

PERSPECTIVE ON CEMETERIES FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF TEMPORALITY AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract

Throughout history, cemeteries have transcended beliefs and the evolution of local history, serving as places of human and social development. In recent decades, however, they have become increasingly relevant to land use and environmental planning as large urban population centers have absorbed them. This document provides a perspective on these scenarios from the point of view of temporality, recognizing the importance of cemeteries in the interstitial territory between industrial growth and history, and their role in sustainable development. A classic review was carried out to this end, allowing us to find different points of view framed within the theory of the long duration and its relationship with geohistory, sustainable development, necropolises, urban development, globalization, and its impact on the environmental development of cities.

Keywords: Environment, Beliefs, Urban development, Geohistory, Globalization.

Introduction

From various perspectives in literature and the social imagination, cemeteries are identified as socially constructed spaces that symbolize the relationship between life and death (Minetti, 2011).

Some attribute specific meanings to them based on their functionality. They describe the cemeteries as places intended for the burial and exhumation of bodies that respond to the health needs or religious expressions of a

particular society. Another perspective views the cemetery's emergence as a significant addition to the sociocultural landscape. Around a physical structure, one can observe a variety of popular rites and practices derived from the historical relationship between the living and the dead. Thus, Velarde (2012) describes them as places for the burial of corpses where the deceased are remembered and worshipped, "representing, commemorating, and monumentalizing collective and individual memory," also known as the city of the dead or necropolis.

Research describing the period before and after the colonial era, when the influence of the Catholic Church on the transformation of burial customs is identified, is centered around funeral rituals. In this sense, these scenarios have been conceived as "Spaces for the dead and rites for memory," where different perspectives associated with historical sweepings have been presented, ranging from the funeral rites of pre-Columbian and Afro-Colombian cultures to the re-signification of places such as cemeteries through ritual (Francis,

2003). Thus, different points of view have led to scientific, legal, and technical discourses that sought to justify the construction of cemeteries outside the city as a mechanism for preventing diseases caused by the decomposition of bodies, leading to the construction of cemeteries in isolated locations that were eventually absorbed by urban development, as in the case of the Central Cemetery of Bogotá, where the architectural design itself reveals how hierarchies were established to accommodate the bodies of important figures. The lines of power that its occupants would wield at the time of their death were clearly reflected in the allocation of tombs and mausoleums within a cemetery that would perpetuate the social castes of the living, even in the physical space where inert bodies were housed for eternity. Colón's study (2004) highlights the situation of the Central Cemetery since the urban neglect it has experienced and describes some of the architectural interventions it has undergone.

In this same vein, a deeply cultural interest has been identified in tracing

the representation of the capital's population, exalting each of the spaces and architectural designs of the Central Cemetery in order to reconstruct the collective memory of the formation of society.

The research background has been organized around two areas of focus. The first is an interest in compiling studies related to the social dynamics of cemeteries within cities as a historical phenomenon, focusing on both national and international approaches, and also exploring temporality as a window for understanding the transformations of urban development.

In this sense, this research presents a discussion related to the theory of the long duration from the perspective of cemetery scenarios and sustainable development, as well as from an urban and globalization approach, to contribute to urban sustainability and, above all, environmental balance.

Development

Throughout history, the history of territories has played a fundamental role in the evolution of localities,

related to their culture and geographical spaces. Thus, since ancient times, places such as cemeteries have played a fundamental role between the earthly and the spiritual, which, according to Sanabria (2020), encompasses the imaginary spaces of family lineages that are tied to a place, where their bond clings to the presence of a cemetery. This situation has linked cemeteries to different academic scenarios, where topics associated with their history (Zou et al., 2021), archaeological relevance (Delgado et al., 2021), historical pathology (Oikkonen, 2021), the floristic diversity associated with cemeteries (Konic et al., 2021), and digital cemeteries (McDowall, 2021) are mainly discussed.

