

Olena Stasyuk

**CURRENT SITUATION AND CONSERVATION ISSUES
OF THE CEMETERY NEAR THE CHURCH
OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN ROHATYN**

*Docent of the Department of Architecture and Restoration,
Lviv Polytechnic National University, Lviv
e-mail olena.stasyuk@gmail.com
orcid 0000-0002-2986-6321*

Received: 08.09.2020 / Revised: 17.11.2020 / Accepted: 20.11.2020

© Stasyuk O. 2020

<https://doi.org/10.23939/as2020.02.286>

Abstract. The historical cemetery near the Church of the Holy Spirit in Rohatyn was investigated. The analysis of damages and losses of the ensemble of the cemetery and its separate monuments is carried out. The material of tombstones has been identified, the state of preservation of their physical substance has been analyzed. Tasks and challenges related to the conservation of the cemetery as a whole and its monuments have been analyzed.

Key words: historical cemetery, memorial sculpture, stone, preservation, conservation, architecture.

Problem statement

Rohatyn is an ancient and historic town. It is famous for its historical, cultural and architectural monuments. Historic cemeteries, as well as churches, are an integral part of the cultural landscape of every city and town. For Ukrainians, the church itself is extremely important – it is a demonstration, a material embodiment of the spiritual essence of Christianity. The area around each Christian church was also called a “cemetery”. In ancient times, Christians were buried around churches, as well as in church crypts. Both the church and the cemetery are a valuable source of historical information, as well as a unique, original gallery of works of art. Unfortunately, historic cemeteries are very vulnerable to destruction – they are physical, chemical and biological factors, as well as human factors, such as ordinary vandalism or incompetence in carrying out repair or finishing work. To successfully create and implement a program for the preservation and conservation of historic cemeteries, it is necessary to carefully research, document and study the material from which these monuments were made.

Analysis of recent research and publications

The historical cemeteries of Ukraine in general and Galicia, in particular, are poorly studied. Mostly researches highlighted the history of the cemetery and described the prominent people buried in these cemeteries. Usually, it is about famous cemeteries in large cities. The issue of memorial sculpture, both professional and folk, in their works to some extent raised by researchers such as Mozdyr M., Mohytych I., Krypyakevych I, Dorosh A., Odrekhivsky R., Prisyazhny K., Biryulyov Y. and others. M. Dolynska, A. Chemerchynsky, P. Grankin, H. Kharchuk, A. Partridge, and others, who study the issues of Galician historical cemeteries.

Objective of the article

The study set the aims to examine the current state of the historic cemetery near the Church of the Holy Spirit in Rohatyn. Investigate material, in particular stone, of the memorial plastics of the cemetery, analyze the causes of its destruction and damages. Show challenges and tasks related to the conservation and preservation of this object.

Results and discussions

Rohatyn is an ancient city because archaeologists have found objects from the Paleolithic and Bronze Ages. In the tenth century, the territory of Rohatyn was part of Kievan Rus. In the vicinity of the city, archaeologists have discovered settlements dating from the tenth to thirteenth centuries with the remains of ramparts, residential buildings and even the foundations of the church. In 1415 Rohatyn was granted the Magdeburg right, and its rapid development began (Wortman D., 2012, p. 248).

It is probably at this time that the wooden Church of the Descent of the Holy Spirit was built. The church is one of the oldest wooden churches in the Carpathians, which has survived to this day. Scientific sources date the church to 1546 (Brykowsli, 1995, s. 76, 90), 1598 (Slobodian V., 2004, p. 81) or the first half of the seventeenth century (Drahan, 1937, s. 76). Recent research shifts the date the church was built to the late 15th. Century (Kutnyi, 2009, c. 101). Initially, the church did not have a bell tower. That is, the bell tower stood separately and was delivered to the church around 1675. In its history, the church has been renovated several times. In particular, in 1675, 1895, 1912. It was in 1912 that the tops of the church were rebuilt – from Baroque with breakers to straight conical, that we see now (Fig. 1).



