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METHODS OF COMMEMORATING LIQUIDATED CEMETERIES AND FORMER  
CEMETERY AREAS AS AN EXPRESSION OF REMEMBRANCE, RELIEF,  
AND RESPECT FOR A SACRED PLACE

SPOSOBY UPAMIĘTNIANIA ZLIKWIDOWANYCH CMENTARZY I TERENÓW  
POCMENTARNYCH JAKO WYRAZ PAMIĘCI, ZADOŚĆUCZYNIENIA  
I POSZANOWANIA SACRUM MIEJSCA

**Abstract**

Old German cemeteries which have been devastated and liquidated, are a disgraceful reminder of the 1970s and 1980s. They are particularly numerous in cities and villages in Western and Northern Poland. Though they constitute a historically exceptional relic of those places and people, only a few have been memorialized. The paper presents a review of exemplary forms of commemorating liquidated cemeteries, as symbolic sights in the landscape with a specific historical, cultural, and social significance.

**Keywords:** *sacrum* in the landscape, forms of commemoration, former cemetery areas

**Streszczenie**

Niechlubnym świadectwem okresu lat 70 i 80 XX w. są dziś zniszczone i zlikwidowane tak zwane cmentarze poniemieckie, których wielką liczbę można odnaleźć w miastach i wsiach głównie obszaru zachodniej i północnej Polski. Pomimo, że stanowią one wyjątkowe świadectwo historii miejsca i ludzi, istnienie tylko nielicznych zostało upamiętnione. Referat prezentuje przegląd przykładowych form upamiętniania zlikwidowanych cmentarzy, jako symbolicznych znaków w krajobrazie o szczególnym znaczeniu historycznym, kulturowym i społecznym.

**Słowa kluczowe:** *sacrum* w krajobrazie, formy upamiętniania, tereny pocmentarne

## **1. Introduction**

In all cultures, a cemetery is a specific place, perceived multi-dimensionally, and from many aspects. It is a sacred place with diverse symbolism, an evidence of the community history of a given culture and time. Since a cemetery combines the past and the future, it is also a place of broadly understood individual and collective memory. There are, however, situations when cemeteries are closed, or even removed. The causes can be legal, historical, social, spatial, economic, or cultural. Closing a cemetery for new burials can be the beginning of its slow devastation. In time, a place valuable in terms of individual memory, without people who remember and care for it, may be forgotten. When cemeteries are liquidated, the only way to protect the cultural and religious significance of such places is collective memory. For it to last, however, it is important to properly mark the place, to remind people of its previous character and history.

## **2. Aim and methods**

The subject of the study are various methods of commemorating former cemeteries. Examples from Szczecin, Wrocław, Gdańsk, and Świnoujście, namely from Western and Northern Poland, where, mostly for historical reasons, a large number of the so-called former German cemeteries remain, were analyzed. In the paper, six different implementations were characterized. In addition, Szczecin lapidaria were discussed, and memorial plaques placed on former cemetery areas were discussed collectively. This text is not devoted to analyzing the causes which lead to the closure and removal of cemeteries, but will focus on the methods of commemorating former burial sites. Also, the publication does not aim to determine the ideal spatial development form of a site of memory, but is a review of the forms applied, together with the author's commentary on the applied solutions in the Discussion part. The purpose of the paper is to demonstrate that the activities to commemorate cemeteries are conducted independently in different cities, have diverse character, and many implementations emerged particularly in the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

## **3. The methods of commemorating former burial sites**

Cemeteries are a space where the sacred meets the profane. The worldly aspect of a necropolis not only results from its function as a burial place, but also as a place of meetings, walks, traffic routes, as well as green areas. The sacred aspect of cemeteries shows itself in that they are a place where rites, beliefs, and religious practices take place. They are deeply symbolic, and have huge cultural significance. They are sites of silence, remembrance of the dead, they bring deep reflections about the essence of human life and death, which also makes them universally sacred.

