

SOCIOCULTURAL LANDSCAPES OF SACRED MEMORIAL SPACES

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Annotation. We live in an era of increased mortality in our country, and thus the theme of death, both as a philosophical-metaphysical concept and as a daily reality, permeates the work of many cultural and artistic figures in Ukraine. Death has been understood in various ways, often signifying not merely the end of existence, but a transition to a new form of life. Funerary structures (architecture of death) serve as gateways or portals to another world. Many architects have posited that architecture begins at the burial site - "the space of lived experience." Sacred spaces are unique in their ability to achieve such a profound phenomenological rooting in their environment. The forms and spaces of these sites transcend the mundane and the momentary in their search for eternal truths, perfection, and divinity.

Churches, memorials, historical buildings (tombs), symbolic attributes, morgues, and spatial planning collectively shape the spiritual landscape of traditional funerary culture. Within the context of social interaction, there exists a triad of nature, architecture, and people. The "gaze of the era" and social landscapes reflect dominant views and values, showcasing cultural and national identities. Thus, the spiritual landscapes of sacred places, arising at the intersection of emotions and abstractions, can be characterized as emotional (sensitive) or tactile landscapes.

Aggressive materialism has deliberately shattered all symbols and values of the previous era "to smithereens" in Odesa and its region. Alongside the significant loss of temples, sacred sites such as the First Christian Cemetery, the Jewish Cemetery, monastic cemeteries, and the Resurrection Skete have also been destroyed. The burial grounds of Odesa are an integral part of our lives and serve as evidence of what once transpired in our land; in fact, they function as open-air museums. In Ukraine, there is no law protecting spaces of memory, and many historical graves are in decay, 99% of which are not listed in the registers of monuments, despite being incredible works of art.

Keywords: memorial spaces, funerary culture, socio-cultural landscapes, architectural religious environment, preservation

Relevance of the study. *Memento mori* is an ancient Latin expression that means "remember that you must die." It was used not to denote a fatalistic approach to death but rather as a way to appreciate life. The theme of life and death invites philosophical contemplation and an understanding of the symbolism of memory conditions,

The specialized environment of burial spaces, created by a shared culture based on religious beliefs, cultural rituals, and burial customs, differs from other urban and architectural spaces. The awareness of death necessitates the act of returning the body to the earth (burial), leading to specific requirements for the environment. The culture of communities shapes an integral architectural environment of cemeteries, which, in turn, influences the quality of visits by mourners and the way the deceased are remembered through memorials as representations of memory [1].

Ecological, cultural, and economic factors have shaped the landscapes of memory spaces over the centuries. At the center of funerary architecture and culture is the human body, which has been placed in grand pyramids, mausoleums, tombs, or shared graves. Along with the right to a personal burial site, a complex and highly individualized funerary culture has emerged. A grave, whether simplified or professionally designed, possesses a powerful significance: it embodies the individual, and architects can enhance or solidify their presence in the world through memorials. However, the power of the grave as a place of memory has increasingly diminished with the rise of cremation and modern societal views and attitudes.

According to the ancient Roman concept of *Genius loci*, every entity has its spirit, its guardian angel. This spirit gives life to people and places, accompanying them from birth to death and defining their character or essence. The greatest significance lies in the harmony with the spirit of the locality where a person's life unfolds. The individual is an integral part of the environment. The term "*dwelling*" is used to denote the total relationship between a person and a place. Historically, the search for a burial site and the creation of memory spaces have been foundational to urban planning. For centuries, the coexistence of cemeteries and churches was very close - "mini-cemeteries" in church crypts and the actual cemetery surrounding the church. Today, this situation has radically changed; there are virtually no examples of cemeteries being established around newly built churches [2]. The public organization "Ukraine Incognito" aims to trace the social structure of regions and explore the ancient cemeteries of Ukraine, which are mostly neglected or destroyed. During the expedition, the team investigated over 730 ancient cemeteries in Vinnytsia, Khmelnytskyi, Odesa, and Ternopil regions, and has completed research in Lviv region [3].

The theme of this work is connected to important scientific and practical tasks—to explore and document memory spaces, their significance, and to ensure the hereditary development of the genetic code of sacred space landscapes.