This research interest has led to the development of multiple studies around the world. In the case of those registered on the Scopus platform, more than 1,500 publications have been recognized, developed since 1858. However, research grew exponentially in the mid-1970s (Figure 1), when the history of these places regained much of its momentum, mainly due to

phenomena associated with the loss of identity within burial areas (Ralph et al., 2021), with the United States, the United Kingdom, Germany, France, and China being the countries with the greatest interest in the central theme.

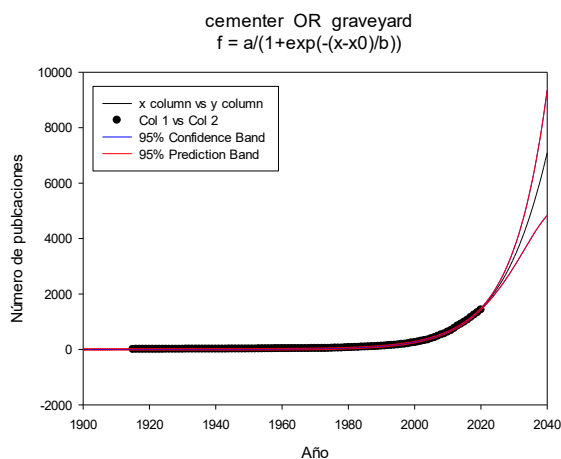


Figure 1. Nonlinear regression associated with the topic “cementer OR graveyard” in Scopus.

In accordance with the proposals in technology watch methodologies, and specifically life cycle methodologies, nonlinear regressions or S-curves allow us to determine the progress of a particular topic in relation to time (Taylor & Taylor, 2012), which in this case, the central topic of “cemeteries” presented an adjustment to the 3-parameter sigmoidal model, with a coefficient of determination of 0.997 and an inflection point for the year

2057; this indicates that this area of research is in its early stages, making it interesting for topics related to high-level research.

Among the lines of greatest interest in the central theme are research projects that tend to establish strategies aimed at the reconstruction, conservation, or sustainability of cemeteries as heritage assets, aspects that are addressed in the forward-looking approach of this document. To this end, collective memory and documentary evidence play a strategic role in reconstructing the events and transformations faced by cemeteries that are part of the city's dynamics, based on ethnographic work to identify and assess cultural heritage (Giedelmann & Jaimes, 2014).

The “Long Duration” theory as a contribution to explaining events from a geohistorical perspective

The theory of “Long Duration” allows us to understand the processes of formation that have taken place in a given space over a long period of time; this theory has been used in various studies to support the analysis of the processes of insertion in cemeteries (Bertrand, 2010). Fernand Braudel, the

father of this theory, proposes an interdisciplinary approach between geography and history, with the intention of allowing the practice of geography to delve deeper into time and history, for its part, to analyze the development of the territory over a period of time, thereby giving rise to a retrospective proposal for understanding the phenomenon under study. The greatest achievement of this proposal is the identification and in-depth study of periods of time in the territory throughout its history. In his theoretical development, Braudel achieves the unification of the development of geography and its history, positioning the long-term strategy in different disciplines according to their needs (Randle, 1966).

The concept of “Long Duration” presented by Braudel in his text *History and the Social Sciences* (1970) constitutes a new methodological model, in which the main element of study is the temporality of a geographical space. Braudel argues in his writing that, following the historical and geographical development of a

given space, there are processes of transformation over long periods of time which are closely related to shorter periods of time, influencing their developments or transformations.

Similarly, Braudel (1987), consistent with his theory, proposes that all types of research conducted under the concept of “long duration” must include three moments or levels: The first comprises geographical time or geohistory, which not only constitutes the frame of reference for the study, but is also its thread; social time or medium time, which constitutes the early development of social life in the territory or space under study. Finally, individual time, also called short time, which is the development of the space or context under study, in which the social context surrounding the space or territory is analyzed.

The periods formulated by Braudel together constitute the process of transformation of space or territory, to which Musset (2009) adds his own derivation, proposing the evaluation of processes in these three periods of time based on the same category of geohistory. This contribution has

become an evolution of Braudel's theory, widely taken up by scientific literature in the field of historiography studies.