Fig. 1. View of the church and the cemetery from the south side

In 1963, the Holy Spirit Church was included in the State Register of Architectural Monuments of National Importance under protection number 243. (Zavada V., 2000, p. 67). In 1980-82, the monument underwent thorough restoration work under the direction of architect Ivan Mohytych. Since 1983, the Church of the Descent of the Holy Spirit in Rohatyn has been a museum object – a department (now a branch) of the Ivano-Frankivsk Art Museum. In 2013, the Church of the Holy Spirit, along with other wooden churches in the Carpathian region, was included in the UNESCO World Heritage List. The area of property included in the World Heritage List is 0,49 hectares (Lipska, Swiatkowski, Warchol, Fichuk, Somochkin, 2014, s. 14). Its borders on three sides run along the existing fence on Drahomanov and Staromlynska streets, and from the west along the Gnyla Lypa river. The south-western part of the border turns north along the ancient border of the cemetery without reaching the river. In the centre of the territory, which is included in the World Heritage List, on a hill is located a church. The church is surrounded on three sides by a cemetery. Only on the south side of the church, in front of the entrance, there is a small square with a flower bed, benches and a security booth. The northwestern part of the cemetery is located on the slopes of the hill and at its foot.

The area of the buffer zone is 1.47 hectares and includes the territory of the city around the World Heritage property (Lipska, Swiatkowski, Warchol, Fichuk, Somochkin, 2014, s. 16). The boundaries are defined taking into account ownership issues along existing roads. Most of the buffer zone is built up by single-family houses. Only the north-western part of the zone, which includes the river, its banks and meadows remain undeveloped. The defined buffer zone also takes into account all important views to and from the object.

The historical boundaries of the cemetery have remained unchanged. From the west, the natural border is the river Gnyla Lypa. From the north, south and east – the roads that surround the hill. The cemetery near the church was gradually filled. The oldest is the south-eastern part of the cemetery. The most deserving members of the community were buried here as priests, members of the church fraternity, etc. Here are the most prominent, the largest and the richest of artistic decoration of the tombstone. Such as the figure of St. Nicholas or the Virgin (Fig. 2, 3). Most of these monuments are made of limestone. However, it is here that you can find several monuments made of sandstone. These are the only monuments in the cemetery made of this material. It is worth noting that both the figures have the character of monuments made by professional masters.

In this oldest part, there are also crosses dating from the first half of the XIX century. In the Ukrainian ethnic lands for centuries until the 19-century crosses were the main form of the tombstone sign in the town cemeteries (Mozdur M., 2009, p. 26–29). It is not known when the carved figured components first appeared on the cross, but the order was always as follows – first just a cross, then a cross with inscriptions and solar signs, then a cross with a crucifix, then a cross with a crucifix and the upcoming ones, and then various combinations to decorate the composition with additional elements such as flowers, leaves, towels, angels, additional figures of saints and so on. In Rohatyn, these are three-leafed crosses of the Greek type. Their height is about 80 cm and a width of about 60 cm, and the thickness varies from 16 to 19 cm. The ends of the arms of the cross resemble clover leaves. The triple clover leaves are a symbol of the Trinity. These ancient crosses contain only inscriptions. This text occupies the entire surface of the cross, sometimes on two sides. Stone crosses made of limestone are a light grey, slightly yellowish stone. These crosses have a small rectangular stone base. They stand directly on earthen graves. Some of the crosses bent, some fell, and some sank into the ground (Fig. 4, 5).

In the second half of the XIX century, the cemetery grew to the north, filling the space behind the church along the fence. In this part of the cemetery, we can also see many stone three-leaf crosses of the Greek type, the same as in the oldest part. There are also crosses with crucifixes here. A feature of the cemetery in Rohatyn is the technique of making these crosses – it is a deep relief which is a pattern cut into the surface. This relief is very thin and very delicate. This image creates the illusion of volume due to the play of light and shadow. In addition to the crucifix, we can see here the three-leafed crosses decorated with a figure of the Virgin, made in the same technique of deep relief. These crosses are also made of limestone (Fig. 6, 7).