Analysis of recent research and publications. Books, scientific articles, dissertations, laws on the preservation of natural and cultural heritage, historical plans, and relevant websites have been analyzed. Significant works and published materials include:

- on the phenomenon, structure, and spirit of place by K. Dey [4] and K. Norberg-Schulz [5];
- on "places of memory" by P. Nora as the memorial heritage of any community [6];
- on architectural phenomenology by E. Husserl, M. Heidegger, L. Moholy-Nagy, and others;
- on "other spaces" by Foucault (*heterotopic places*) [7];
- on "the space of absence" by R. Etlin, where cemeteries are defined as "places of paradoxes - neither the space of the living nor the place of death";
- on cemeteries as historical records of landscape design by J. Loudon;
- on "the other city" by K. Scarpa with a sense of formal poetry in architecture.

A significant contribution to the theoretical foundation of the research and preservation of the historical heritage of Odesa has been made by Timofeev V., Pribiega L., Bezv V., Vecherzky V., Lisenko V., Motyreeva N., Meshcheryakov V., Grekov A., Yeksaryova N., and others. The historical burials of Galicia and Lviv have been comprehensively examined by researchers from Lviv Polytechnic. For instance, Boyko H. highlighted the issue of ancient Jewish cemeteries from the 16th to 19th centuries as objects of cultural heritage in the western region of Ukraine [8]. The Jewish spiritual constitutions of Lviv, including the synagogue and cemetery, were studied in the work of S. Ivanov and Yu. Kryvoruchko [9]. The spiritual-functional symbiosis of the cemetery and church was discussed in an article by Stasyuk O., who emphasized that the spiritual environment cannot be conceived without artistic content. In line with contemporary challenges and tasks, the same author addressed the formation of new military cemeteries in the historical cities of Galicia [10].

Despite the significant work of "Ukraine Incognito" in researching ancient cemeteries across five regions of Ukraine, there is a lack of studies on the characteristics of burial formations of different confessions, particularly in multinational cities like Odesa and the surrounding region; the

development of methodologies and measures for preserving specific memory spaces and all elements of this important heritage. Factual data on the history, architecture, and cultural significance of cemeteries in Odesa, Lviv region, and other cities in Ukraine are presented on relevant websites [11, 12]. An analysis of sources has shown that experts from various fields have studied certain aspects of the subject related to their own disciplinary areas. In addition to architectural aspects, cemeteries also offer a rich field for urban, spatial, historical, anthropological, and social research, as well as the dynamics of socio-cultural landscapes through burial customs and culture.

Purpose. The aim of the research is to systematize the characteristics, prerequisites, and evolution of the phenomenon of sacred spaces of the dead (*Dead Space*); to examine the conceptual and typological varieties, the conditions for the formation of their socio-cultural landscapes, as well as contemporary approaches and directions for the formation of memory spaces (of death).

The main emphasis of the work is placed on the importance of dialogue between the public and the architectural profession for the development of quality burial spaces. As a result of analyzing the historical aspects of public memorial places, it is anticipated that their significance as spaces for the living and the dead will be revealed. Special attention is to be given to the exploration of "dead" space as a cultural environment for society, which should be designed, managed, and utilized as a qualified architectural environment.

Research objectives. Historical materials from the "Architectural Encyclopedia of the Second Half of the 19th Century" by G. Baranovsky, Volume 1, have been utilized, which presents compositions and structures created based on religious rituals and the cult of the deceased [13].

Factual information about the cemeteries of Odesa and their condition has been gathered from municipal websites [12,14,15]. The current state of research practices, preservation efforts, and directions for the reconstruction and restoration of traditional elements of well-known cemeteries and crypts in Vienna have been examined [16,17,18]. Contemporary trends towards the transformation of sacred spaces into green zones and solutions for the transformation of memorial spaces have been explored. The contributions of renowned architects to the hereditary development of historical memorial spaces have also been considered.

The research methodology involves contextual and comparative analysis of phenomenological concepts in architecture; a comprehensive analysis of the categorical apparatus of architectural phenomenology; and the issues of space in architecture.