The notion of a post-cemetery area does not have an official definition. According to the long-term research and experience of the author, it is a space, which, for different reasons, has lost its former burial function, and its landscape has changed enough to make it difficult

to recognize and identify as a cemetery. This could be a formally liquidated cemetery, or a cemetery, which, having been abandoned and neglected, has suffered significant devastation. Usually, such areas are completely stripped of tombstones, and signs of the graves. In other cases, scarce surface grave and cemetery elements can survive. Such an area can be re-used e.g. as a park, and in such a case it is often referred to as a post-cemetery park [9, p. 15-16]. It is worth noting that within the boundaries of towns, the number of historical cemeteries is very often quite significant. For instance, in Gdańsk, there are more than ten historical cemeteries, in Szczecin there are 91 in total [9, p. 9], but in Wrocław there are as many as 120 [3, p. 11]. After 1945, the authorities of the PRL were liquidating cemeteries on a large scale, associating them with the German past of the towns. For instance, between 1960-1970 in Wrocław, it was decided to liquidate 45 pre-war cemeteries [3, p. 312]. It was a time of their mass removal, but it should be remembered that cemeteries were also closed and liquidated before that, and the causes could be diverse. It is worth remembering that since the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, regulations appeared in Western European countries prohibiting the burial of dead in churches and within city walls, and orders were made to remove old cemeteries adjacent to churches, and to transfer them outside cities [3, p. 312; 18, p. 66; 1, p. 505; 5, p. 78]. For instance, according to statistical data from 1926, in the city of Wrocław and in its nearest vicinity, there were 41 cemeteries, of which 17 were already closed [3, p. 314]. Current conservation practice holds that historical cemeteries should not be closed, and definitely not liquidated. However, if they have already been liquidated, the optimal solution is to preserve them as areas of greenery with proper commemoration of the site. Regardless of its status of preservation, a former cemetery area should be a place of remembrance, which should attract people's attention and encourage them to think about the past. In general, the basic form of commemorating the area is with monuments, but these can also be monumental planning schemes, which combine the compositions of sculptural and architectonic elements, and give the space its commemorative function. Such facilities form common spaces and build social identity [4, p. 7-8,10,14]. Therefore, for the memory to last, a visual symbol is necessary, being a medium of remembrance. For the sacred to survive, human awareness is needed and the memory must be preserved. Not commemorating former cemetery areas results in the people buried there being forgotten. Therefore, the phenomenon of "weathering of the sacred" can be observed [8, p. 209-211], which, according to the author, means the gradual deterioration of the sacred aspect as a result of the fading of individual and collective memory about the site's history, its significance, and the people buried there. The examples discussed below, show how old burial sites are commemorated at present.

### **3.1. The cemetery of non-existent cemeteries in Gdańsk, Poland**

It is a symbolic monument planning scheme to commemorate Gdańsk cemeteries of different denominations, devastated after World War II, mainly in the 1970s. As early as 1998, the Authorities of the City of Gdańsk decided to commemorate Gdańsk's former cemeteries by erecting a monument in the square of the Corpus Christi Church [19]. The structure was established in the post-cemetery park at 3 Maja Street, in the area of the former Evangelical Corpus Christi cemetery,

