

1. CULTURAL VALUES OF CITYSCAPE

*Maria Aurora Flórez de la Colina, Dorota Gawryluk, Jurga Kučinskienė,
Pilar Cristina Izquierdo Gracia, Giedre Ivavičiūtė*

1.1. INTRODUCTION

1.1.1. Cityscape and cultural values

What are the values of modern cities? And are some of those values located within an ancient historic origin? Difficult questions to answer, but relevant as most of the world population lives in cities and the tendency is that the actual percentage will increase (United Nations, 2014). The attraction of urban settlements is in the basis of human culture and modernity has increased its attraction, creating a lack of balance between small rural towns and megacities. To re-establish a new sustainable approach, we need to know what are those urban values and to reach a better understanding with our environment.

Most dictionaries (Merriam-Webster, Collins English Dictionary, 2020) consider that cityscape can be:

1. A city view, as a scene.
2. An artistic representation of a city, an urban landscape (printing, drawing, photograph).
3. An urban environment, a configuration of built forms and interstitial space.

The urban cultural landscape is formed because of human intervention with its scenery, which is a specific and unique urban landscape. This shape creates an urban image that can be used as its identity. Urban cultural landscape is a reflection of the physical and cultural conditions in the region, which occurs due to political, economic and social influences starting from the past, and continuing in the present and future. So it can be said that urban morphology occurs because of urban cultural landscape (Rosmalia, Martokusumo, 2012).

We would like to trace back the values that are represented as a symbolic form in the material built spaces of European cities, with a similar methodology to that used by Kevin Lynch (1960) to study three American cities. Kevin Lynch established that urban images were linked to: “landmarks”, as points of reference and memories for most of its citizens, usually buildings or public open spaces near them; “nodes”, between areas or neighbourhoods; “districts”, medium or large areas in the city, with common features; “edges” either real such as city walls or shorelines, or just perceived by inhabitants; “paths”, as streets, railways, canals or other spaces through which people move or travel (Lynch, 1960). We will add some other basic elements that have been established in the 21st century by UNESCO, as part of the concept of “Historic Urban Landscape, HUL” (UNESCO, 2011).

We will try to give an approach to those values, relating our studies to three European cities, with different sizes and locations: Białystok (Poland), Madrid (Spain) and Klaipėda (Lithuania).

1.1.2. The buildings, public spaces and artistic representation of a city as a way of transmitting its values

Urban public space adopted a very relevant role both in city planning and in culture, essentially in contemporary 20th century European cities. In the last two decades of the beginning of the 21st century, dramatic issues have changed the view we have of open spaces that have been the core of occidental city life: terrorist attacks, but also illnesses such as Covid-19 are making us think about public spaces design. As “public space appears to be under threat (Voices of Culture, 2016)”, we need to identify its values for citizens.

Cultural values are linked with identity, as established by many studies and research. When thinking of a European historic city image, most of us remember some construction element, such as the Eiffel tower in Paris or the Big Ben tower in London, but also a city view from a lookout point. From the 17th century many painters utilized this, as the famous View of Delft (1660–1661) by Jan Vermeer. Landscape paintings become popular in 18th and 19th century Europe, and collections of views of cities were kept in palaces. Impressionist painters made urban landscape as a subject, popular. During the 20th and 21st centuries, photography and figurative painting was also interested in urban settings. We might use these artistic representations of cities as a tool to understand its history and values, as well as its identity.

1.1.3. The Case of Poland, Spain and Lithuania

The aim of this chapter is to show the importance of cultural values in shaping European cities in last 300 years and why public spaces should be adapted and designed to convey new values such as sustainability, capacity of change to adapt to new

technologies over time as well as historic continuity, plurality and diversity as well as identity and sense of a place. Understanding these values may help decision makers better prioritize actions to be done, and a more transparent process of decision making.