Different functional actions and requirements necessitate different environments to be successful. "Having a place" is usually understood in a quantitative, functional sense, with spatial distribution and the provision of necessary dimensions. A number of architectural theorists have turned to phenomenology as a means of understanding and describing reality to address the challenges of their discipline. This method has been developed by philosophers throughout the 20th century and has primarily been applied in psychology, ethics, and aesthetics. The "architecture of place" possesses a certain autonomy as a geographical and temporal context (Fig.1). According to A. Rappoport, "poetic" phenomenology of architecture "deals not with a fixed sign, but with the experience of direct and active aesthetic perception of the environment." [19]. Phenomenological experiences of "space, texture, and light" have been examined by S. Hall, R. Abraham, D. Haiduk, and others. The theoretical system of phenomenological understanding of architecture includes three groups of categories: the first group: corporeality, embodiment, material, nature; the second group: place, context, center, home, boundary; the third group: the act of construction, ritual, architectural performativity.

During this research, the role of sacred memory spaces in providing a cultural environment for public use of memorial sites, which need to be designed, managed, and utilized as a qualified built environment, is anticipated to be revealed.



Fig.1 Sacred space of memory Cimetiere des Rois, Geneva

I am interested in three things: time, death, God.

Poet A. Vvedensky, 1920s.

Presentation of the main material. The emotional foundation of the environment of any temple, sacred places, and their figurative content is the spiritual principle - God, Spirit, Idea as an ideal. The atmosphere of the environment and complexes intended for spiritual communication is formed as a work of art. The design of these spaces is based on the "embeddedness" of religious types of environments in the life of society [20]. The structure of space for the dead is formed as a combination of various aspects: pragmatic, sensually perceived, archetypal space of universal patterns, cultural space, abstract space of logic, expressive space of art, and other forms. K. N.-Schulz emphasized that space cannot be perceived purely as a geometric abstraction or as an object of visual perception, thus he used the concept of "existential space" or "space of lived experience" [5].

Sacred memory spaces are typically formed by a series of historical and contemporary objects intended to preserve traditional burial culture: temples, chapels; grave burials, including catacombs; cremation burials (columbaria and ossuaries); memorials and cemetery crosses; crypts; meditative and memorial gardens, green recreational areas; entrance elements (portal) and cemetery infrastructure. The concept of "place of memory" (fr. *lieu de mémoire*), introduced by French scholar P. Nora in the early 1980s, represents the unity of the spiritual and the material, which later became a symbolic element of the heritage of the national memory of the community. Places that embody national memory include monuments (of culture and nature), holidays, emblems, ceremonies in honor of people or events, farewell and funeral speeches, and eulogies [6].

Burial sites are places of memory for various cultures, rooted in spatial, temporal, and bodily experiences evoked by the location. They are not merely resting places for the body but active spaces where the deceased assume a social role, and the temporality of death is marked by rituals. In many cultures, cemeteries are sacred places that require special consideration upon entry, when crossing the "portal." Therefore, the French philosopher M. Foucault classified them as heterotopic spaces (*hetero* - other, *topos* - place) [7]. Based on this concept, dead spaces do not fit into conventional classifications of environmental complexes and create a unique atmosphere within the urban context.

Significant examples of various burial complex constructions include: Egyptian mastabas and pyramids (*houses for eternity*); burial mounds and mausoleums; cave burials in mountainous regions; crypts (underground passages, hiding places) and tombs (*lower churches*); gravestones (*sepulcrum*); hewn coffins in forests, houses on stumps, and birdhouse-like structures above graves. The notion of dead spaces as mere conduits to the past, honoring loved ones, is not entirely complete; they have always been sites of innovation and reinterpretation in art, architecture, and design. They compellingly demonstrate identity, making them fertile ground for socio-cultural, historical-archival, and architectural research.

The catacomb burial culture in the southern steppe of the Black Sea emerged during the Bronze Age when bodies were placed in niches and sealed. With the spread of Christianity, burials near or within churches became prevalent, symbolizing an important spiritual continuity for the afterlife. However, during this period, as M. Foucault argues, an "obsession with death as a disease" arose, known as the "urban fear" of disease outbreaks and epidemics [7]. Individualized cemeteries with single graves for families, marked with the names of each person, emerged on the outskirts of large cities in the 18th century. A monumental type of cemetery formed, featuring large buildings filled with symbolism through crosses, altars, and other religious elements. This place also represented family status and reinforced heritage and memory.

