



Handbook for the Inventory of Polish Cemeteries and Tombstones Abroad

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the Inventory
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Table of contents

	Preserving memory	3
	Foreword	9
PART 1	Description and typology of funerary monuments	17
1.	General rules for description	19
2.	Types of tombstones and their finials, pedestal and base, decorative elements	28
2.1.	Cross	29
2.2.	Obelisk/pyramid	35
2.3.	Column	37
2.4.	Urn	37
2.5.	Statue	38
2.6.	Stele/boulder as a type of tombstone	44
2.7.	Sarcophagus/stone coffin	45
2.8.	Aedicula	46
2.9.	Cippus	46
2.10.	Small chapel	47
2.11.	Exedra	48
2.12.	Altar tombstone	48
2.13.	Ledger stone	49
2.14.	Pedestal, base and band – freestanding pedestal as a type of tombstone	50
2.15.	Panels and plaques	52
2.16.	Fence	54
3.	Types of funerary monuments	55
4.	Funerary and cemetery chapels, mausoleums, epitaphs	59
4.1.	Epitaphs	59
5.	Other cemetery objects	61
6.	Material	63
6.1.	Natural stone	65
6.1.1.	Magmatic rocks	65
6.1.2.	Sedimentary rocks	70
6.1.3.	Metamorphic (transformed) rocks	72

6.2. Artificial stone	76
6.3. Metal alloys	79
6.3.1. Cast iron	79
6.3.2. Wrought iron	80
6.3.3. Tin and zinc	81
6.3.4. Copper alloys – brass, gunmetal, bronze	81
6.3.5. Lead	82
 Plates	 84
 PART 2 Good practices	 135
1. What is permitted and what is not	137
2. Scope of work	141
3. How are cemeteries found?	144
4. Carrying out work	146
5. Types of record cards and how to fill them out	150
5.1. Movable monument record card	152
5.2. Immovable monument record card	157
5.3. Cemetery card	158
6. Documentary photography	161
7. Cemetery plan	170
8. Plan and description of architectural objects	191
9. What to do with amassed documentation?	198
10. Online catalogue of Polonica	199
 Bibliography	 207
 Appendix	 214
Guidelines for documentary photography	214
Volunteering and document templates	215
 Index	 229

Preserving memory

What is a cemetery? 'Cemetery (Latin *coemeterium*; Gr. *koimētērion* – a resting place): an area, usually fenced, where the dead are buried in graves or where ashes are preserved after their cremation' (Encyklopedia PWN). The author of this brief definition does not mention anything other than the utilitarian role of cemeteries. Let us better quote Jacek Kolbuszewski, an outstanding Polish philologist, folklorist and researcher of the history of former eastern territories of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. He treats necropoli as: 'a cultural text rich in content, allowing for a better understanding of civilisation processes taking place, the build-up of epochs and their transformations in social consciousness'.

Cemeteries reflect social, moral and religious relations prevailing in a given community. This is particularly evidenced by funerary monuments, especially epitaphs and symbols set on them. Recalling the words of French historian Philippe Ariès: 'In its topography, a cemetery is a reflection of the whole of society, just as a map reproduces the landform or a landscape. Eventually, a cemetery is a museum of fine arts'.

From the early Middle Ages, the following were buried in temples: rulers, members of their families, secular and clerical dignitaries, wealthy and merited burghers, founders and patrons; the remaining dead were buried in courtyards and around churches. As churchyards often could not be enlarged, exhumations of human remains became a necessity. Bones were deposited in ossuaries and, when the latter became full, were transferred to burial pits.

Towards the end of the 18th century, burials in the vaults of churches and in adjacent churchyards became increasingly questionable. Nevertheless, the custom of burying the dead in churches or churchyards, which had functioned for centuries, became firmly established in the public consciousness.

Necropoli were closely linked to religion and a consecrated cemetery became a sacred place. People did not want to be buried in an area that did not appear to them as consecrated. Also important was the fact that in the past, only certain residents were buried outside village boundaries. This applied,

for example, to nonbelievers or to the location of Jewish cemeteries. People deprived of the right to a church burial were also buried outside the town, where so-called epidemic cemeteries were also set up for fear of spreading the plague. Burial in out-of-town cemeteries was therefore initially regarded as a form of social degradation.

