Summary

Due to its commonality, tourism offers favourable conditions for learning. Educational tourism (e.g. visiting a cemetery) may be a way to popularize universal values. The research framework for the book was based on the assumptions that a cemetery performs different functions depending on its origins, history, age, development and geographical location, and that it is a site of a given educational activity, where man spends his free time. Our sensitivity and interest in a given space are largely determined by our culture, which helps us to understand the significance of places, events and space. Culture, which can be of interest to the tourist, also determines the character of this interest. Man, his motives for traveling and the culture are interrelated elements forming the educational space, which is a part of the tourist space.

At the turn of the 19th c. the emerging tourism discovered the cultural assets of the past and the contemporary world. The tourist started to visit historical, cultural and religious sites. In the 19th c. man became interested in the death space (space connected with the act of death, its place, form of commemoration, customs, beliefs, symbols, landscape, circumstance, etc.), as a result of a change in the attitude of the Western man to death (ARIÉS 1989). This change, which took place at the turn of the 18th and 19th c., was largely determined by the localization and character of new cemeteries, and the liquidation of the overfilled city cemeteries, which had become a health hazard. The establishment of the Pere Lachaise Cemetery in Paris in 1803 was a breakthrough in the organization of cemetery space in Europe. In England and the United States there appeared the idea of garden cemeteries, designed also with the living in mind, according to which the cemetery – the garden of the dead – was supposed to combine landscape, greenery and architecture. A cemetery, similarly to a garden, was to include fountains, ponds, exotic trees, flower beds, grass, paths, benches and wooden garden houses, as a background to reflection and memories. At the same time, the garden cemetery was to be a place for taking a walk and spending free time, especially in the rapidly growing cities of the 19th c., such as Boston, New York, Hamburg or Vienna. In the United States rural cemeteries and city parks were the basis for the idea of the parks of memory – a kind of layman alternative to cemeteries based on the church ideology. A Polish example of a garden cemetery is the Central Cemetery established in Szczecin in the early 20th c.

The 19th c. romanticism brought a fascination with the mysticism and drama of death. It became trendy to visit battlefields (Waterloo), sites of mass death (Pompeii), torture (Tower of London), murder (Jack the Ripper’s London), cemeteries and tombs (Père Lachaise, Saint Michel, Paris and Rome catacombs, Egyptian pyramids). It can be assumed that the early 19th c. cultural tourism made use of death spaces to a large extent. In the 20th c. there appeared yet another phenomenon, strictly connected with the need to experience emotions through fear, horror and fictional death. It obviously resulted from the development of mass culture (MORIN 1965), which had little to do with the spirit of romanticism. Such interest in death is quite common, and shows in trips to crypts, catacombs, ossuaries, old cemeteries and museums exhibiting the faces of death (e.g. Madame Tussaud’s in London, the Chapel of Sculls in Czermna, Poland, or the Capuchin crypts in Palermo).

So far the cemetery as an object of geographical study has not been researched as comprehensively as the author suggests. Therefore, the author attempted to examine the role of cemeteries in the context of tourism and recreation, the motives to visit the sepulchral space and the consequences of such visits. Another target was to check how strongly cemeteries may influence the tourist space, which is an expression of various tourist activities in the geographical space, permanently affecting this space and exploiting the already existing forms for tourist purposes.

Human tourist activity is a process causing changes in the geographical space, as a result of which the tourist space is formed. The study focus was the identification and description of the process of enlarging tourist space by adding new spaces, formerly
considered to be non-tourist. An example of such a space is the sepulchral space. It must be remembered that it can be the tourist space in itself or a part of it. It is an open space; having met certain conditions, it can also perform the recreational function. Search for new tourist and recreational spaces results in the interest taken in cemeteries by active tourists, who practice certain forms of recreation, especially walking.

The author put forward three hypotheses:

1) The cemetery as a particular sub-space of the geographical space, performing different functions, is the target of religious, educational or recreational migrations.

2) With time its primary functions (burial, cult and religion) are supplemented with other functions (recreational and educational). Simultaneously, tourists' or local inhabitants' educational activity is growing as a result of the increasing concentration of historical, cultural, spiritual and natural values on the cemetery premises, and as a result of the civilization development (socio-cultural). The cemetery becomes the tourist exploration and penetration subspace.

3) The cemetery with its significant cultural and natural assets and inner and outer infrastructure increases the tourist attractiveness of the whole area, becoming an element of a larger tourist product, dependent on the information policy.

The relations between the people visiting the cemetery for educational or other purposes (tourists) and the cemetery itself vary and depend on the needs and motives of the former. The important factors are the social attitudes, religious beliefs, historical knowledge and the cultural background of the tourists. The need to visit a cemetery may be also modified by outside factors, like marketing and attempts to make the place a commercial tourist product. The cemetery can be perceived as a place performing different functions; the perception of the cemetery space may range from a utility site (burial ground), through a sacred, symbolical, historical site, to a place of a given social activity.