Fig. 2. Tombstone with the figure of St. Nicholas



Fig. 3. Tombstone with the figure of the Virgin



Fig. 4. Three-leaf crosses of the Greek type on the oldest part of the cemetery



Fig. 5. Cross with the inscription of 1869 which fell and lies on the ground

In this part of the cemetery, we can already see crosses made of artificial stone – such as reinforced concrete and so-called lastriko. Often the grave itself is already fenced with a cement curb. Such monuments are often in the shape of a slab, very often have metal plates and are often decorated with photographs made on a ceramic basis. Colouristically, they are sustained in greyish colours. Sometimes delicately decorated with a ribbon of geometric ornament in black, white and grey. A few metal tombstones made in the technique of casting. These are extremely monumental statues – one of them is just a cross made in the neo-Gothic style. The most notable is the crucifix with the figure of the Mother of God standing under the cross. There are several smaller crosses that, unfortunately, are broken and destroyed. All metal monuments were placed on stone foundations. The metal is in very poor condition.

In the early twentieth century, the cemetery grew in a northwestern direction on a hillside toward the river valley. We can say that the lower terrace of the cemetery was formed. And actually, here the territorial growth of a cemetery stops. Here you can also find some ancient, already familiar to us stone three-leaf crosses – very few of them. Here you can also find several reinforced concrete crosses from the First World War, the same as in the Austrian military cemetery in Rohatyn. These crosses are placed in rows between other burials.



Fig. 6. The cross is decorated in the technique of deep relief. The motive of the crucifixion with the standing nearby



Fig. 7. The cross is decorated in the technique of deep relief. Motif of the figure of the Virgin

Limestone monuments were built for a short time after the Second World War. They were probably made by local folk masters. These are modest crosses, sometimes with a crucifix. Angels were often depicted here. By the 1970s, the manufacture of tombstones had completely shifted to reinforced concrete and lastriko. And at this time, a new fashion began to appear – the manufacture of a monument of black gabbro stone with carved, dotted portraits of buried people. Such monuments are often double and are vertical slabs with patterns. The composition includes a cross. It can be of different shapes and sizes and can be made of various materials, not only of stone but for example of metal.

From the second half of the twentieth century, the lower terrace of the cemetery was filled and the territory of the cemetery was thickened. New burials densely fill the newest northwestern part of the cemetery and at the same time appear throughout the cemetery wedged between the older burials. The tradition of erecting black gabbro monuments with a painted portrait continues to this day. In recent years, there has been an opportunity and a trend to make monuments of natural stone of different bright expressive colours. For example from granite. Different shades of red, green, and brown were added to the traditional colours of black and white. In the historic cemetery in Rohatyn, we can see several new monuments in contrasting colours. These monuments are unusual, we can say unexpectedly very modern in shape. Everyone is different.

As for the physical condition of the tombstones, we can find various materials in the cemetery. 90 % of the monuments are made of stone. These are natural stones such as limestone, sandstone, gabbro, granite and artificial stone such as concrete, reinforced concrete, lastrico. There are monuments made of metal – different metals and in different techniques. There are also several wooden crosses. However, these are temporary crosses on the place of which stone monuments will be erected. This is in line with local tradition, where a wooden cross is placed on a fresh grave, and a stone monument is built no sooner than a year after burial.