The creation of non-urban cemeteries coincided with the collapse of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. The first legal regulations on cemeteries were already issued during the partitions: a Prussian decree by Emperor Frederick II of 1773, a decree by Tsar Alexander I of 13 March 1817 and a court decree by Emperor Joseph II of 23 August 1784. Legislators required necropoli to be established away from human settlements and in dry areas not prone to flooding. The fact that cemeteries began to appear outside cities was due not only to hygienic factors, but also to the desire to commemorate the burial sites of loved ones and to cherish their memory. This was becoming increasingly difficult in view of the lack of space in churchyards and church crypts. At this time, many city-centre cemeteries were closed and the remains of the deceased were moved to new out-of-town necropoli, mass graves or individual graves if one could afford it.

The new necropoli offered an opportunity for a symbolic meeting between the living and the dead, encouraged reflection and private prayer, all while the All-Souls' Day, the Feast of the Dead falling on 2 November, was, according to aforementioned Jacek Kolbuszewski, 'celebrated as a great national family holiday. It is enough to visit a Polish cemetery on that day to grasp the profound meaning of the words that the homeland is the land and the graves'.

In cemeteries, especially those for the inhabitants of larger cities, there were particularly prestigious places marked out: avenues for the distinguished and quarters for the clergy, the military and war victims. Special plots were also designated, e.g. for children and the poor. The layout of a new cemetery as a park-and-garden area was also important. The location of the church, the funerary chapel and columbarium, the layout of paths, the selection of greenery with symbolic significance and the appearance of a bell tower, fence or gate, often bearing a suitable inscription or the founder's name, functioned as a symbolic passage from the world of the living to the world of the dead. The scale of a necropolis and the artistic level of its tombstones can tell us much about the wealth of the local community, the then popular ways of commemorating the dead or local traditions, as well as about the stone, carpentry and foundry workshops whose products were placed on graves. The great development of sepulchral art in Europe came in the 19th century. The cult of the fallen on the battlefield, which is a type of expression of patriotism, was also reflected in the erection of monuments and the creation of burial sites, which became a lasting testimony to national uprisings and wars. Both participants known by name and those unrecognised were commemorated

with inscriptions: N.N., Unknown Soldier, Unknown Defender. War cemeteries and cemeteries of the victims of genocide crimes have become poignant memories of the hecatomb of the great battles fought in the 20th century and of the actions of criminal totalitarian systems.

The change of borders after World War II and related population migrations and resettlements have left many civilian and military cemeteries without permanent care. Necropoli in the former eastern territories of the multinational and multicultural Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth remained outside its borders. Polish cemeteries and graves are scattered on all continents, and their history relates to the times of both Great Emigrations: the 19th-century and post-Yalta ones, migrations of Poles within the partitioning states during both World Wars and deportations of Polish citizens deep into the Soviet Union...

Time has shown that even the most beautiful necropoli located in former eastern territories, filled with commemorations of great historical and artistic value, fell victim to the heartless policies of the new authorities. Links between the past and present began to blur. The absence of guardians of the cemeteries, who died or were exiled, and an indifferent or hostile attitude of the local population towards testimonies of the presence of the Polish ethnos, resulted in the necropoli becoming what we call 'unwanted heritage', 'rejected' or simply forgotten. Jacek Purchla rightly observes that 'it is a separate category today – especially in Central and Eastern Europe, where political boundaries changed much faster than cultural boundaries – the heritage of the disinherited and the heritage without heirs, the 'product' of the tragedies of the 20th century – the Holocaust and ethnic cleansing', citing as an example not at all the eastern territories, but the post-German heritage of Wrocław, which underwent a complete population exchange after the war.