which was active in the years of 1815-1956. The designers were Hanna Klementowska and Jacek Krenz, and the opening ceremony took place in 2002 [12]. The monument planning scheme was supposed to resemble a temple with a symbolic altar (Fig. 1). Access to the area is through a metal gateway with a decorative tree symbol, and the whole area is surrounded by a fence. The gate, together with the fence, emphasizes the separation of this space, just like a cemetery is a separate space, where there is always a clear border between the sacred inside and the profane surrounding. The main material for the planning scheme is stone, together with low and high vegetation. There are no colorful bedding displays, and evergreen plants dominate, which adds gravity to the site. The main axis runs along a stony alley with a row of trees, it directs one's gaze to a stone altar located at the end. It was built from 38 surviving tombstones and stone crosses from the 18<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup>, and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries that were transferred from different liquidated cemeteries in Gdańsk. Human remains found during the construction of the monument are placed under the main slab, in the central part of the symbolic cemetery [6]. Some of the tombstones are cracked and mounted loosely, which may symbolize brutal treatment of the graves, the dead, and commemorates their monuments during the liquidation of the cemeteries. On the dark stone altar, the following sign is placed, "... TO THOSE WHO HAVE NO NAMES", highlighting the fact that, as a result of the liquidation of the cemeteries, the buried lost the right to survive as individual memories. The altar slab, just like the alley that leads to it, has ground lighting. With the geometry of the elements, the composition creates a formal and sublime atmosphere. It is also enhanced by small fields suggesting cemetery quarters with plants, stone columns obliquely cut at the top, and cracked along the whole length, and stone benches resembling a sarcophagus. Cemetery gravestones are also placed in these quarters. At present, the planning scheme is a place of ecumenical meetings, it is also often visited on All Saints Day.



Fig. 1. Cemetery of former cemeteries in Gdańsk (photo by A. Pilarczyk)

### 3.2. Monuments commemorating former cemeteries in Gdańsk, Poland

In 2005 the Authorities of the City of Gdańsk decided to commemorate the sites of the liquidated Gdańsk cemeteries. With the implementation of the scheme, between 2006–2009, 17 stone slabs were erected [7]. Each slab has a description in three languages: Polish,

Latin, and German, and includes the old name of a cemetery, the time of its operation, and its approximate plan (Fig. 2). The form of a vertical slab is very simple, its shape suggests a gravestone on a stone base. The material is dark granite. The form and the material are the same for each cemetery. On a horizontal base, it is written that the monument was funded by the city, as well as the year of its erection. At the very top of the plate, the symbols of the city of Gdańsk are placed (a crown, and two Greek crosses below them). On the slabs, there are no other symbols or markings related to the denomination or cemetery imagery.



Fig. 2. Monuments commemorating non-existent cemeteries in post-cemetery parks in Gdańsk (photo by A. Pilarczyk)

### 3.3. Gdańsk cemeteries lapidarium, Poland

The lapidarium (Fig. 3) was opened in 2006 in the Academic Park at the Gdańsk Technical University, at the place where between 1893–1956, St. Nicolas Catholic Cemetery and Royal Chapel were located. The planning scheme was designed by Joanna Tucka and has an area of 0.45 hectares. A place was created to collect and secure headstones and other stone elements from old Gdańsk cemeteries of different denominations. In total, more than ten objects have been gathered here from the 18<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. In the middle, a cenotaph has been erected made of an erratic boulder with a sign reading ‘Gdańsk’ according to the oldest version of the word from 997 [15]. The boulder is on a platform, and around it, a spiral was created where granite cuboids are placed with the digits from X to XI; they symbolize 11 centuries of the city’s existence. The composition is completed by low shrubs. Historical cemetery stone elements are placed in rows on the lawn in the lapidarium square and along the park alley.



Fig. 3. The Gdansk lapidarium in the Academic Park in Gdańsk (photo by A. Pilarczyk)