1.2. Cultural values and public urban spaces

Thinking about the new material layers on the historical urban pattern of our cities is more important that we realize. They are related to the memories of its inhabitants and sometimes linked to events of their lives. As an example, **public squares are “landmarks” that can be the scenery of everyday lives**, when used as markets, one of the more common uses in Europe. As explained by Bob Giddings, James Charlton and Margaret Horne (2011):

“Of all types of urban space, squares are the most representative of the values of the societies that created them – the agora, forum, cloister, mosque courtyard are examples. Traditional functions included:

- Trade: buying and selling, depository and manufacture;
- Information: dissemination of news – place of social activity;
- Recreation: games, teaching, lunch and conversation;
- Protection: militia, training and drill, gathering in times of danger;
- Piety: holy inspiration and prayer, open space before a church for worship (French, 1983)” (Giddings, Charlton, Horne, 2011)

We will analyse and explain the uses and values of one selected public square in each of the three European cities in our study, and how those historic public spaces have changed. Ancient photos and paintings show how they were used, some existing/non existing objects in them, including or excluding greenery, monuments or statues, changing pavements and building’s facades...

1.2.1. City square in Białystok, Poland: Kosciuszko Square “Rynek Kościuszki”

The most important square in the centre of Białystok is Rynek Kościuszki. It was the main space of the residential, private town connected with the Baroque Branicki’s palace and garden residence since the second half of the 18th century (Dobroński, 2012). The market square had traditional trade but also representative functions, with a rich symbolic program at that time. Everyday life of the market was surrounded by a beautifully composed set design of the urban and architecture. The dominant tower of the town hall towered over Białystok (Dolistowska, 2018) (Fig. 1.1a). During World War II, the town hall was pulled down by the Soviets, who wanted to erect a monument to Stalin in its place. Nearly 90% of the centre of Białystok was

destroyed during World War II. The town hall, some of the historic buildings around the market square and the Branicki's Palace were rebuilt or largely reconstructed after the war, similar to the Old Town in Warsaw (Wicher, 2009). These activities were aimed at rebuilding the identity of the place and the sense of social identification.

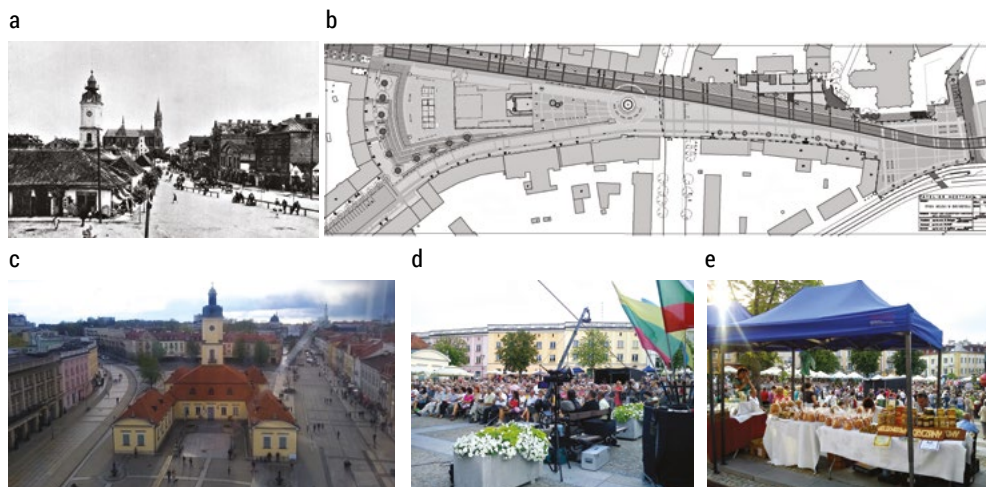


FIG. 1.1. “Rynek Kościuszki” square in Białystok, Poland a – Market Square 1915–1920 (Source: WEB-1), b – Project of revaluation 1st decade of 20th c. (Source: D. Gawryluk, 2011), c – Kościuszkowski Square, eastern part, the 2nd decade of the 21st c., d-e – Events on Kościuszkowski Square (Source: c, d, e photos by D. Gawryluk)

There was a square with flowers, bushes and trees established on Kościuszkowski Square in the 1960s of the 20th century. It was an important central point of public transport there too. Over decades, plants grew up and made the shape and buildings around the area of Kościuszkowski Square, invisible. The disregarded greenery area has become even a dangerous place. Historical values of this cityscape place were destroyed in that time.