Before 1989, which marked the start of the process of political change in Central and Eastern Europe, the possibilities for research on the cultural heritage of the First and the Second Republic of Poland beyond the eastern border were severely limited. Before the collapse of the Soviet Union, it was difficult or impossible to reach sites, objects, libraries or archives located beyond the borders of the contemporary Poland. With the transformation came the time for systematic research related to the area of the contemporary Ukraine, Lithuania, Belarus and Latvia, undertaken in many research centres in Poland. In 1991, research began and its results are still published in successive volumes containing detailed inventories of historical monuments. Volumes from the series *Materiały do Dziejów Sztuki Sakralnej na Ziemiach Wschodnich Dawnej Rzeczypospolitej* (Materials for the History of Sacred Art in Eastern Territories of the Former Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth), published since 1993 (ed. by Jan K. Ostrowski, publisher: Międzynarodowe Centrum Kultury w Krakowie (International Cultural Centre in Kraków)), include the work of Polish scholars

and students from institutes of art history, who restored the memory of thousands of monuments, many of them entering the academic realm for the first time. Sepulchral art was recorded in the *Materials...* when commemorations were located inside churches or on church grounds.

At the same time, an opportunity arose to give greater care to monuments and historical mementoes located in the territory of successor states of the First and the Second Republic of Poland. Soon, thanks to funds from the Polish state as well as the involvement of national public institutions, non-governmental organisations and church structures, conservation and restoration of many valuable monuments, including sepulchral ones, was launched. One of the largest projects of this type is the systematic conservation of tombstones at the Lychakiv Cemetery in Lviv, which has been carried out since 2008 and is financed by the Polish Ministry of Culture and, since 2018, by the POLONIKA National Institute of Polish Cultural Heritage Abroad. The Institute has undertaken, among other things, a restoration of the largest funerary chapels in this cemetery, starting with the chapel of the Krzyżanowskis and the mausoleum of the Barczewskis.

Since the beginning of the 1990s, inventory work has also been carried out at Polish cemeteries and graves abroad. Much credit is due to the Ministry of Culture, which allocated funds for the inventory and the conservation of cemeteries and sepulchral monuments. In the first instance, work was carried out on necropoli in former eastern territories of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. These activities took place in cooperation with historians and art historians, conservators, universities and with the participation of non-governmental organisations.

At the same time, academic research projects commenced, which resulted in publications, databases and inventory cards containing descriptions, photographs and information on the state of preservation of objects. Moreover, social activities were initiated, especially among people resettled after the war within the borders of contemporary Poland. Numerous grassroot initiatives emerged to preserve the memory of people whose graves remained outside the country and, due to lack of proper care, were destroyed or disappeared forever. As a result of these initiatives, non-governmental organisations and private individuals collected a great deal of information about Polish graves and cemeteries and found forgotten burial sites and traces of devastated and often desecrated graves. They also made lists of the buried and undertook cleaning, inventory and rescue work, which regrettably was not always carried out professionally.

For many years, the most extensive campaign was launched in Lower Silesia. Named 'Save Grandfather's Grave from Oblivion', its participants are mainly young volunteers – pupils and students. These activities are becoming increasingly professional each year, as organisers attach great importance

to the training of volunteers, who, guided by experts, acquire information on how to clean in old cemeteries in such a way as not to damage historical substance. They broaden their knowledge on how to make an inventory of sepulchral objects, and also learn which preventive conservation work can be carried out by people who are not specialists in this field. It should be emphasised that thanks to such actions, many cemeteries have gained guardians who systematically maintain them in good condition. Such actions increasingly cause previously indifferent residents and local authorities to become involved in caring for forgotten necropoli, treating them as common cultural heritage. Since 2019, there has been an additional opportunity to financially support such initiatives. The POLONIKA Institute has launched a special grant programme 'Volunteering', which makes it possible to raise funds for the training and organisation of volunteer trips.

Our knowledge of the condition and number of cemeteries outside the country and the artistic and historical value of tombstones is constantly growing. However, it should be emphasised that in territories of the former Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, cemeteries and graves that have been deprived of constant maintenance continue to disappear irretrievably, the reason being people and natural factors, especially the passage of time. Sadly, necropoli also attract criminals who rob tombstones of sculptural details and metal elements, penetrate crypts in search of valuable finds and desecrate human remains. In many cemeteries, more valuable slabs and stone elements have been lost over the years and reused, for example, by local stonemasons. Cases of tombstone destruction are often the result of hostility towards former residents, but also the result of hooliganism. When a cemetery fence disappears and increasingly lush greenery overgrows old graves, the boundary between sacred and profane becomes blurred. The sight of an abandoned cemetery can be a painful experience.