Braudel (2009) assumes in this sense that things related to space would not be anything more than the permanent sum of eventualities, events, and repeated successes. In this regard, Casanova (2013) argues that these temporal processes contribute to the development of spatial transformations and collaborate in the formation of strategies for establishing periods of time, events that, according to Braudel, occur in short periods that, when added together, combine a perfect symbiosis between the organization of space and time for the formation of a social structure. Furthermore, he explains that in the analysis of the "Long Duration," geography loses its meaning and, therefore, its purpose as an individual discipline, to become the stage and reflection of the sum of events that occur over time to shape the transformation of the phenomenon under study.

Therefore, applying the concept of "long duration" in this analysis allows

us to understand the different social, cultural, environmental, religious, and political structures of cemeteries, based on the combination of geographical and historical elements that enable us to identify the origin of the imaginaries and practices woven around their insertion in the city. It is therefore vitally important to recognize the fluctuations that have marked milestones in the consolidation of cemeteries as heritage assets, in light of events over more or less extended periods, defining them as slow and profound times.

Braudel (1970) clarifies that time is not linear but rather determined by layers or levels that the researcher uncovers, using techniques and strategies from history and geography. In this sense, he states that: "All levels, all the thousands of levels, all the thousands of fragmentations of historical time, are understood from this depth, from this semi-immobility; everything gravitates around it" (74p), referring to long time or the so-called "Long Duration." The journey through the historical events of cemeteries, according to Braudel's theory, allows us to establish narrative

and geographical methods that determine the behavior of their users and visitors over time. According to Ojeda (2013), it is established that the theory of the “Long Duration” not only allows us to develop mechanisms of the past, but also leads us to analyze different eras together, where the explanation of the general development and the impacts caused by the evolution of historical processes over time result in guidelines or orientations for futuristic scenarios, an aspect that is taken up in the prospective intentionality of the development of cemeteries at all territorial levels.

While Braudel proposes a methodological approach based on the “longue durée” rather than a theoretical concept, it is considered a methodological guide for the interpretation and analysis of events that have taken place in a given space over time. As Páez (2017) states in his article *Geohistória*, it can be determined that the theory does not have a single method but rather, depending on the objectives and scope

of the research, its applicability may vary.

An example of this is the work of Fernand Braudel, founder of the “longue durée” school of thought, who conducted a retrospective analysis of historical and evolutionary events in the Mediterranean during a specific period of time. Along these lines, we find studies such as that of Casalino (1999), who developed a master's thesis in history entitled “Death in Lima in the 19th Century,” which establishes different temporalities that revisit historiography in the art of death; the studies of Velasco (2007), who develops in his undergraduate thesis “The Cemetery; the Mirror” as a historical document for the study of the city of Mérida; the works of Lamilla (2011) around the Central Cemetery of Neiva (Huila) as a setting for the activation, reinterpretation, and dispute of multiple memories; and the discussions of Servín (2014) in his article “A Look at the Study of Death from the School of the Annales and Cultural Geography,” where he proposes methodologies from Braudel's theory, enclosing

multitemporalities in the study of death.

Sustainable development: a concept for the protection and development of the necropolis

Explaining the space-time relationship through the analysis of historical events in short-, medium-, and long-term time frames requires the convergence of different fields of knowledge and disciplines in the social, historical, and geographical aspects of the phenomenon under study. Thus, combining the theory of “long duration” with the concept of sustainable development, which is woven into the central challenge of this review, in search of a holistic understanding of the conditions surrounding cemeteries, among which population growth, socioeconomic processes, and environmental conditions stand out.