The oldest crosses are made of limestone. Limestone is a material that is relatively soft and easy to process due to its physical and mechanical properties. Limestone in the tombstones of the cemetery in Rohatyn was strongly influenced by all existing factors of destruction – the condition of the stone was influenced by structural and textural features, atmospheric and biological factors. There is a lot of biology – a variety of mosses, lichens, ivy that winds on the stone. This condition of the stone makes it difficult to read the inscription on the crosses. It also leads to the scattering of the surface layer of the stone together with the inscription – it is not safe and recoverable. Drawing monuments is a big problem. The thin relief is painted with paint, whether it is lime or oil or other paint, it simply destroys it – it is impossible to see the details, letters, facial features, fingers, etc. Besides, the consequence of such painting is the same as in the case of a biological threat – the shedding of the surface layer of the stone together with the relief. And when that happens, it is not recoverable. We also see physical damage and loss of stone. These are crosses that have fallen or broken into pieces. We can see the folded fragments of crosses, and sometimes we can see a cross that stands, but which lacks, for example, parts of the shoulder, and so on (Fig. 8, 9).

The sandstone found in several monuments is a dark red sandstone known as Terebovlya sandstone, which is still being developed in the vicinity of Terebovlia and Buchach. The most common type of destruction of such monuments is the stratification of the rock due to the structural and textural features of the stone and biological plaques of various types. Sandstone is a stone harder than limestone in this case, biological damage occurs, but they are minimal. As for the stratification of the breed, unfortunately, the first signs of such a phenomenon were already visible.

Reinforced concrete has been used in the cemetery in Rohatyn since the beginning of the 20th century. Unfortunately, we can see individual crosses that fall apart into particles and from the body of which protrude metal fittings. Concrete curbs around graves are in a different condition; it probably depends on the quality of the concrete. No special damage is observed. Military reinforced concrete crosses from the First World War are in good condition. In general, the condition of the material can be described as satisfactory.

Lastrico is a material used in the cemetery since the middle of the twentieth century. Monuments made of this material are in relatively good condition. The downside is that this material is also sensitive to biological damage. Visually, it looks like a greyish and greenish plaque appears on the stone, spots that contribute to the destruction of the stone. But this process is slow and long, so given the average age of such monuments, their condition can be assessed as good.

Gabro also showed himself on the good side. AS for now, there is no damage or loss to monuments made of this material. This may be due to the relatively young age of these monuments. The newest granite monuments are less than ten years old and are in excellent technical condition.



Fig. 8. An example of biological damage to a limestone sculpture



Fig. 9. An example of damage caused by unprofessional painting of limestone

There are not many metal tombstones in the cemetery in Rohatyn. They are also different – made of different metals and in different techniques. Cast monuments are majestic, exquisite works of art. Unfortunately in very poor condition. They are deformed and broken into pieces. Besides, the metal is destroyed extremely by rust. I would say that these monuments are in a threatening condition. There are several interesting metal crosses in the oldest part of the cemetery. Two of the below are also made in the technique of casting. They are quite modest, have not many decorative ornaments and are examples of serial Lithuanian products of their time. This does not mean that they are not valuable. Now such crosses are no longer produced, and there is a small number of them in the preserved historical cemeteries. The metal of these tombstones is also affected by rust and is in poor condition. In the same oldest part of the cemetery, we can see several metal crosses installed in the early twentieth century. They are made of metal strips and have a very interesting pattern. The technique is the same, but the pattern is different for each cross. The whole metal is covered with rust. Stone pedestals are in poor condition and monuments, in general, are also in poor condition

After examining the current condition of the cemetery, it became clear that the cemetery, as well as individual monuments of this cemetery, need to be restored. There is an interesting fact – the cemetery is located on the territory where the church is located, which is included in the UNESCO World Heritage List. This list does not include the church itself, but certain property, as mentioned above. Part of this property is the area where the cemetery is located, but the cemetery is not a monument. It is only part of the surroundings of the monument. But even in this status, care must be taken to preserve the historical and artistic value of the cemetery. The territory of both the cemetery and the church is surrounded by a fence. On the side of Drahomanova Street, the fence is wooden, made of horizontal boards, covered with a wooden roof. On the side of Staromlynska Street, the fence is made of reinforced concrete blocks, and on the side of the river – a metal mesh. Reinforced concrete blocks are light grey, delicate, curly top decorated with openwork balustrade. Each of these parts of the fence is in poor condition – sloping, broken, and in some places completely absent, and therefore requires repair. It would be ideal if it was the same on all sides and made of wood as a material that corresponds to the historical authenticity. The cemetery as a whole is one of several communal cemeteries in Rohatyn. The cemetery is closed for new burials, but the so-called burials to the graves of relatives are held here. In this way, fresh burials appear in the cemetery between old ones. Through the territory of the cemetery, the residents of Rohatyn have laid a path – a kind of communication abbreviation, which runs throughout UNESCO, that crosses the cemetery and surrounds the church. This situation certainly makes it difficult to take care of the territory of both the cemetery and the church.