However, the problem of devastation, robbing and liquidation of forgotten necropoli also affects Poland. The fate of the many abandoned Jewish, German, Lemko and Boyko cemeteries serves as a good example. Fortunately, the idea of rescuing the remains of these necropoli is gradually gaining appreciation. The preservation of older tombstones, deprived of historic features or not subject to the care provided by either the state or conservation services, is additionally not favoured by the law, which in most countries allows for the liquidation of unattended burial sites for which no further use fees have been paid.

We will not be able to protect all tombstones and necropoli located outside the country from destruction or liquidation, but through documentation we can save the memory of the former inhabitants of the eastern territories, as well as of the Poles who decided or were forced to emigrate. We must realise that it is both important and urgent to take systematic action

involving research of sources, inventory work, photographic documentation and publications.

Fieldwork is the basis for these activities, and its results can be the starting point for further research. It is worthwhile for an eyewitness examination and description of sepulchral objects to be carried out in a standardised manner, using guidelines developed by specialists. Standardisation of inventory cards will facilitate the creation of databases and, in the future, a repository for documents prepared for sharing.

The POLONIKA Institute's *Handbook for the Inventory of Polish Cemeteries and Tombstones Abroad* will help to develop substantive competences of people who, due to their interests in research or simply driven by a need of their heart or a desire to know the history of their ancestors and the history of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, support projects and actions aiming at the preservation of old cemeteries. Its authors are Professor Anna S. Czyż (Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University, Vytautas Magnus University) and Doctor Bartłomiej Gutowski (Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University), art historians who for many years have been documenting cemeteries located in the East. Among other things, they jointly conducted an international research grant entitled 'The Rasos Cemetery in Vilnius. Inventory, historical and linguistic research', which has resulted in publications and an extensive catalogue of tombstones and people being made available online. For many years, they have also travelled across Ukraine with their students, documenting Polish cemeteries and graves in Podolia. The results of their research have been systematically published and made available online in successive catalogues. Their Handbook, which we hand over to readers, contains rich illustrative material. It will undoubtedly prove useful in inventory work aimed at protecting and saving such mementoes of the past as old cemeteries.

Foreword

The history of caring for Polish graves scattered over almost the entire world and documenting the burial sites of Poles abroad can be traced back to the 19th century¹. However, due to the political situation and limited financial and organisational possibilities, proper work in this area was not undertaken until after 1989 in the face of political changes in Central and Eastern Europe². At the same time, recording work and historical studies were carried out in France, Canada, Great Britain, Italy as well as Bosnia and Herzegovina, among other countries. After the Russian troops entered Ukraine in 2022, and earlier due to the intensification of repression in Belarus, the possibility of carrying out work in this area was significantly limited. Since then, we have seen a greater interest in documenting and maintaining cemeteries in Western Europe, but also in the Czech Republic, Romania, Africa and South America, among other places. The majority of activities relate to the inventory and cleaning of cemeteries in eastern territories of the former Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. They are undertaken by various academic institutions, associations and foundations, as well as private individuals. Since 1998, the documentation of Polish culture abroad has been the subject of interest of academics, graduates and students at

¹ The earliest work relating to the documentation of cemeteries outside the country was Eustachy Marylski's publication *Pomniki i mogiły Polaków na cmentarzach zagranicznych* (Warszawa 1860) (Monuments and Graves of Poles in Foreign Cemeteries (Warsaw 1860)). Another work by Anaton Giller on Polish graves in Irkutsk was published in 1864. In 1884, a Commission of Polish Graves was established in Paris, focusing primarily on taking care of the graves of November insurgents. This task is still continued today by the Society for the Care of Polish Historical Monuments and Graves in France. See Gutowski.

² Betlej 2012.

the Institute of Art History of Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw³. These include, above all, inventory work in the necropoli of Podolia, Ternopil and Kyiv (Ukraine) and in the Rasos Cemetery in Vilnius as well as Saint Michael's Cemetery in Riga. Work has also been undertaken in the Czech part of Cieszyn Silesia. The first experience with inventories, the lack of handbooks for carrying them out in historic cemeteries and, above all, the need for a clear typology and unification of descriptions of tombstones and funerary monuments, resulted in the publication in 2008 of a small book entitled *Nekropolie kresowe. Skrypt dla inwentaryzatorów zabytkowych cmentarzy dawnych Kresów Wschodnich* (Borderland Necropoli. Coursebook for Historic Cemeteries of the Former Eastern Borderlands)⁴.

