angel" comes from the Latin *angelus* which in turn derives from the Greek *ἄγγελος* Angels: Messenger (2001). The Hebrew word most similar is *מַלְאָךְ* *mal'ach*, which has the same meaning. The name, Angel, is derived from "Angels" which in Greek means "messenger" or "sent". Therefore, we highlight the figures of angels in a variety of human, biblical and spiritual perspectives on immortality, salvation, loss, transcendence and eternal life among the symbols of the sculptural manifestations in the cemeteries of the twentieth century.

Here are also angelic manifestations, not shown in all its hierarchies, or so as artistic as can be found in urban and private cemeteries, given the purchasing power of the bereaved in the latter.

The angelic sample is small and very rudimentary and is generally Supreme Hierarchy sculptures.

Cherubim (are those who pray and symbols intercede of divine wisdom, Children regularly represented as typical chubby cherubs derived from the classic cupids or putti (Saro Morales, 1989).

For material that has been made in white mortar and in isolated cases and placed white marble like finish in chapels (Figs. 11, 12).



Figure 11 Presence of Angels



Figure 12 Angelic presence

Chapels with Historical Value (Figs. 13)

There are also other types of shrines reflecting the cemetery. Were divided into those with historical value, in the first instance by the dating of the burial and second by the elements, materials and methods of construction used in addition to the patina of time that has served to show abandonment that some of them denote by the lack of maintenance and visits to relatives

There are buildings that have been decorated with architectural elements of neoclassical reminiscent in some cases: use of scrolls, cornices supported by pillars to the walls, mixtilíneos auctions, domes, arches and pointed and somehow give the patrimonial character to site and help realize the testimony of vernacular tradition mentioned at the beginning of that letter by the characteristics expressed as memory and collective memory location (Figs. 13).



Figure 13 Chapels with historical value

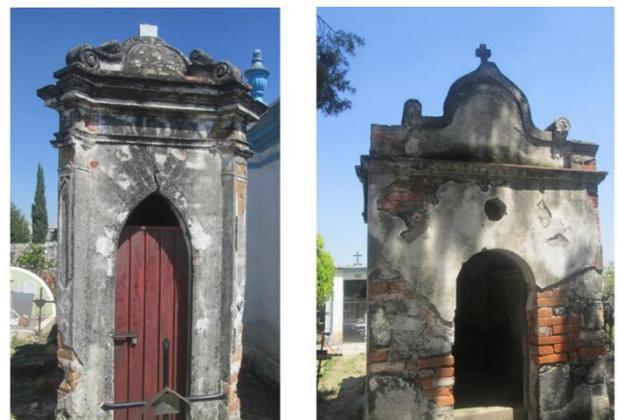


Figure 14 Chapel before 1950, (P.Islas, 2014)

Current chapels



Figure 15 Actual Chapels



Figure 16 Current chapels

Finally the chapels have been called "current", initially showing the type and the materials and construction systems that contrast with those of historical value, still retain the pattern, however the use of simplified elements, colors and of course dating are variables Position on a temporality nearby (Figs. 14a-bcd) so they have no architectural value, and are subject to inclusion in the historical memory, but the memory of the place and collective memory, reinforcing the concept of the cemetery as an object of cultural and seen as the "text" is read from access to the meanings interest.

Conclusion

The pantheon of San Bernardino Tlaxcalancingo is a site recently created, it was observed that the first use was in 1911, so it's a funeral space of the twentieth century. It is also a fact that the place of burial was the atrium of the current parish dedicated to St. Bernardino of Siena and in the courts of the chapels of the neighborhoods, which were shown in the plane of the town.

Social institutions expressed here by the stewards and prosecutors have been and remain very important in the socio-ideological decision, which makes the town despite being conurbation with the city of Puebla, still retains its traditions.

It has been written about the sites as "texts" since observing material objects, in this case the cemetery of San Bernardino, you can make a reading of the "meanings, values and social relations", making this reading its history and thus is seen as cultural heritage "reflecting the collective memory and place."



Figure 17 Colored on the Day of the Dead Tombs (N. Perez and B.García, 2014)

The Pantheon in specific has its day visit, mainly on weekends, but here in Mexico is leading the visit of the Day of the Dead festivities, when the place becomes a meeting place for locals and where the interrelationship denoting time the historical and cultural uniqueness of the cemetery, as it is material and symbolic part of the community is established. Days when people arrive very early coloring tombs lie in this place (Figs. 13).

Regarding the realization of the types of burial were shown making up the place and also will constitute the passage of time through constructive demonstrations characteristics of the community, reinforcing the cultural reading, since comparatively with funeral urban spaces has a marked difference in shape, materials and iconography funeral, marking the socio-economic gap while in non-urban sites, the vernacular tradition manifested in their typology and iconography appears, showing the cultural diversity that reading provides.

Comparative Typology of Urban Heritage Cemeteries Public and Private: the participation of scholars of the project is appreciated. Cases: Municipal and French city of Puebla.

References

Biblia de Jerusalem,
<http://www.biblia.catholic.net>

CARMONA MUELA, J. Iconografía de los Santos, España, Ed. Istmo S.A., 2003.
Diccionario de la lengua española (vigésima segunda edición), Real Academia Española, 2001. (Consulta el 21 de junio de 2013)

CUENYA MATEOS, M. Á.(2008). « Los espacios de la muerte. De panteones, camposantos y cementerios en la ciudad de Puebla. De la Colonia a la Revolución », Nuevo Mundo Mundos Nuevos [En ligne], Colloques, mis en ligne le 03 janvier 2008, consulté le 12 septembre 2014. URL : <http://nuevomundo.revues.org/15202> ; DOI : 10.4000/nuevomundo.15202 Minetti, Ricardo Angel. (2011).

MINETTI, R. A. (2011). “Dona eis requiem. Los cementerios ante la mirada de la cultura”. *Alteridades*, 21(41), 129-143. Recuperado en 11 de septiembre de 2014, http://www.scielo.org.mx/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S0188-70172011000100013&lng=es&tlng=es .

«Novísima Recopilación de las Leyes de Indias. Título III, N° 238. De los cementerios de las Iglesias: entierros y funeral de difuntos», Op. Cit, pp. 119 – 122 en Cuenya Mateos, Miguel Ángel.(2008). « Los espacios de la muerte. De panteones, camposantos y cementerios en la ciudad de Puebla. De la Colonia a la Revolución », Nuevo Mundo Mundos Nuevos [En ligne]

MORALES SARO, M.C., “Paraísos de mármol: la imagen del ángel en la escultura funeraria modernista” en Cuadernos de arte e iconografía, Tomo 2, N°. 4, Actas del Primer Coloquio de Iconografía, Madrid-España, 1989, pp. 377-383, ISSN 0214-2821

SAMA GARCÍA, A. El cementerio marino. Arquitectura funeraria de Lluís Domènech i Montaner en Comillas, Arte y Ciudad - Revista de Investigación No 1, Abril de 2012, pp.43-88. ISSN 2254-2930

VALERDI NOCHEBUENA, M.C. Espacios funerarios...una mirada holística, Puebla, México, Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla, 2011. ISBN 978-607-487-387-0