The territory of the cemetery itself can be called neglected. The grass is not mown, the trees grow randomly, that is, they are not pruned, nobody is watching them, obviously many of the trees are self-seeding. There are no paved paths in the cemetery – only paths trodden in the grass. Recently, the church has been actively fighting against artificial flowers in the cemetery – asking not to bring artificial wreaths, vases, bouquets, etc. This certainly works – the garbage in the cemetery has become much less, but this bad habit has not yet been completely eradicated.

The first challenge is to tidy up the territory of the cemetery, and the next respectively is the conservation of individual monuments. This should be done by specialists. As for stone monuments, they should, first of all, be stabilized statically – to raise, level, strengthen accordingly, that is to do everything necessary that the monument stood steady and strong. Next, you should clean, as needed, strengthen the stone material itself, glue and fasten the broken parts of the monuments. Accordingly, if necessary, the addition of lost parts, the expression of inscriptions, refinement of colour unification. As for metal monuments, the most obvious is the need to combat rust, there is also a need for static stabilization of objects, healing, and if necessary, the reconstruction of some lost elements. The choice of technology and the conservation itself should be done by specialists. Issues such as the addition of lost elements are always debatable and they are decided by experts at restoration councils. And the last challenge when the cemetery is already restored is the need to maintain your facility in such a restored condition. There is a need for constant care, sweeping, cleaning (such as clearing snow in winter, fallen leaves in autumn, mowing the grass in summer), continuous monitoring of the condition of monuments and immediate elimination or correction of minor damage. Such seemingly simple steps can significantly extend the life of cemetery monuments, and hence the cemetery at all.

Conclusions

Rohatyn is an ancient and historic town. Nowadays, Rohatyn is known for the name of Roxolana, and the monument included in the UNESCO World Heritage Site list – it is the wooden Church of the Descent of the Holy Spirit. Despite the lack of legal status of the monument and the presence of modern burials, the historic cemetery near the Church of the Descent of the Holy Spirit is in a satisfactory condition and has retained its historical and artistic value. This cemetery is in a difficult situation – it must be both a monument and a useful object for people. And this is always very challenging.

As for the material of tombstones, it differs greatly. There are also metal and single wooden monuments and a whole palette of stone material. This is primarily local limestone and imported sandstone, gabbro, granite. We are also dealing with the widespread use of artificial stone based on cement. As for the destruction and damage, the situation is not easy. All natural factors of the destruction of geological and biological, chemical character work and do not disappear anywhere. Another human factor is added to the existing cemetery. Non-professional repair or arrangement of monuments such as glueing, painting or clearing, etc. There are many cases when such actions lead to catastrophic consequences. Inaction can be no less harmful. Both the individual monument and the cemetery as a whole require constant care to be in good condition at all times.

The historic cemetery near the Church of the Descent of the Holy Spirit in Rohatyn requires the definition and approval of its legal status and the adoption of a concept for its further functioning and use. Challenges to the ways and methods of preservation must be addressed by specialists, taking into account the special monumental status, and therefore in addition to Ukrainian and international law.