In this regard, there are critical positions regarding the misuse of natural resources in favor of a concept of development or social transformation that goes beyond the biological fabric. In this sense, Hernández (2010) states that as time

progresses, humanity also progresses, generating a constant movement characterized by harmony and conflict within the framework of development. Ezcurra (1997), for his part, asserts that since its beginnings and arrival on the American continent, humanity has overused resources, causing their massive deterioration and condemning many species to extinction. Guimarães (1994) establishes that society as a whole is facing a crisis caused by the depletion of natural resources as a result of political and economic intervention in management focused on unsustainable models.

For Mac Mullen (2012), achieving an efficient quality of life had not been so dramatically aggressive with natural resources until now, due to population growth measured by a socio-political system that privileges uncontrolled consumerism. He asserts that the balance between man and nature has been disappearing until we are now faced with a substantial deficit of resources that are fundamental to our survival as a species. Reflecting on this, it is possible to infer that among the main impacts of current resource

exploitation models, the demand for goods and services undoubtedly far exceeds the existence of resources in nature or their ability to regenerate. The exploitation of resources, which was given free rein since the dawn of the industrial revolution and the post-war period, gave way to consumerist models that considered technological progress as the ultimate goal over any attempt to protect the environment and nature. All of this led to an increase in the transformation of renewable and non-renewable resources into raw materials to supply different global markets, leaving behind unmanageable chains of biological waste (Jankilevich, 2003).

According to Alea (2005) in his article "A Brief History of Environmental Education: From Conservationism to Sustainable Development," environmental processes around the world began to be addressed in the 1970s due to the high rate of deterioration of the surrounding environment, with humans being the main culprits of this degradation. He also outlines the beginning of natural resource protection processes and the

commitment to efficient management of these resources through joint environmental education strategies, which have addressed the issue of human development and environmental protection through the creation of legal management tools for the development of sustainable living, as mentioned by the United Nations (UN, 2014).

Among the most significant milestones in this regard are: the United Nations Conference on the Environment to analyze the impact of development on nature, held in Stockholm in 1972, as well as the pronouncements of the United Nations Environment Programme (Vinuesa et al., 2020), which led to the development of the Cocoyoc Symposium in 1974, where a wide variety of experts from different countries identified the economic and social factors that lead to environmental degradation.

In this sense, the term "sustainable development" first appeared in literature in the agreement signed by 33 African countries in 1969, sponsored by the International Union for Conservation of Nature, which

allowed for a concrete application of the concept around the capacity of humans and societies to generate actions that would guarantee the conservation of necessary conditions for future generations, as expressed by De Vincentiis (2012). However, the concept only took hold in the 1980s, under joint strategies of leading countries in environmental protection processes. Leff (2004) argues that sustainable development is being turned into a neoliberal ideological mechanism that promotes sustained economic development, which is characterized by establishing modern technological instruments that take advantage of the natural conditions of the environment that have transformed nature.

The United Nations (UN, 1987) released the Brundtland Report prepared by the World Commission on Environment and Development, entitled *Our Common Future*, which provides a more in-depth understanding of the concept and proposes possible strategies to solve the problem caused by the impact of economic and social growth on the

environment. Sustainable policies then take a privileged place in the academic discussions of environmental advocates, positioning a whole series of treaties for the protection of resources and life as we know it. In line with this, it is desirable to construct a conceptual framework for environmental and sustainable management policies that cover the wide variety of industries or scenarios that generate waste or are potential sources of pollution, where it is undoubtedly possible to locate both urban and peripheral dynamics of cemeteries.

In this regard, authors such as Gallopín (2003), who tend to associate the concept of “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (p. 23) -also presented in the Brundtland Report, which demonstrates the importance of building a guiding axis in the formulation of a prospective analysis of cemeteries, where the environmental policy guidelines that regulate their operation are concentrated, with strategies and guidelines for

strengthening management that guarantee their sustainability in the terms expressed by Guimarães (2005) when he states that:

“Sustainable development will only be possible to the extent that we manage to preserve the integrity of the natural processes that guarantee the flow of energy and materials in the biosphere, while also preserving the planet's biodiversity.”

