

National Science Center research grant entitled “*Planning cemeteries in the existing urban and rural structures in Poland, seen from the spatial order aspect, against the background of the contemporary European sepulchral space*”

The research is interdisciplinary as it was carried out in three scales encompassing 1) the widest territorial range i.e. settlement unit with cemetery – macro scale, 2) cemetery vicinity i.e. its surrounding, relations to other elements -mezzo scale and 3) cemetery spatial layout - micro scale. They all embrace socio – cultural, environmental, composition – esthetical, legislative and finally functional-spatial aspects. Sixty contemporary (established between 1999 and 2019) cemeteries located in the territory of Poland were researched as well as one hundred historic graveyards representing cities, towns as well as rural areas. The backdrop for Polish cemeteries study constituted their European counterparts from countries bearing similarities in the field of pre-dominant religion, cremation rate, legal regulations concerning burial sites. They are located in Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Spain, the Netherlands, Germany, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden and Italy.

The role of cemetery as public garden is going to increase due to constantly deteriorating urban green areas quality, dynamic urbanisation, demographic trends and the pandemic the world has been facing since 2020.

Because of all the above mentioned factors proper cemetery location and its functional – spatial program are increasingly significant. Proper location means accurate setting of cemetery in system of town space, green areas, public space and access to public transportation. When it comes to functional – spatial program it refers to cemetery space arrangement and its equipment. Well implemented project just meets this need. Also, it has been elaborated:

- a catalogue of proenvironmental solutions for implementation in Polish cemeteries - they echo a number of regulations from the European Landscape Convention and legal acts on planning and land management, as well as they reflect global environmental problems and growing ecological awareness ;
- the so called „pattern book” regarding spatial and landscape forms referring to shaping funeral landscape (cemetery – crematorium) integrated with its surrounding, reflecting the growing popularity of cremation and need for not occupying space for the alive ;
- multicriteria analysis assessing how a given plot meets requirements to be used as burial ground. It can be applied as a tool in the process of spatial planning for magistrate clerks, planners, cemetery managers, investors, but also organisations and individuals interested in land management of their area. Once applied it may lead to reduction of environmental, social, functional - spatial and compositional – esthetical problems potentially arising from inaccurate cemetery location.
- Template algorithm while planning and designing cemeteries, already used in establishment of a new municipal burial ground in Gniezno as well as during the expansion of parish graveyard in Czerwińsk nad Wisłą. We have elaborated a conceptual analysis scheme in order to carry out works more efficiently on the very early stage, identify cemetery values and problems and fit it in with the surrounding space in accordance with the accessibility – coherence – identity model.

Considering the facts cemeteries are widespread establishments and persistence of their function one can conclude the general public should be concerned with issues related to their location and management. For this very reason we have made a catalogue of good practises entitled „Cemetery in Landscape. Landscape of cemeteries” aiming at popularizing these objects as multifaceted space units contributing to spatial balance. The author's intention was the catalogue would become source of knowledge helpful with understanding, reading, planning and designing cemetery space.

The research project is highly thought of in scientific community as it was published in very reputable and highly-scored magazines like „Sustainability” (70 points) and „Landscape Online” (100 points).