This experience, enriched by successive years of work in cemeteries not only in Lithuania and Ukraine⁵, but also in the Czech Republic, France, Latvia, Turkey, Great Britain, as well as the still existing need to unify the results of activities undertaken by various centres, inspired us to rework the handbook for inventory workers at historic cemeteries. We set the goal of making the notion more comprehensible and selecting better photographs, as well as enriching typology with new, previously unrecorded tombstone forms. The result was a handbook that was first published in Polish in 2020 and then translated into Ukrainian and Lithuanian. This publication, based on terminology specific to sepulchral art, included diagrams useful in describing tombstones and tombs both of a provincial character and those from larger artistic centres, indicating, as much as possible, typical or atypical forms, primarily for eastern regions of the former Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. In 2025, we will publish an expanded version of the handbook including an appendix with additional examples of tombstone descriptions from the largest Polish emigrant communities in France, the United Kingdom and the Czech Republic.

The creation of a unified scheme for the description of cemetery art is quite a challenge, as the inventory is carried out by various research centres or private individuals who act on their own, or sometimes in agreement with relevant associations or foundations⁶. Differences in descriptions and approaches

³ This work was initially carried out in agreement with the „Wspólnota Polska” (‘Polish Community’) Association and the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage, and now also thanks to the support of the POLONIKA Institute.

⁴ Czyż, Gutowski 2008a.

⁵ The authors of the publication, together with Katarzyna Chrudzimska-Uhera and Norbert Piwowarczyk, carried out an initial reconnaissance at Polish cemeteries in Chicago, Detroit and Milwaukee, among others. The materials were collected as part of a project to document so-called Polish Cathedrals, conducted under the direction of Professor Jacek Gołębiowski from the John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin.

⁶ Inter alia Skowronek 1986; Inscriptions of Polish tombstones in Paris 1986–1994; Śladecki 1993; Brykowski, Czerniawska, Jaroszewicz 1996; Hauser 1998; Rudkowski 1999;

to inventories mainly relate to the fact that they are not always undertaken in a systematic way and are not always dealt with by art historians. We therefore faced the difficult task of creating, on the basis of existing studies, a system that is consistent with them and allows a description of specific forms of sepulchral art.

The tradition of work on terminology allowing a precise description of monuments of funeral art dates back to 1989 at the Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw (the Academy of Catholic Theology at the time) and the coursebook *Klasyfikacja i typologia nagrobków* (Classification and typology of tombstones) published by Zbigniew Bania and Andrzej K. Olszewski⁷. It was used during the inventory of the Warsaw Powązki cemetery. The framework outlined by these researchers became the basis of our typological and terminological research, alongside significant articles by Andrzej Basista, Andrzej Nowakowski, Paweł Pencakowski, Jan Schubert and Zdzisława Tołłoczko, *Analiza i systematyka architektury grobów cmentarnych* (Analysis and Systematics of Cemetery Tombstone Architecture)⁸ and *Architektura grobów cmentarza Rakowickiego w Krakowie* (Architecture of Tombstones of the Rakowicki Cemetery in Kraków)⁹. We also made use of the second edition of *Słownik terminologiczny sztuk pięknych* (Terminological Dictionary of Fine Arts)¹⁰ as well as instructions for compiling records of movable monuments, architecture and cemeteries available on the website of the National Heritage Institute¹¹. Similar studies on Jewish cemeteries have been undertaken by the Lublin centre¹². On the other hand, in 2011, Karolina