This last point is extremely important because it means that, in order to be sustainable, development must shift from the current anthropocentrism to biopluralism, granting other species the same ontological right to life, which, incidentally, does not contradict the anthropocentric nature of economic growth.

The various sustainable development strategies proposed in the Brundtland Report are combined with the ideas of Max-Neef (1993), from the perspective of development on a human scale, that is, development that bases its equilibrium on awareness of the total satisfaction of human needs based on recognition of the mechanisms that link self-dependence and man's

relationship with nature, and recognition of the social and economic functions of technological processes. All of this is seen in correlation with the globalized processes between people, society, politics, and the environment.

Thus, the term sustainable development, as redefined in this review, will be understood as the balance between the management of cemeteries since their declaration as heritage sites and the protection of the surrounding environment, in such a way as to establish a symbiotic relationship that articulates mechanisms for the clear and timely identification of risks, as well as the formulation of improvement actions that lead to sustainability-oriented management.

Cemeteries - Places for the repose of bodies

There are many concepts involved in the development of this type of equipment designed to protect bodies within the framework of their respective religions. Burying the dead is one of the ancestral traditions that have characterized the constitution of most societies. The treatment of human

remains is linked to a practice that dates back to ancient times, when spaces for the disposal of corpses were located on the outskirts of settlements, but not too far from thoroughfares, in order to prevent those who had passed away from being forgotten and, in some way, to guarantee safety within these spaces (Fernández, 2007).

The era of Christianity, according to Strano (2006), was marked by persecution of believers, who were forced to bury their dead in catacombs that eventually became insufficient, and some members of these upper-class communities had to give up space on their land so that their brothers in faith could be buried there. Furthermore, the author states that in the time after Christ, the dead were buried on the outskirts of the city, a custom that continued until the mid-7th century, when the Council of Toledo allowed some members of the hierarchy to be buried in churches, subsequently giving rise to Christian cemeteries as final resting places.

Nistal (1992) states that the cemetery is a place of rest, of sleep. The etymological root of the word cemetery

derives from the Greek Koimeo-Koimetérion, which means “he who rests.” In Rome, the Law of the Twelve Tables decreed that no corpse should be buried within the city; this law was adopted by Emperor Antonino Pío, who extended it to his entire domain.

The term cemetery is fundamental to the research, as it defines the scope of study and is where the geohistorical methodology is configured to recognize how its inclusion stimulates the development of cities, based on an analysis of favorable and unfavorable variables, as well as criteria for affecting or protecting its architectural wealth based on its declaration as a heritage site.

Urban development and globalization

Large-scale urban growth processes have historically resulted from efforts to meet the basic needs of societies (Soto-Cortes, 2015). This constant dynamic has led to environmental crises in areas surrounding high-impact production processes located in regions privileged for their natural wealth. The social and political context of the time determines the pace of

growth and mobility of the population in large cities, motivates large migrations, leads to a profound neglect of the countryside, and results in immersion in neighboring population centers that have communication routes as evidence of commercial growth, as mentioned by Ocampo (2013), to which is added the birth of new residential areas. In this regard, Cifuentes (2009) presents in his article "Modeling urban growth factors as a contribution to sustainability. Case study Manizales-Colombia," an important review of authors who have described these phenomena of accelerated urbanization and their devastating impacts on the natural environment, resulting in environmental imbalance.

Similarly, Rio Cortina (2018) suggests that urban development and population growth are influenced by various processes, including the absence of public policies that promote the development of productive commercial strategies, an aspect that should be taken into account in research related to the historical and territorial development of cemeteries,

since analyzing the urban development of large cities through geohistory will make it possible to identify the different moments of growth that cities have experienced until they have absorbed, in many cases, cemeteries as a consequence of urban growth.

Urban Sustainability: growth, conservation, and environmental care in the city.

Urban growth process

Environmental processes have undergone transformations due to the modernization of industrialization processes in societies, which are most evident in large metropolitan areas. This has required different strategies for the protection of natural resources. Urban growth must therefore occur in a harmonious and responsible manner, recognizing the needs arising from the housing boom in major cities, where disorderly land use dynamics have been established.