### 3.4. Remembrance site in Świnoujście, Poland

In Świnoujście, Fryderyk Chopin city park was established between 1975 and 1976. It was established at the site, where from 1771 to the 1950s an Evangelical-Lutheran cemetery was active. In 2010, a competition for the concept of revitalizing the Park was announced under the headline: “Integrated Downtown Project – Chopin St. Park Reconstruction”. A project from the Bronisz Land Design Studio prepared by Artur Bronisz, Alicia Jasińska, Joanna Antosik and Anna Miszczyńska, won first place in the competition and was consequently implemented. The Park was opened in 2013 [13, p. 247-248]. Within the project, a place commemorating the cemetery was built (Fig. 4). The composition consists of three cuboids oriented horizontally in one line, these are white horizontal plates. Each wall has an opening filled with a sign; a Latin cross symbolizing the Christian faith, a circle with the Luther Rose – the sign of Protestant Reformation, or the star of David – the symbol of Judaism. Next to it, a vertical granite slab is erected, with a description in Polish and German reading “IN MEMORY OF PREVIOUS RESIDENTS OF ŚWINOUJŚCIE. IN THIS PLACE FROM 1771 TO THE 1950s, RESIDENTS OF ŚWINOUJŚCIE WERE INTERRED. THE REMAINS OF THE DECEASED, EXHUMED DURING THE INVESTMENT PROJECT, HAVE BEEN TRANSFERRED AND BURIED IN THE MUNICIPAL CEMETERY. RESIDENTS OF ŚWINOUJŚCIE AD 2013”. Given the park’s size, the remembrance site is small, and the number of elements or the size of the symbols are not very visible. An integral part of the remembrance site is the so-called light clearing, namely an open space with irregularly arranged points of light (Fig. 5).



Fig. 4. Remembrance site in Fryderyk Chopin City Park in Świnoujście (photo by A. Pilarczyk)



Fig. 5. The visualization of the remembrance site in Świnoujście; the so-called light clearing can be seen in the background ([http://www.a-ronet.pl/index.php?mod=nagroda&n\\_id=2118](http://www.a-ronet.pl/index.php?mod=nagroda&n_id=2118))

### 3.5. Common remembrance memorial in Wrocław, Poland

In 2005 a competition for the construction of a monument commemorating the residents of Wrocław buried on the already liquidated cemeteries took place. The monument (Fig. 6) was unveiled in 2008, and its designers were Tomasz Tomaszewski, Alojzy Gryt, and Czesław Wesołowski. The structure was erected in what is now known as Grabiszyński Park, at the site of the former crematorium at the former Grabiszyński III cemetery, active from 1916 to the 1950s–1960s. [21]. The monument can be accessed through a paved alley, at the beginning of which is a concrete entry gate with a Latin sign reading “MONUMENTUM MEMORIAE COMMUNIS” at the top, meaning “Common remembrance memorial”. The monument is in the form of a high wall with a length of 60 m, and a height of 4–5 m and composed of 32 granite fragments, upon which old gravestones are mounted. The four parts of the monument symbolize Catholic, Evangelical, municipal, and Jewish cemeteries. Within the monument’s composition, the Christian cross and the Jewish menorah – a seven-branched candlestick, one of the oldest and best known symbols used in Jewish religious art, appear. On one horizontal plate, there is a list of all the cemeteries liquidated after 1945 in Wrocław. On one of the vertical plates, there is a sign in Polish and German, reading “IN MEMORY OF PREVIOUS RESIDENTS OF OUR CITY, WHO WERE BURIED IN THE LIQUIDATED CEMETERIES – PEOPLE OF WROCLAW”. Additionally, on the horizontal granite plates, the following sign is placed “A CEMETERY CAN BE DEMOLISHED – BUT NEVER THE MEMORY” in Polish and German. The memorial is illuminated.



Fig. 6. Common Remembrance Memorial in Grabiszyński Park in Wrocław (photo by A. Pilarczyk)

### 3.6. Remembrance site at the Central Cemetery in Szczecin

The Central Cemetery, opened in 1901, is currently the largest cemetery in Poland. In 1994, a commemorative boulder (Fig. 7) was placed in an old quarter of the city with a sign in German, “ZUM GEDENKEN AN DIE TOTEN DER STADT STETTIN”, or “In memory of the deceased people of Szczecin”. It was funded by former residents of Szczecin and by the remaining German minority. In 2001 next to the boulder, a tall wooden cross was erected. Nearby, there are pre-war grave monuments. Religious celebrations take place at this site. [17, p. 149-150]. It is a relatively modest form of commemoration, particularly taking into account the size of the cemetery and its pre-war excellence.