The latest revitalisation of Rynek Kościuszki in the 1st decade of the 21st century (project by Atelier ZETTA) (Gawryluk, 2011) (Fig. 1.1b). The readability of the market square scale (big trees from after war in the square were transplanted to another part of the city) and space's functionality (change in traffic organisation) were restored. The cultural values of Białystok are confirmed by contemporary elements, such as showcases exhibiting old views of Rynek Kościuszki, a drawing on the square's floor showing the plan of the former town building and the course of the Choroski route, a sculpture of little Ludwik Zamechhoff (author of Esperanto language) (Fig. 1.1c). Nowadays, the market serves as a city lounge – a meeting place where numerous events (cultural, social, state, traditional markets...) take place – a place of social activity, a place where an increasing number of residents spend their time, a place that is intentionally visited by tourists too. Rynek Kościuszki is one of the main landmarks in Białystok due to its cultural values (Fig. 1.1d, e).

1.2.2. City square in Madrid, Spain: “Plaza Mayor”

The name of “Plaza Mayor” can be translated as Main Square and it is, as well as “Puerta del Sol”, one of the essential “landmarks” of the city. It has kept most of the traditional functions established by French (French, 1983) (Giddings, Charlton, Horne, 2011), including trade (with its shops under its arcades and as a popular temporary winter market, even today), recreation (also maintained with its restaurants, cafes and terraces, cultural open air events, occasionally teaching (Valiente López, Izquierdo Gracia, Florez de la Colina, García López de la Osa, González Rodrigo, Martínez Pérez, Llauradó Pérez, 2017), information (both as a place of social activity and an important municipal information point).

Built in the sixteenth century, it was originally outside of the Madrid city walls. The “Plaza Mayor” space was used as a marketplace where the Madrilénian people could find products cheaper than inside the village, as the latter ones were taxed with the “portazgo” – literally, the “gate tax” – that all merchants must pay if they want to sell inside the walls.

The village transformation after it was nominated as capital of Spain, and the resulting population increase, motivated the village authorities to build a new line of walls and so the Plaza Mayor was going to be integrated within the village urban fabric; the “edge” perception of this “landmark” changed. Aside from being the main marketplace centre, something reflected on singular buildings, like the “Casa de la Panadería” -Bakery House-, it became the scenario of the Crown and the Church for solemn acts (like public executions, canonization processes, Inquisition “autos de fe”) and festive activities (bullfighting, tournaments, celebrations) (Fig. 1.2).



FIG. 1.2. Oil Paintings of “Plaza Mayor” square in Madrid, Spain. a – ca. 1623, b – 1634, c – between 1675 & 1680 (Source: WEB-3)

Many Monarchy power symbols can be found there (memorial plaques and inscriptions, crests, statues) which remain in place even with the large transformations suffered by the city.

Perception of the shape of this square was significantly changed with greenery in its middle or with the “paths” established in the 20th century by public transport inside it, as we see in postcards from the 1950s (Fig. 1.3). People’s movements had a circular pattern, following tramway lines, which was even more evident due to the statue in its middle inside the rectangular shape of the square.



FIG. 1.3. Ancient photos of “Plaza Mayor” square in Madrid, Spain (Source: a, b – WEB-3, c – WEB-4)

Today it has recovered its importance and symbolic meaning for its citizens. One of the most interesting tourist landmarks for our visitors, it is still an important meeting point not only for tourists, but also for the capital inhabitants, the Madrilenians, and a recreational space (Fig. 1.4).



FIG. 1.4. “Plaza Mayor” square in Madrid, Spain (Source: photo by M.A. Flórez de la Colina, 2016)

The terraces and restaurants of the square offer a unique way to enjoy our cuisine and the space is frequently used for concerts and other cultural events or sports activities, being an important municipal information point. It is also a place for shopping in the stores that you can find under its arcades. There is still the tradition of the Sunday stamps & coins market and in December we have the famous Christmas market, the traditional place to buy ornaments and figures for the family manger.