Suarez and Molina (2014) argue that most of the problems generated for the environment originate in cities and their industrial environments, as this is where the greatest number of polluting

emissions are generated and where resources such as water, soil, and air are used inappropriately or excessively. This situation leads to instability in regional social and economic processes, due to the way in which modernist consumption systems conceive of a comfortable lifestyle. In this same vein, Moreno (2009) establishes that the concept of sustainability is a strategy for cohesion between economic development, the environment, and society in general, as elements that, when viewed from the same perspective, establish long-term development marked by the efficient use of resources.

According to Lezama & Domínguez (2006), the discussion on urban sustainability revolves around social, economic, and environmental dimensions, addressed in an integrative manner that gives rise to a new category of analysis: the principle of sustainability and development.

Processes for the conservation of heritage assets or assets of cultural interest

The concept of heritage, both in terms of the regulatory framework and the

social imagination, is a key tool for determining conservation strategies, as this concept is the basis for the management and use of protected assets due to their cultural significance (Manzini, 2010). Mairal (2000) indicates that the conceptual approach to heritage dates back historically to the processes of collecting works of art during the Renaissance period, which shows a historical process of heritage conservation between the 15th and 16th centuries. However, it was in the 19th century that the conservation, recovery, and appreciation of art took shape, given the imminent destruction of monuments as a result of the urban reforms carried out at that time and the constant expropriations (Tapia, 2011).

Taking the above into account, definitions such as that presented by the Cultural Heritage Division of the Jalisco Ministry of Culture, which defines tangible cultural heritage as “comprising movable and immovable property created by societies on our planet,” and later by UNESCO (2004) establishes the concept of heritage as “the legacy we receive from the past, what we experience in the present, and

what we pass on to future generations,” it is recognized that sustainability appears as a challenge surrounding the protection of heritage assets, an aspect of great interest in the context of establishing research related to the subject, with the understanding that it should focus on presenting content that highlights the importance of cemeteries as heritage assets and the conservation actions that have been implemented or could be implemented in a prospective proposal for sustainable cemetery management.

It should be noted that it was not until the early 20th century that heritage conservation policies began to be established in Spain under the concept of the Modern Architecture Movement (Tapia, 2011), which established a series of policies set out in charters that were subsequently ratified at the international level and guided heritage conservation guidelines. According to the historical compilation by Camposano (2015), the 1931 Charter of Athens and the creation of UNESCO in 1945 included among their purposes the safeguarding of humanity's tangible and intangible heritage. This objective

was strengthened in 1964 with the promulgation of the Venice Charter, which, in addition to reaffirming the Athens Charter, expanded the elements to be preserved.

In 1974, in Quito, Ecuador, the first document of the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) was developed, establishing guidelines for heritage conservation in the Americas. This was followed by the New Orleans Charter in 1991, which established a commitment to the treatment of heritage properties. All of these documents provide guidelines for heritage conservation and restoration processes that have been applicable to properties of historical and cultural interest.

In the case of Colombia, reference is made to Law 1185 of 2008 and its regulatory decrees, which emerged on the national scene as a result of the recognition of the diversity present in the nation's cultural heritage. The cultural manifestations and idiosyncrasies that are built around cultural assets give local culture an increasingly profound meaning that is rooted in society, without this implying

that they are static. As can be seen in the Central Cemetery, their reality is dynamic and intertwined with the urban mobility in which they are embedded.

In this regard, Paula Moreno, former Minister of Culture, states that: Policies aimed at making the nation's cultural heritage accessible to all do not only mean that we should all be able to appreciate and enjoy it at any time, but also that heritage should become a driver of economic and social development in communities and, above all, should have a positive impact on the quality of life of all Colombians. This policy seeks to involve all possible actors in heritage management, in models that increasingly include the private sector and civil society in areas that have traditionally been the responsibility of the public sector, and to address cultural heritage in a comprehensive manner, taking into account both tangible and intangible aspects according to their particular characteristics (Ministerio de Cultura, 2010).