Fig. 7. The Szczecin remembrance site at the Central Cemetery in Szczecin (photo by A. Pilarczyk)



Fig. 8. The lapidarium at the Central Cemetery in Szczecin (photo by A. Pilarczyk)

### 3.7. The lapidarium at the Central Cemetery in Szczecin

A specific remembrance feature is cemetery lapidaria. In Szczecin, the largest and most valuable one is the lapidarium at the Central Cemetery (Fig. 8), opened in 2007 in the area of the former urn grove. Taking into account the guidelines of the Provincial Monuments Conservation Officer, a project was initiated to recreate the old spatial arrangement, to

preserve and, partially to reconstruct the elements of landscape architecture, greenery, and headstone arrangement. The designers are Joanna Wojtecka, Marzena Jaroszek, and Krzysztof Gołębiecki. This place is not accidental, since in this part of the cemetery, numerous old tombstones and other original elements have survived. Some historical headstones were erected in situ. Other ones, removed from different places of the large cemetery, were also placed here; their original location cannot be determined anymore. In this way, a diversified and interesting collection of tombstones was created, surrounded by aesthetically arranged greenery [16, p. 336-338]. A historical path runs through the lapidarium, which was established at the Central Cemetery in 2010, making this spot easier to reach and see.

### 3.8. Other lapidaria in Szczecin

As in the case of Gdańsk, Wrocław, or other places in Western Poland, a large number of old German cemeteries in Szczecin were also destroyed after World War II. At present, the oldest and most visible signs of their existence are alleys with impressively mature trees [11]. Meanwhile, only a small number of gravestones have been preserved, depending on the site. Single tombstones were often moved from former cemetery areas to one site, to create small lapidaria (Fig. 9, 10). Such actions were not always in agreement with the conservation authorities. They were often initiated and executed by local communities. The reason was often the desire to clean up a cemetery area, and the need to collect abandoned, usually turned over pre-war headstones. Such places are the destination of accidentally found tombstones from different places outside the areas of the old cemeteries. Currently, one place where such items end up is the lapidarium at the Central Cemetery.



Fig. 9. The lapidarium created in the 1990s at the post-cemetery park in Sądiedzka St. in Szczecin (photo by A. Pilarczyk)



Fig. 10. The lapidarium from 2007 at the former Evangelical cemetery in Ostowa St. in Szczecin (photo by A. Pilarczyk)

### 3.9. Other forms of commemorating old burial sites in Szczecin

Analyzing former cemetery areas in Szczecin, it may be stated that, only in a few post-cemetery parks, has any information appeared about the graveyard past of the site. An example may be Albert Wilimsky Park at Krzemienna St. in Szczecin – an old Evangelical

cemetery liquidated in 1976. This area has been converted into a park and in 2008 a brick and mortar column was erected here with a plaque containing the Park's name and information in Polish and German stating that this is a post-cemetery park (Fig. 11). Another example is an informative plaque located at the entrance to the area of the former military cemetery; today, it is Friedrich Ackermann Square (Fig. 12).



Fig. 11. A plaque giving information about the cemetery past of Albert Wilimsky Park in Krzemienna St. in Szczecin (photo by A. Pilarczyk)



Fig. 12. The old military cemetery at Mikołaja Kopernika St. in Szczecin with a plaque giving information about the past of this site (photo by A. Pilarczyk)

#### 4. Discussion

To mark the sites of historical cemeteries is an expression of respect for the burial sites, and of the need to preserve them in the collective memory. The majority of the projects characterized above were created at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century and it can be assumed that they will keep on emerging, since, as mentioned above, there are hundreds or perhaps thousands of forgotten cemeteries in various cities and villages of Poland. The activities described relate to “foreign” cemeteries; that is, those belonging to other nationalities and cultures. Despite this fact, numerous initiatives have appeared to commemorate these sites, coming both from City Authorities, and from local communities. The examples discussed above demonstrate the social need to commemorate the burial sites of former, mainly German, residents, and to protect the surviving gravestones and grave monuments.