1.2.3. City square in Klaipeda, Lithuania

In the 17th century the *Theatre Square* was known as a venue for traveling theatres, there was a market, which together with other markets formed a long and rather wide market, where there were bustling traders and attractions (Tatoris, 1994). The first public squares and green squares were constructed in Klaipeda in the first half of the 19th century. In 1819 after filling part of the castle ditches, the new market was opened in the irregularly shaped square, on the edge of which a hall was built and the current *Theatre Square* was located between two marketplaces and became part of a long marketplace itself (Tatoris, 1994). In 1850 a square was planned on the site of the current *Theatre Square*, but soon the site was used for trade (Fig. 1.5).



FIG. 1.5. Theatre Square from 19th century till now, Klaipeda, Lithuania (photo from Klaipeda County Public Ieva Simonaityte Library (Source: a, b – WEB-5, c – WEB-6 and d, e, f – photos by Martynas Vainorius)

For long time, the old town ended up to the street, and after the theatre was built in front of it, a square was formed. The square became a completed spatial element of the city in the second half of the 19th century (Fig. 1.5). In the 20th century the magistrate considered how to make better use of the *Theatre Square*. Part of it was considered to be turned into a green square, and the other part left free for public gatherings. It was decided to build a fountain in the middle of the square and a triangular square around it, but although the fountain was built in 1912 (Fig. 1.6), the green square was abandoned (Tatoris, 1994). The monument created by A. Künne in memory of the poet Simon Dach (1605–1659), a poet born in Klaipeda and a professor at the University of Karaliaucius, stood in the *Theatre Square* until 1939 with a sculpture Tarava Anike.



FIG. 1.6. The Tarava Anike sculpture with a fountain in Theatre Square, Klaipėda, Lithuania (Source: a, b – WEB-6, c – Klaipėdos architektūra, 2020)

The buildings that formed the square during World War II were badly damaged. Warehouses behind the theatre, a trade hall, a block in the lower part of the square were demolished. In 1963, in the reconstruction project of the old town, prepared by V. Jurkštas, S. Cerskute and V. Parciauskas, it was proposed to increase the space in front of the theatre by demolishing the existing buildings in the lower part, planting, installing a parking lot, adding an extension to the bank. As a result of these alterations, the planned and functional nature of the square has changed. Although the theatre was the most important building in terms of composition and function, the new layout of the square did not represent it anymore (Butkus et al., 2015). The only path that crosses the square diagonally seems to emphasize that its main purpose is to pass transit pedestrian traffic to the pier. After planting with bushes and trees it became a green square. The *Theatre Square*, which functioned as a green square for a long time after the war, did not take on its shape until the very end of the 1990s. Closing it from the busy Sukileliu (now Pilies) Street as a theatre annex and the restoration of the Tarava Anike sculpture with a fountain, it has become a new emotional attraction of the city (Butkus et. al., 2015) to the present day (Fig. 1.6).

1.3. Integration of historic cultural values and contemporary city requirements

Many cities in Europe have been destroyed by war at different periods of our history. The European Community, after the Second World War, was created to try to avoid this destructive threat of human beings: “As of 1950, the European Coal and Steel Community begins to unite European countries economically and politically in order to secure lasting peace. The six founding countries are Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg and the Netherlands” (European Union, 2020). Cultural values are essential to build peace or as Jean Monnet stated: “If I had to do it again, I would begin with culture” (cited by Jahier, 2016).

1.3.1. A city with signs of former religious communities: Białystok, Poland

Białystok was a multicultural and multi-religious city before World War II. There were Jews (about 40%), Catholics (30%), Orthodox Christians (15%), Protestants (4%) and others (Dobroński, 2012). Their diversity was marked in the city landscape with objects related to religion: temples and cemeteries. Jews were the most numerous part of Białystok society which had about 60 synagogues in the area of the city (Dobroński, 2012; Dolistowska, 2018). Today, the denominational structure in Białystok is as follows: Catholics (60%), Orthodox Christians (15%), Protestant churches (less than 1%) and others.