In the Middle Ages, wealthy individuals were buried in churches, while the poor were interred in *campielli dei morti* (small fields of the dead), which were hellishly damp and overcrowded with patches of earth. The campielli were ultimately closed in 1837, and the deceased from Venice began to be sent across the lagoon to San Michele, which was entirely dedicated to the dead [21]. This place is mythically associated with Charon, the ferryman of the dead in Greek mythology.

At the old cemeteries of Odesa, tombs from the 19th and 20th centuries have been preserved, featuring a vast array of architectural styles and forms, which served as the final resting places for members of the aristocracy, families of industrialists, and merchants. The most common structures were substantial constructions made of shell limestone and valuable stone types, adorned externally and internally with bas-reliefs and high-reliefs, statues, and vases; there were also chapel-tombs, pavilions, and wooden houses in the old-believer cemeteries of the region [15].

The tombs provided reliable protection for the remains from the looting that graves often experience. A house for the dead, a crypt (from Polish - *sklepienie*), is a structure with a burial chamber located above ground or in a basement. The prototype of crypts is the Holy Sepulcher. In Europe, since the 14th century, crypts began to be built as separate structures in Italy and then in other countries. They served as burial places for important and noble figures, thus being monumental and highly decorated.

The historical landscape of Odesa in the 19th and early 20th centuries is notable for its diversity of ethnic and religious affiliations among residents: Ukrainians, Russians, Italians, French, Germans, Poles, Jews, Tatars, Armenians, and many others have coexisted for centuries. This mutual intertwining of cultures formed the foundation of the unique atmosphere of a thriving port city. Burial sites are important carriers of each nation's culture. The area of the first memory places in Odesa was limited, leading to the eventual necessity of establishing new ones [14]. The preserved crypts of the Second Christian Cemetery of Odesa are small structures that align with classical architectural models [13]. They were used for the burial of a single deceased person or family members. Family crypts typically resembled small chapels with domes and crosses on top (Fig.2).



Fig. 2. (left to right) Crypt, 1899; Yanchesky's Crypt, 1917; Cornet Kubash's Crypt, 1903, Odesa

They were built not only in public burial sites but also on private estates. These crypts hold historical and cultural value, and visiting them is both interesting and educational. They remind us of prominent individuals and inform us about historical events, drawing visitors' attention to the cultural, artistic, and architectural features of different eras, thus connecting the past, present, and future.

However, not all tombs have withstood the test of time and weather conditions; many are in unsatisfactory condition. Since there were almost no trees in the region, all burial steles and gravestones in the form of crosses were made of stone, particularly shell limestone, which has led to many of them weathering away, and some have become "illegible." Gravestones of Armenian origin, steles, and gravestones from the Balkans have been included in the UNESCO World Heritage list. Cossack crosses have been one of the symbols of our country for over 400 years, yet they are still not included in the register of monuments and are not studied properly.

An example of using underground space for the burial of a single family is the church dedicated to Saint Nicholas and Saint Martyr Ariadne (now the Cathedral of Saint Righteous John of Kronstadt), which was built and consecrated in 1902 according to the design of the famous Odesa architect Yu. M. Dmytrenko at the Greek Charity Society's almshouse (Fig.3).



Fig. 3 Church in the name of Saint Nicholas and the Holy Martyr Ariadne, 1902, Odessa

The crypt of the church was arranged as a tomb for eight members of the family of the Greek patron merchant of the 1st guild, M. M. Mavrokordato. After the actions of the "fighters against the church," the temple remained in a semi-ruined state for many years, and only in 2016 were the repair works of the crypt completed. Significant work remains to be done for the full restoration of the temple.