The commemoration forms described differ significantly, therefore it is not easy to compare them. What connects these examples is the willingness to celebrate and to preserve the memory of these sites and people. This shows itself, amongst others, by the use of lasting construction materials, such as stone. These are boulders, granite blocks, stone slabs, columns, stone sett. Apart from the practical aspect, stone has vital cultural and symbolic meaning. This symbolic meaning results mostly from the high resistance of stone to the destructive operation of time. In the cult of the dead, stone has been used since the dawn of time, therefore it is of great cultural importance. Old stone grave elements are of particularly high value, they are

symbols of the dead, a sign of a site's history, monuments, cultural artifacts, artistic or artisan creations. For this reason, lapidaria spontaneously turn into remembrance sites (Szczecin 3.7., 3.8.), and in the designed cemetery commemoration areas, tombstones are gathered, from one or many different cemeteries (Wrocław 3.5., Gdańsk 3.1. and 3.3.).

Designing commemorative facilities has an extremely long tradition. In the case of a former cemetery, what should be commemorated is obviously not only the fact of its existence, but also the people buried there, which is not the same thing. The fact that the site is to honor the memory of the deceased, is highlighted in Gdańsk (3.1.), in Wrocław (3.5.), in Szczecin (3.6.), and in Świnoujście (3.4.). Memorial plaques giving information about the cemeteries, but not about the people buried there are found in Gdańsk (3.2.), and in Szczecin (3.9.).

The remembrance sites require proper imagery. Since symbols are carriers of meanings, they help us to understand the notions and content that are difficult to describe, and make them comprehensible [2, p. 5]. The content layer is particularly significant for remembrance sites. The above projects include symbols related to religions or denominations - the cross, the Luther rose, the star of David, the Menorah, an altar, a temple. These are also symbols referring to the cult of the dead, the eternity, the division of the sacred from the profane, passage from the world of the living to the world of the dead, from the material zone to the spiritual zone. These symbols are, for instance, a gate, a passage, a wall, a border (Gdańsk 3.1, Wrocław 3.5.), a route (Gdańsk 3.1, Wrocław 3.5.), water (Szczecin 3.7.), light (Świnoujście 3.4, Gdańsk 3.1.), a spiral (Gdańsk 3.3). Meanwhile, the use of plant symbols and plant compositions is less common, or completely avoided in the adopted solutions. Only evergreen plants are visible (Gdańsk 3.1., 3.3., Szczecin 3.7.), which are justifiably associated with immortality. In addition, trees and shrubs create the atmosphere of sadness and reflection, appropriate for this type of site. Therefore, greater attention should be paid to creating proper plant arrangement in places that commemorate old cemeteries, since the symbolism of plants growing in burial sites has a very old tradition. For instance, cypress trees that symbolize sadness, death and mourning have been commonly planted in Mediterranean cemeteries since ancient times. In Poland and in some European countries, where this tree does not grow, thujas or black poplar of the Italian variety were planted; its column-like appearance resembles a cypress tree [2, p. 57]. In addition, trees with hanging treetops, which resemble "weeping", are becoming popular in cemeteries. Also, far back in ancient times, death was associated with flowers such as hyacinth, narcissus, rose, anemone, violet, poppy [20, p. 141-144]. Plants traditionally growing in cemeteries include: ivy, box, periwinkle, laurel, holly, and coniferous trees and shrubs of different species. Despite the devastation of many cemeteries, to this day, one of the most characteristic surviving elements of old cemeteries in Szczecin is their vegetation [11]. Studies and observations of the condition of historical cemeteries show that alleys of trees were planted as well as species including yew, ivy, periwinkle, or lilies of the valley.