FIG. 1.7. Monument of Great Synagogue in Białystok, Poland: a – former graveyard Square on Bema street, b – monument of Great Synagogue, c – memory board with view of former Great Synagogue (Source: photos by D. Gawryluk)

The Jewish community was almost completely destroyed during World War II. In the contemporary landscape of Białystok, the evidence of the former Jewish diaspora are selected objects adapted to new functions (synagogue Piaskower – Universal Podlaski now, Synagogue Beit Szmuel – unused now, Synagogue of Cytrons – Slendzinski Gallery now), landscaped green areas established on former Jewish cemeteries (Central Park realised as community action in the 60/70s of the 20th c. on the place of the Old Jewish Cementary, square by Bema street designed by Jerzy Grygorczuk in the 1st decade of the 21st c. on the place of the former cementary) (Fig. 1.7a), more and more monuments, signs and information boards in the city space, e.g. the Monument of The Great Synagogue with the square and the model of the building restoring the memory of the location of the largest synagogue in Białystok (author of conception Michał Flikier, design and realisation artists: Maria Dżugała-Sobocińska, Stanisław Ostaszewski, Dariusz Sobociński, 2008) (Fig. 1.7b, c). The monument is not easy to find, the urban structure was changed after War Wold II and area of the former Jewish district is almost not visible in the city scape.

The followers of the Evangelical-Augsburg Church were numerous in the 17–19th century. Now they are almost absent in Białystok's community. Areas of two former evangelical graveyards are signed in cityscape: 1) in the form of the lapidarium

(1994–1996 designed by Jerzy Grygorczuk) with a collection of tombstone elements near Wasilkowska street (Fig. 1.8a) and 2) a new sculpture and greenery composition on Sienny Square (Rynek Sienny) realised according to the conception of sculpturer Jarosław Perszko in 2020 (Fig. 1.8b). The crossed lines of monument and square are a symbol of the intersection of different cultures and communities in Białystok (Fig. 1.8c).

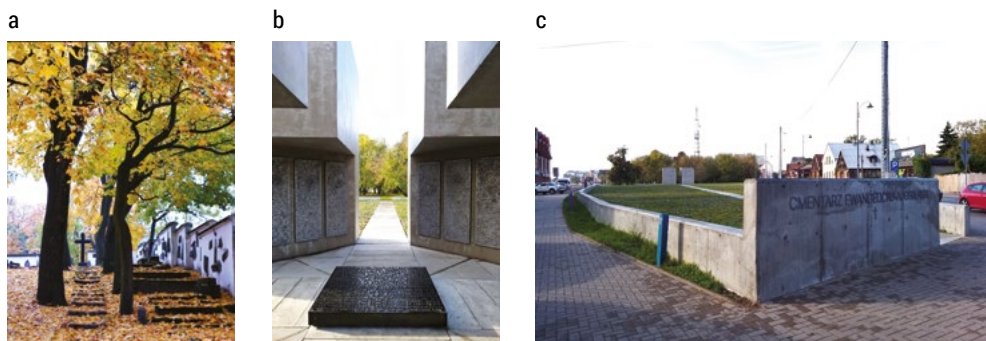


FIG. 1.8. Former Evangelical cemeteries in Białystok, Poland: a – Lapidarium on Wasilkowska street b – monument on Sienny Square, c – Sienny Square, Sienny Rynek (Source: a, b, c photos by D. Gawryluk)

The religious graveyards were absorbed by the city and their functionality was changed. Białystok projects are based on the integration of greenery and history in the places of former Jewish and Evangelical graveyards.

1.3.2. An historic city with “international spirit”: Madrid, Spain

An historical Egyptian temple was moved from Egypt to Madrid, but not many of its inhabitants know the importance of this “landmark”.

The construction of the Assuán dam in the beginning of the 1960’s was going to flood a number of heritage buildings of the Nubian Valley. The First international rescue collaboration was launched by UNESCO. Spain was rewarded by Egypt for its contribution with Debod temple, transferred to Madrid from Alexandria and installed in the Prince Pio Mountain.

Work for reconstruction and restoration in Madrid was done by Manuel Herrero Palacios and Martín Almagro Basch (archaeologist), but not until 1970–1971. Restitutions were made with Sotomayor sandstone ashlar masonry and two residual pylons of the three initial ones were mounted on an axial route immersed in a gentle slope, inside an artificial pond integrated into the remodelling of the park where it is located (Fig. 1.9, 1.10).