Marcisz, Rudka 1999; Biernat, Górzyński 1999; Bajsarowicz, Morawiecki 1999-2004; Lewkowska, Lewkowski, Walczak 2000; Roguski 2000; Grodziska 2001; Drelicharz 2004; Grodziska 2004; Hauser 2006; Grodziska 2007; Lewkowska, Lewkowski, Walczak 2007; Lewkowska, Lewkowski, Walczak 2008; Dacka-Górzyńska, Górzyński, Ugniewski 2008; Pałasz-Rutkowska 2010; Skrzypczak, Skrzypczak 2010; Dacka-Górzyńska, Górzyński 2012; Patlewicz, Tomczyk 2024; Chytry 2013; Skłodowski 2013; Zaworonko-Olejniczak, Szkopek, 2016; Kukia 2015; Patlewicz, Tomczyk 2017; Chudzio, Solarz 2020; Biernat, Górzyński 2021. Mention can also be made of work by individuals such as Urszula Olbomska or organisations such as the Fundacja Dziedzictwa Kulturowego (Cultural Heritage Foundation), Armenian Foundation, Chrześcijańsko-Demokratyczny Związek Polaków w Winnicy (Christian Democratic Union of Poles in Winnica) and many others.

⁷ Bania, Olszewski 1989.

⁸ Basista, Nowakowski, Pencakowski, Schubert, Tołłoczko 1986.

⁹ Basista, Nowakowski, Pencakowski, Schubert, Tołłoczko 1987. An attempt at a typology of tombstones and chapels was also made by: Dominikowski 2014, pp. 87–94 and Wiraszka 2017–2019.

¹⁰ Dictionary 1997.

¹¹ Maczubski 1989; https://www.nid.pl/pl/Dla_specjalistow/Badania_i_dokumentacja/zabytkinieruchome/instrukcjewytycznezalecenia.

¹² Klimowicz, Sygowski, Tarajko, Trzeciński 2018.

Grodziska wrote a text on the problem of cemetery documentation¹³. Finally, the subject issues have been addressed in various foreign publications¹⁴.

Understandably, the above-mentioned publications were not the first attempts made at addressing the specific issue of cemetery inventories. Pioneering in this respect were activities undertaken in the 1970s and 1980s by the Ministry of Culture and Arts, where initial efforts were made in the then Board of Museums and Monuments Protection to create a framework for the care of necropoli, primarily associated with records, i.e. the creation of a cemetery card, but also with defining conservation guidelines and administrative standards. The aftermath of these activities included a three-part post-conference publication, hardly available today, published by the Ministry of Culture and Arts, the PAX Association and the United Economic Teams¹⁵. It is noteworthy that in 1981, the Second Congress discussed the need to 'standardise the vocabulary as soon as possible [...] with particular attention to its precision and lapidarity'¹⁶. This was also the motto that accompanied our work.

The publications mentioned above were important to us. Nevertheless, our own experience gained during the preparation of cemetery and tombstone record cards from the territory of the former Ternopil Province (partly published in catalogue form¹⁷) and the online database for inventoried cemeteries that has been built since 2013 proved crucial in our work¹⁸. Knowledge and experience gained during many years of documentation work were enriched by conclusions drawn from

¹³ Grodziska 2011.

¹⁴ They differ somewhat in nature from this publication as they rather constitute an attempted typology of objects and description of their symbolism, e.g. Keister 2004 or Sinder 2017, or issues related to the search for genealogical information in cemeteries – DeBartolo Carmack 2002 or related to certain elements of documentation – Guffnet 2013. A separate group consists of publications devoted to the protection of cemeteries, providing not only information about basic maintenance, but also about cemetery documentation, including Illinois Historic 2008; Cemeteries Handbook 2024; Prince George's 2010; Strangstad 2013; Trippe-Dillon 2014.

¹⁵ The sessions assumed the character of conservation conventions. They were organised in Halin on: 15–17 April 1980, 16–17 November 1981, 7–9 April 1983, 2–5 May 1984 and 16–19 May 1985. The materials were compiled by Elżbieta Baniukiewicz from the Ministry of Culture and Art, and later from the Board for the Protection and Conservation of Palace and Garden Complexes, as well as by Hanna Spychajowa and Tadeusz Swat from the PAX Association. See also Śladecki 2000, pp. 703–705, where it is reported that the author developed his own methodology for conducting the inventory. Unfortunately, it remains unavailable in the circulation of scholarly publications.

¹⁶ Convention I–III, p. 8 (II).

¹⁷ Czyż, Gutowski, Janowczyk 2004; Czyż, Gutowski, Skrodzka, Vyšata, Zdzieborska 2007; Czyż, Gutowski, 2009; Czyż, Gutowski 2016; Czyż, Gutowski 2017.