From his perspective, cultural heritage conservation is achieved through the

active participation of social actors as spectators, but he also conceives of heritage as a driver of community development, which must have a positive impact on the quality of life of Colombians, an aspect that is in line with the sustainability perspective of urban cemeteries.

Environmental care as a protection strategy

Environmental care involves the application of strategies to mitigate environmental impacts on water resources, soil, flora, fauna, and air, which affect in one way or another the conservation of the natural environment, urban development, and public health. These mitigations aim to reduce the pollutants generated by everyday production processes and those generated by industry.

In the case of cities, environmental protection has led to a series of international and national strategies, developed in environmental management instruments known as “direct control or regulation instruments” (Hernández, 2015). These regulatory strategies focus on solving technological problems such as housing

construction and the inappropriate use of public services, including the mismanagement of liquid, solid, and gaseous waste, which affect normal public health conditions, and physical problems such as occupancy patterns, demands for space, and expansion processes in different sectors, including housing or territorial expansion, production, economic development, among others, which contribute to urban development.

One of the most relevant mechanisms is part of joint strategies developed by international bodies, which implement state policies to understand and address the aforementioned issue and, with this, the skills to protect and care for the environment, as established by many of the world's environmental authorities, which recognize modern humans as key agents with the capacity to halt the destruction of living beings before crossing an irreversible threshold, beyond which even the future of humanity on Earth could be in danger. These mechanisms give rise to strategies for each country to implement the most relevant strategies for caring for the environment.

In this sense, by protecting the heritage, social, and economic conditions and elements and establishing environmental impact mitigation strategies within the Central Cemetery, we are contributing to its care and protection, since by modifying the traditional orientation of the pollutants produced or released by the cemetery into the environment, we will contribute to the environmental care of the city and the cemetery's direct area of influence.

Conclusions

From a sustainable development perspective, cemeteries should be considered not only as heritage sites and places of historical memory, but also as key components in the construction of a more balanced and resilient urban ecology. This vision involves recognizing their potential as living systems within the urban fabric, capable of providing important ecosystem functions such as thermal regulation, biodiversity conservation, and sustainable soil management.

By incorporating the approach of sustainable urban ecology, it is understood that cemeteries can play an active role in mitigating the

environmental impacts generated by rapid urbanization. Many cemeteries have significant vegetation cover, with native and adapted tree species that contribute to the ecological balance of cities by providing shade, capturing carbon, filtering air pollutants, and improving air quality. In addition, they offer shelter and habitat for birds, insects, and other forms of urban life, serving as small islands of biodiversity in densely built environments.

In this sense, their integration into urban ecological planning must be strategic, taking advantage of their spatial configuration and vegetation as green corridors or nodes of ecological connectivity, linked to parks, nature reserves, and other public spaces. This type of management allows us to move toward more sustainable and resilient urban models in the face of climate change, while promoting the appreciation of these spaces from a socio-environmental perspective.

Likewise, the proper management of natural resources within cemeteries, such as water, soil, and organic waste, is essential to ensuring their sustainability. The development of green infrastructure, the

implementation of environmentally friendly maintenance practices through composting, reuse of materials, and ecological landscaping, and the incorporation of circular economy principles can transform cemeteries into living laboratories of urban sustainability.

On the other hand, linking these spaces with the community can strengthen environmental education and citizen participation processes. Through awareness-raising activities, guided tours, workshops, and collaborative projects, cemeteries can become spaces for learning and ecological awareness, promoting an urban culture that values life, memory, and the environment in an integrated way. In this way, cemeteries represent a unique opportunity to promote sustainable urban ecology strategies, provided they are managed with a multidisciplinary vision that recognizes their multiple dimensions: heritage, social, ecological, and cultural. Thus, by integrating them into urban and environmental planning policies, we contribute not only to their preservation but also to the well-being of communities and the ecological regeneration of urban environments.

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