In publications regarding the use of land in cities, different authors (Liszewski 1973) classify the cemetery in different ways. As a matter of fact, there are three groups of functions ascribed to cemeteries by different authors. They are public utility areas, communal economy and service areas, and green areas. The cemetery is treated as a part of urban greenery and a recreational area.

The cemetery, which has been present in human life since the earliest times, plays an important role. This role, however, has been changing along with the civilization development. The cemetery as a concentration of graves, a resting place for the departed, is an important part of social space, i.e. space where social phenomena and processes occur. Depending on the time in history, graves and cemeteries in a sense determined the development of the urban and rural space. Cemeteries “migrated” in this changing space (Fig. 12). The change of the cemetery localization in the urban space is strongly connected with the development of the social space. The author quotes the example of Lodz here, as a case study of the sepulchral space development.

On the basis of descriptions and case studies, the author constructed a model of changes in the localization of European cemeteries, together with the functional changes in the structures of a settlement and a city in six historical periods: antiquity, the 2nd century, the 6th century, the 9th century, the 18th century and the 19th-20th century (Fig. 13). At present, the cemetery, or its remnants in the city centre, forms the educational space of the city, and at the same time the tourist space. The cemetery space is adapted to other purposes and performs symbolic and educational functions or is an area of limited recreation. It should be remembered that the cemetery, especially if it is regarded as important, often determines the development of the urban space. Practically, since the early 20th c. city cemeteries have been rarely liquidated due to social protests. In rare cases in Poland they had been liquidated (Protestant and Jewish cemeteries) and transformed into parks or occasionally put up for construction.

On the basis of the data provided by the National Centre of Historical Monuments, Research and Documentation, a map of the spatial distribution of historical cemeteries, graves, tombs and other sepulchral items in Poland was compiled. In March 2006 the cemeteries registered as the historical monuments of Poland constituted 6% of the 61 387 entries. The most important elements creating the sepulchral space are the following: cemeteries; tombs, crypts and cemetery chapels; sites of mass death and mass graves;
museums, exhibitions and events; other items. The inventory of the touristically most attractive sepulchral items and sites in Poland was based on the classification above.

In order to see how important the sepulchral space is in the real tourist and recreational space of Poland, the author ordered a survey at the Social Opinion Survey Centre (CBOS). The results suggest that a historical cemetery or a cemetery whose form or land-scape is different from typical cemeteries, is treated by the majority of Poles (53%) as a tourist or educational attraction (geographical, historical). The cemetery, or sepulchral space, may then determine the educational attractiveness of a site and may be of interest to tourists as part of cultural tourism. 50% of the respondents said that they had been for walks at a cemetery, so it can be assumed that the cemetery can be a space of psychical and physical recuperation; in a way it performs the recreational function. 53% of the respondents stated that they had visited such a place as part of a tourist trip.

Cemeteries and tombs have been journey destinations for ages, but for varying reasons. People usually travel there because of the moral imperative to care for the graves of the closest family and to cultivate their memory. A particular manifestation of this belief in the Polish tradition is the All Saints’ Day, when the majority of Poles visit family graves, even if they are hundreds of kilometers away. It is often the only chance to meet the other living members of the family during the year. This type of journeys, however, is not considered to be purely tourist. Despite the fact that the long distance travelers often stop at hotels and restaurants, and the will to visit the family is a frequent motive of tourist journeys, there is no research into these massive migrations. 1st November is the day of the greatest migration of Poles in the whole year.

The model of the tourist function development at the cemetery, proposed by the author, is based on the temporal changeability phenomenon. In the case of the cemetery, time is a solid ground for enlarging the function and changing the meaning in the process of cognitive perception. A new cemetery is not an interesting site until a particular fact or event changes the perception of it. There are other significant factors, such as the architecture of graves, tombs and chapels, the spatial organization of the cemetery, the character and significance of the people buried there, or symbolical graves.

The cemetery often becomes neglected, because the dead are usually remembered only by three generations. There comes a time when there is nobody to take care of individual graves, because family members have either emigrated or died. The cemetery falls into disfavour and can soon be closed down for a variety of reasons (limited burial space, a possibility to use the area for other purposes) and finally liquidated. Presently, a cemetery which has been closed down can be liquidated without exhuming the bodies only after 40 years. The areas of former cemeteries are usually turned into parks, because of the trees. When the cemetery is neglected, it may undergo a process of cognitive exploration, as a result of which its value is rediscovered and it is treated as a historical monument. The cemetery is under legal protection and acquires educational or recreational significance. Through the tourist penetration it becomes a tourist attraction or a recreation space. As a tourist asset it may become a part of a tourist product, or, very rarely for ethical reasons, a tourist product itself. A cemetery may become a tourist attraction without going through the stages described above. Many contemporary, non-historical burial grounds are visited for educational or recreational purposes.