¹⁸ <http://cmentarznarossie.uksw.edu.pl>; <http://cmentarzetarnopolskie.uksw.edu.pl>.

printed catalogues of cemeteries abroad that were published by other authors¹⁹. They were also combined with study visits to cemeteries in Europe and North America.

The handbook is composed of two parts. The first, theoretical one, presents the principles of describing a work of art and the types of tombstones and funerary monuments, also in the context of their stylistic transformations and dating problems, the decorative motifs characteristic of sepulchral art and the materials from which monuments were made. Also presented in this part are elements of historic cemeteries that should be considered during documentation work. The second part of the handbook addresses good practices, i.e. advice related to the preparation of work and principles of cemetery inventories. These reflect a certain ideal state, which of course should be modified depending on the situation, including, among other things, financial aspects. In this part, the reader will find a discussion of record cards and instructions on how to complete them, and will also learn about the cards we prepared for the cemetery inventories.

These two parts of the handbook are complemented by photographs of exemplary objects²⁰, as well as drawings by Mateusz Gryzłó, whose task was to create an objective image of a given type of monument or decorative motif. They are accompanied by model inventory descriptions, taking into account a variety of cases, ready to be used during the work.

The index will allow the reader to navigate efficiently among the types and varieties of tombstones classified in this handbook. It also takes account of the ornamentation and iconographic themes referred to in the text. The bibliography contains a list of articles and books that may be of use in inventory work.

By publishing the English version of the handbook, we hope not only to increase interest in documentation of Polish heritage abroad in non-Polish speakers, but also to stimulate discussion and the sharing of experiences in the field of documentation and monument recording. At the same time, we emphasise that the description rules we have presented in the handbook refer to documentation standards developed in Poland and differ from rules applied in other countries.

* * *

As mentioned above, this handbook is a significantly expanded and supplemented version of the coursebook published in 2008. The draft version of

¹⁹ To date, several volumes of catalogues of Polish tombstones have been published in such countries as Belarus, France, Georgia, Japan, Lithuania, Ukraine, Great Britain.

²⁰ Unless otherwise indicated, the photographs come from the authors' archive based on projects carried out at the Institute of Art History of Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw.

the new work was used by students who have been faithfully accompanying us for years in our work in Ukraine and Lithuania. Their presence and commitment is extremely important to us, as they are a valuable addition to the academic meetings held inside University facilities. This second edition contains corrections and additions, which are primarily the result of inventory trips made in 2021-2023 during which we used the handbook. It tackles more thoroughly specific characteristics of Polish tombstones found in Western Europe.

Our special thanks go to Professor Janusz Smaza from the Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw for his experience and know-how of the materials shared with us, but also for his kind attitude. This part was completed by Doctor Michał Wardzyński from the University of Warsaw. Our gratitude also extends to Andrzej Jagielski from the Geological Museum (Polish Geological Institute). The problem of the inventory of vegetation in cemeteries was consulted and partly elaborated by Doctor Anna Długozima at the Warsaw University of Life Sciences. We would also like to thank Doctor Dorota Zawiejska and Doctor Alicja Sadowska from the Faculty of Geodesy and Cartography, Warsaw University of Technology, for their valuable tips concerning the section devoted to the preparation of cemetery plans, as well as Professor Dariusz Gotlib, for his commentary on differences between a plan and a map. Norbert Piwowarczyk shared his experience in taking documentary photography. He also authored the instructional photographs (ill. 36, 59, 70–75). The model documentary photograph presented in the handbook was taken by Piotr Jamski from the Institute of Art of the Polish Academy of Sciences (ill. 69; together with his team he also took several other photographs), whom we thank for the many years of cooperation. We are also grateful to Doctor Karol Guttmejer from the POLONIKA Institute, who kindly agreed to read the entire handbook and share his experience in inventory-making and his substantive comments.

Above all, however, we wish to thank the first director of the POLONIKA Institute Dorota Janiszewska-Jakubiak and the staff at the POLONIKA Institute for their care and support received in our inventory work, as well as the editors, translators and graphic designers involved in the preparation of the English version of the handbook.