Militant materialism deliberately destroyed all symbols during World War I (1914-1918), two revolutions (1905, 1917), and the Civil War (1917-1920). During World War II, many monuments and steles in the cemeteries of Odesa were repurposed for the practical needs of residents or turned into rubble. During the Soviet era, the practice of construction (as in the case of the Resurrection Skete) or demolition of sacred sites, such as the Jewish cemetery, was widespread. The territory of the Resurrection Skete, founded in 1846, is a vivid example of the tragic fate of sacred spaces in Odesa. Today, the skete represents an abandoned area (4.54 hectares) with objects of cultural and historical heritage and semi-ruined buildings (Soviet modernism) of the former sanatorium "Red Stars." The wellness complex was built in 1970 directly on the territory of the historical burial site. The Resurrection Skete retains elements of the planning structure and individual architectural objects related to the life and activities of prominent Odesa entrepreneurs, architects, philanthropists, and

public figures. The skete has influenced the urban development of the historical district of the city - Sredniy Fontan. Several objects on its territory are works by renowned architects - F. Morandi, A. Todorov, V. Dombrovsky. The liquidation and absence of external attributes - gravestones, fences, gates - do not signify the disappearance of the memorial site, as the burials remain underground.

For a long time, various views on the issue of caring for burial sites have existed and continue to exist. It is traditionally believed that a cemetery should be self-sustaining. In some cultures, there is a belief that any interference in the "life" of sacred places disturbs the peace of the deceased. Undoubtedly, the sacred sites of our city and country lack support from the state, private funds, and attention from researchers to ensure the sustainable development of historical heritage. Austria demonstrates excellent experience in preserving historical heritage, including the restoration and rehabilitation of historical burials. These "places for the dead" have become a kind of open-air museum and social centers []. A significant interest lies in the research and practical contributions of Austrian architects, restorers, and managers - the regulatory framework, solutions to organizational and financial issues, methodologies for documenting historical memorial sites, techniques for preserving the authentic environment of Vienna's burials, and the adaptation and development of places for the dead, known as the Architecture of the Afterlife [16,17,18].

An overview of the formation of sacred sites has shown how their symbolism, forms, and placement within the urban fabric reveal the identity of different cultures. From small gravestones around churches, closely tied to religious worship, to meticulously arranged quarters on the outskirts of cities, the later models of park cemeteries and crematoria reflect the needs and lifestyles of their time. Unique natural landscapes, such as mountainous areas with their slopes and outcrops, are themselves works of art and worthy monuments to the deceased.

The concept of cemeteries and perspectives on them are currently changing: there is a desire to transform these large spaces into public green areas with numerous functions for social interaction and recreation. There are many examples of transforming historical burial sites into social parks without religious symbolism. For instance, the historic cemetery of the Kings (named after the street) - Cimetiere des Rois (Cimetiere de Plainpalais), founded in 1482, covering an area of 28,000 m², where more than 300 local figures are buried (the so-called "Pantheon of Genevans"), has functioned as an open public green space in the center of Geneva since 1945. Here, dendrologists conduct tours, and residents relax and meditate (Fig.4).



Fig. 4. Public green space Cimetiere des Rois, Geneva. Top view

It was the possibility of building a bridge between the living and the dead that inspired (Nikolaus Hirsch, Michel Müller) to create the Museum of Immortality for Design Week in Mexico (Fig.5) In their view, architecture does not help the dead but helps preserve their memory among the living [22].



Fig.5 Museum of Immortality, N. Hirsch, M. Muller

After nearly 200 years of operation, the unique San Michele cemetery (the only cemetery in Venice) ceased to meet the needs, leading to a competition in 1998 that envisioned the construction of new columbaria, a chapel, and a crematorium, as well as the expansion of the territory through a platform on a new island [21,23]. The idea of the accepted project by D. Chipperfield is to create enclosed majestic courtyards that unite buildings, walls, burial niches, and landscape, in contrast to the linear arrangement of tombs that currently exists (Fig.6). The author believes that the proposed design aims to create a sense of overall unity and dignity without controlling every detail, for example, by leaving space for inscriptions and flowers.



Fig.6 San Michele burial ground, architect D. Chipperfield, 1998-2017

Architect K. Scarpa viewed the cemetery as a philosophical commentary on the question of death and space for future generations. "I wanted to show some ways in which you could approach death in a social and civic context, and moreover, what sense death has in the ephemerality of life" [24]. The Brion Vega Cemetery in Northern Italy best illustrates his manifesto of geometry and the influence of light (Fig.7)



Fig.7 Brion Vega Cemetery, architect K. Scarpa

Contemporary architects are literally striving to breathe more life into architecture for the dead, designing symbolic landscapes of memory that radiate beauty, tranquility, and a sense of intrigue.