The landscape of remembrance, which old cemeteries and former cemetery areas are, should be managed with particular focus on the dignity of these sites. Taking into account, however, the number of liquidated cemeteries, their differing areas and statuses of preservation, it is difficult to expect that each former cemetery could be fully converted into a commemorative site. For large post-cemetery planning schemes with few surviving historical and composition



elements, a better solution is to appoint a small section of the space a zone for remembrance and reflection. In this way, the funds raised for this purpose can be used more effectively. Also, it is easier to preserve a section of the site in proper condition, since preserving the former cemetery areas is also a form of commemoration. The rest of the site can be arranged more neutrally and be used as green leisure area. An example of this type of solution is the Common Remembrance Memorial in Wrocław (3.5). In the case of old cemeteries where a certain number of historical headstones remain and the composition and vegetation arrangement have been preserved, a memorial park or a lapidarium park can be created. Such a place will be both a remembrance site, and a post-cemetery park, combining remembrance, historical, and leisure functions. The characteristic elements of the composition, which keep the sites' identity, should be highlighted. Examples of this type can be found in Szczecin in the post-cemetery parks in Władysława Nehringa St. [10] and Ostrowska St., not discussed in this paper.

In the context of commemorating the old cemeteries, competitions for designing such places are worth emphasizing. Competitions are a good opportunity to obtain relatively best design with appropriate solutions, and to achieve a good final effect. Due to the nature of these places, their symbolic and cultural meaning, their designers should be characterized by sensitivity and the ability to properly integrate different artistic means and to shape proper imagery. Commemorative elements should be characterized by high aesthetic and artistic value (adequate form). It should also be emphasized that remembrance sites are also places of meetings and leisure, that is why it is necessary to properly equip them in terms of their intended function. The commemorative facilities and spaces should attract, and stay in one's memory, hence the need to personalize their creation as a whole, and to create relevant cultural, historical, and social memory media [14].

## 5. Conclusions

Some of the commemorative facilities discussed were established in the 1990s, but the most numerous projects date back to the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The initiative to create sites that commemorate old cemeteries and people buried there in Poland have come from both local authorities as well as other communities, social groups, or individual persons. The creation of such places is opposite to the process of collective oblivion. This demonstrates the need to build social identity and a sense of unity by sharing the same space and being equal in death. It is also a form of apology and redemption. The attitude towards historical cemeteries, especially to the "foreign" ones, shows the level of culture and sensitivity of contemporary society. Therefore, the formation of such remembrance places and commemorative facilities demonstrates positive social changes.

The remembrance sites for old cemeteries and the deceased can vary, these include great monuments, monumental planning schemes, properly arranged spaces, lapidaria, but also small commemoration plaques. The commemoration places mentioned in this paper have specific symbolism related to the religion, denomination, and the theme of death and

passing. However, the author believes that this symbolism should be richer, more diversified, and universal. The use of symbols, archetypes, allegories is important for cultural heritage; for this reason they should be invoked, so they can be familiarized with, understood, and utilized. Thus, it is important that the content layer be expanded, which would contribute to the development of the audience's sensitivity and cultural awareness. For this purpose, it is necessary to carefully select the material, and to not forget about vegetation. Plants not only help to properly shape the mood of a place, they can also be used symbolically. When shaping remembrance sites for old cemeteries, it is highly desirable to use a plant which is traditionally planted at cemeteries. This raises the cultural, historical, and aesthetic value of the place. This is even more the case when adapting areas of old cemeteries for parks; besides the elements typical for cemeteries (spatial arrangement, landscape architecture elements, tombstones etc.), plants typical for cemeteries should also be left there.

To create remembrance sites for old cemeteries and people buried there is by all means both desirable and justified. Their presence can promote individual and social cultural development, shape the identity, the system of values, or deepen the awareness, and thus it comprehensively enriches us. The process of their creation should be supported both materially and spiritually.

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