The model of the tourist function development at a cemetery suggests that this function can be in some cases the only salvation for forgotten and neglected cemeteries and graves. Next to the tourist function, the cemetery acquires then an important symbolical function and retains its historical character.

Certainly, the cemetery is a particular subspace of the geographical space. This particularity consists mainly in the functions it performs, the most important of which are the burial and the commemorative function. However, the cemetery performs other functions as well: historical, symbolical, educational, tourist and recreational. The author proves that the first pilgrimages, religiously motivated journeys, were made to the graves of martyrs and saints. Also today such a trend is popular. The grave of St Jacob in Santiago de Compostela is visited by about five million pilgrims every year, and the grave of Muhammad in Medina by two million (JACKOWSKI 2003).
Research confirmed that the cemetery is the destination of educational migrations, which are usually part of cultural, ethnical, sentimental or general tourism. The act of learning takes place during individual or group trips, as well as during ordinary walks. Let us remember that the 19th c. ideas of the American rural cemetery, French park – cemetery and English garden cemetery aimed at creating not only a memory space, but also a museum space with monuments and pieces of sepulchral art, which are now considered to be historical items. The cemetery is also a space which commemorates events, historical facts and famous people. Therefore it is often a sort of a “history book” of the local community. The cemetery is often the destination of educational trips, during which the participants learn about its history, architecture and art. They visit the graves of important people, known from history, and pay homage to them for their deeds. The more interesting form the cemetery has and the more historical values can be found in its space, the more attractive it is considered to be.

The most controversial part of the first hypothesis was the statement that the cemetery is the destination of recreational migrations. The author believes that this thesis has strong foundations. The cemetery, classified as a green area, is a walking area, i.e. an area where a recreational activity takes place. The cemetery is a therapeutic space, which makes it easier to accept the departure of a close person. The grave is in this case a certain substitute of the dead person’s home, an environment which is taken care of. The grave is a confirmation of a continuous contact with the deceased person. The author observed meetings, conversations and walks taken together at the cemetery. The cemetery, as a sacrum space, is often treated as a place of solitary peace, a safe place, an asylum similar to a shrine. However, this thesis can be confirmed only to a limited extent. The cemetery cannot be treated as a popular recreational space. Even the most beautiful cemetery, which at the same time is a wonderful park (e.g. the Central Cemetery in Szczecin), or a forested area within a city (the Junikowo cemetery in Poznan), has its basic functions, it is the resting place for the dead and any excessive behaviour will be regarded as the profanation of the sacrum. The recreational functions of the cemetery result primarily from the accumulation of natural and landscape assets. However, a cemetery devoid of special natural assets may also be a place where people spend their free time, rest and recuperate. Naturally, recreational functions of the cemetery are very limited. Both the author’s research at the Central Cemetery in Szczecin and Suliborski’s work (2005) confirm the fact that the recreational functions of cemeteries are usually used by people inhabiting the vicinity and elderly people over 55 years of age. 58% of the people approached by CBOS declared walking in a cemetery in their free time.

The cemetery starts to perform educational and recreational functions only after certain conditions are met. Time is an important factor, as with time the cemetery acquires historical, cultural, spiritual and natural value. Another important factor is the activity of local inhabitants, who use the cemetery for recreation rather than for educational purposes, contrary to tourists, who usually treat a cemetery as an educational asset rather than recreational.

A cemetery with extraordinary cultural and natural assets has great tourist potential. If there is adequate technical infrastructure at or around the cemetery (paths, benches), as well as commercial and service infrastructure (souvenir stalls and shops, guides), which makes the visit at the cemetery attractive, if the cemetery is promoted as a cultural or natural asset, it becomes a site visited for educational purposes. It may be an element of a larger tourist product.

Cemetery space is multi-functional. The changes caused by tourist activity that occur in this space, can be observed first of all in the intensity and regularity of the renovation and protection of sepulchral art. Cemeteries from World War I in Low Beskid were renovated after the local authorities had recognized them as sites which could increase the inflow of tourists. The cemetery, similarly to a shrine, in a sense loses the sacrum dimension for the benefit of the profane (The Old Cemetery in Zakopane), becoming an educational space. People visiting cemeteries have different reasons for doing so, as shown in the descriptions of tourist trips to places of death (thanatourism) (TANAS 2006).

To sum up, the role of cemeteries in forming the tourist space depends on factors which are determined by the cultural values and norms. At the beginning of the 19th c., under the
influence of romanticism, the cemetery became a place of interest, and by that it started to form a real tourist space (from the primary individual tourist space). The more interesting the expression of a cemetery is and the higher historical value it has, the higher its tourist value becomes. As a result of exploration and penetration, a non-tourist space acquires the qualities of a tourist space, subject to economic laws, where the demand creates the supply. Moreover, the cemetery has an extraordinary educational potential which can be used in the process of teaching young people.

Translated by Ewa Mossakowska

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