Conclusions. The death of vast masses of the population after yet another Apocalypse transforms into a powerful tool for socialization and the formation of cultural identity... of the living and the dead. Life and death meet most closely in the war within the turbulent vortex of the forces of good and evil. The purpose of "dead spaces" is to help share grief, express feelings, and provide emotional recovery through social meanings. Cemeteries are special sacred spaces that should be evaluated in terms of their symbolic, social, spatial, cultural, ecological, and recreational aspects, as well as the principles of their design. This is a specialized architectural environment that differs from other urban spaces by its own culture. The principles of designing "dead places" and their architecture are determined by religious beliefs and funeral customs.

Many memorial sites, over the years of destruction and lack of attention from the community and authorities, have gradually turned into "forgotten" places, losing monuments, crypts, and decorative elements. Cemeteries have taken on the care of buildings and works of art, as well as the overall preservation of traditional cemetery culture. In fact, they have been transformed into property zones defined by cemetery administrations, masons, and users of this space, rather than being shaped by architects, planners, and engineers.

Changing society's attitude towards "other" spaces and stopping their destruction is a priority task for preserving the socio-cultural landscapes of heritage and its inheritable development. Taking into account international experience, interdisciplinary research is necessary to restore the lost characteristics of architecturally qualified spaces, including architectural, urban, sociological, historical, and theological studies, as well as developing urban programs with public involvement. It is advisable to continue transforming historical cemeteries into park zones with the possible

organization of excursion routes, which will contribute to smart long-term investments in the city's infrastructure.

For this, it is necessary to prepare specific action programs and highly qualified personnel on industry issues, particularly those related to innovative methods and technologies for the preservation and inheritable development of cultural heritage.

Prospects for further research. A significant contribution to the sustainable development of sacred places would be the development of project concepts for their preservation and implementation of emergency measures.

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СОЦІАЛЬНО-КУЛЬТУРНІ ПЕЙЗАЖІ САКРАЛЬНИХ ПРОСТОРІВ ПАМ'ЯТІ

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Анотація. Ми живемо в епоху підвищеної смертності людей у нашій країні, тому тема смерті як філософсько-метафізична і як повсякденно реальна проходить через творчість багатьох діячів культури і мистецтва України. Смерть людини розумілася по-різному і

означала не стільки кінець існування, скільки перехід до якогось нового життя, і надгробні споруди (архітектура смерті) ставали воротами/порталом в інший світ. Багато архітекторів вважали, що архітектура починається з місця поховання - «простору життєвого досвіду». Рідко досягають такої ж феноменологічної вкоріненості об'єкта в середовищі, як сакральні простори. Форми і простори цих місць долають буденність і одномоментність сприйняття в пошуках вічних істин, досконалості та божественності.

Церкви, меморіали, історичні будівлі (склепи), символічні атрибути, морги, планування складають духовний пейзаж традиційної поховальної культури. У контексті соціальної взаємодії існують природа, архітектура і люди. «Погляд епохи», соціальні краєвиди відображають домінантні погляди, цінності, відображають культурні та національні ідентичності. Тому духовні краєвиди сакральних місць, що виникають на перетині емоцій та абстракцій, характеризують як емоційний (сенситивний) або дотиковий пейзаж.

Войовничий матеріалізм навмисно руйнував усі символи, цінності попередньої епохи "вщент" в Одесі та регіоні. Крім значної кількості храмів, втрачено і зруйновано такі сакральні місця, як Перший християнський цвинтар, Єврейське кладовище, цвинтарі при монастирях, Воскресенський скит та інші. Території поховань Одеси є невід'ємною частиною життя та свідченням того, що колись відбувалось на теренах нашого краю, фактично це музеї під відкритим небом. В Україні немає закону про захист просторів пам'яті, багато історичних поховань знаходяться в занепаді, 99 % з яких не внесені в реєстри пам'яток, водночас це неймовірні витвори мистецтва.

Ключові слова: меморіальні простори, поховальна культура, соціально-культурні пейзажі, архітектурне релігійне середовище, збереження.