References

- Brykowsli R. 1995. Wooden church architecture in the crown lands of the Republic of Poland, Warszawa.
- Drahan M. 1937 Ukrainian wooden churches, Lviv.
- Kutnyi A. 2009. Sacred wooden architecture in the Carpathian Mountains, Munchen.
- Lipska D., Swiatkowski M., Warchol M., Fichuk L., Somochkin I. 2015. Conservation and landscape study for the church of Pentecost in Rohatyn, a UNESCO world heritage property. Warszawa–Lviv.
Archive of the Institute "Ukrzahidproektrestavratsiya", file no. I-26-9
- Wortman D. 2012. Rohatyn // Encyclopedia of the History of Ukraine: in 10 vols.. Kyiv : Naukova dumka.
- Zavada V. 2000. Monuments of architecture and urban planning of Ukraine. Kyiv : Tehnika.
- Mozdur M. 2009. Ukrainian folk memorial sculpture. Lviv.
- Slobodian V. 2004. Temples of Rohatyn region. Lviv : Logos.

Олена Стасюк

*Доцент кафедри архітектури та реставрації,
Національний університет "Львівська політехніка", Львів
e-mail olena.stasyuk@gmail.com
orcid 0000-0002-2986-6321.*

СУЧАСНИЙ СТАН ТА ПИТАННЯ РЕСТАВРАЦІЇ ЦВИНТАРЯ БІЛЯ ЦЕРКВИ СВ. ДУХА В РОГАТИНІ

***Анотація.** Рогатин є містечком давнім та історичним. Воно є відомим і знаменитим своїми історичними, культурними й архітектурними пам'ятками. Історичні цвинтарі, як і церкви є невід'ємною складовою частиною культурного пейзажу кожного міста і містечка. Для українців сам храм є надзвичайно важливим – це унаочнення, матеріальне втілення духовної сутності християнства. У давнину християн ховали довкола церков, а також в церковних криптах. На жаль історичні цвинтарі є дуже вразливими до руйнувань – це фізичні, хімічні і біологічні чинники, а також людський фактор, як то звичайний вандалізм або звичайна некомпетентність при виконанні ремонтних чи опоряджувальних робіт. Для того, щоб успішно створити і втілити програму збереження історичних кладовищ необхідно ретельно їх дослідити задокументувати, інвентаризувати, а також ретельно вивчити матеріал з якого виконані ці пам'ятки.*

Дослідження має за мету вивчити існуючий стан історичного цвинтаря біля церкви Св. Духа в Рогатині. Дослідити матеріал, зокрема кам'яний, меморіальної пластики цвинтаря, проаналізувати причини його знищення і пошкодження. Показати виклики та завдання, які пов'язані з реставрацією і збереженням цього об'єкту.

Сьогодні Рогатин роблять відомим: ім'я Роксолани і пам'ятка включена у список світової спадщини ЮНЕСКО – дерев'яна Церква Зішестя Святого Духа. Історичний цвинтар біля церкви Зішестя Святого Духа перебуває в задовільному стані і зберіг свою історичну й мистецьку цінність.

Щодо матеріалу надгробних пам'ятників, то він, зокрема, є дуже різний. А що стосується руйнувань і пошкоджень, то всі природні чинники руйнування – працюють. На діючому цвинтарі додається ще людський фактор – наприклад, нефаховий ремонт чи впорядкування пам'ятників. Дуже шкідливою є й бездіяльність. Як кожен окремий пам'ятник, так і цвинтар вцілому, для того, щоб постійно перебувати в доброму стані, вимагають постійного догляду.

Історичний цвинтар біля церкви Зішестя Святого Духа в Рогатині вимагає визначення і затвердження свого правового статусу і прийняття концепції щодо його подальшого функціонування і використання. Виклики щодо способу й методики збереження, мусять вирішуватися фахівцями з урахуванням особливого пам'яткового статусу, а значить, крім українського, ще й міжнародного законодавства.

Ключові слова: історичний цвинтар, меморіальна пластика, камінь, збереження, реставрація, архітектура.