FIG. 1.9. “Templo de Debod” in Madrid, Spain (Source: photos by M.A. Flórez de la Colina, 2020)

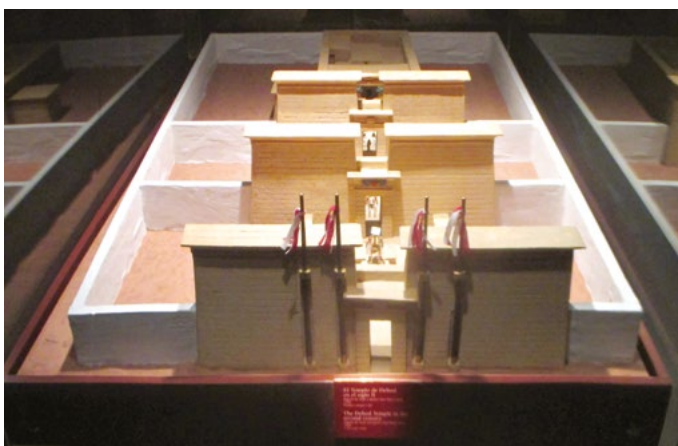


FIG. 1.10. Model of “Templo de Debod” as it was in 2nd century, located inside the museum (Source: photos by M.A. Flórez de la Colina, 2020)

Recent studies report the progressive deterioration of the temple due to environmental problems, generating a controversy about future actions for better conservation (Arquitectura de Madrid, 2020).

1.3.3. A city that integrates greenery and history: Klaipeda, Lithuania

The greenery of Klaipeda city and suburbs had a utilitarian and aesthetic significance. Strong sea winds and blowing sand value the creation of protective barriers. To make the city more beautiful, the magistrate installed squares and green squares in the city, demanded to arrange them, and to decorate the cemetery with bushes and flowers. Already in the second half of the 18th century by the order of the Prussian government, the streets of Klaipeda were planted with trees (Tatoris, 1994). In the middle of the 19th century planting in the promenade began. This promenade was five km long. There were English-style parks on the edge of this alley. Over time, city gardens and squares are installed. In the 19th century larger railway stations had to have

squares, two of them were installed near Klaipėda station. In the 20th century planning of parks and squares becomes stricter forms – geometric. Urban and suburban greenery was supplemented by a cemetery. In addition to respect for deceased ancestors, they also had an important aesthetic educational significance (Tatoris, 1994). During the history of Klaipėda, there were many cemeteries, each community had its own cemetery. In the 1820 a new City Cemetery was opened in which everyone could find a place for themselves. It was decided in advance to plant trees in the cemetery (Demereckas, 2014). The carefully maintained cemetery became a quiet place, which was considered the pride of Klaipėda. The plan of 1840 already shows the new City Cemetery, designed in the classicist style (Fig. 1.11), which was divided into four rectangles of equal size. After the great fire of 1857, a new wide path to the cemetery was installed (Demereckas, 2014) (Fig. 1.11).

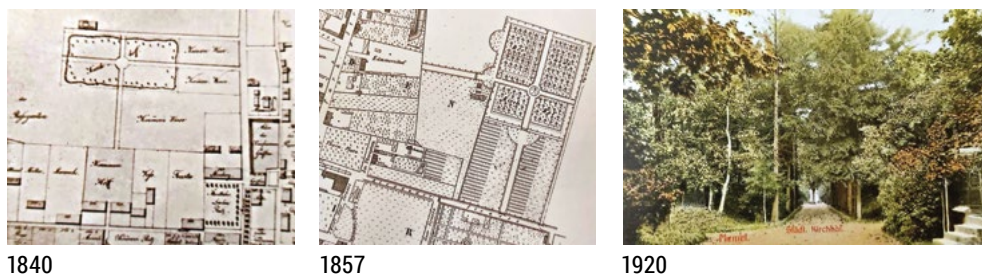


FIG. 1.11. City Cemetery from 19th till 20th century, Klaipėda, Lithuania (Source: photos from Demereckas, 2014)

The cemetery has been redesigned: a semi-circular square has been formed in the western part in front of the cemetery. The town cemetery was park-style, so it was great for walks (Fig. 1.11). At the junction of 19th – 20th centuries, an expanding city began to approach these cemeteries. On the 1944–45 Klaipėda lost most of its population, so this cemetery no longer performed a memorial function. For the new owners of the city, the cemetery has become a place to profit from. In the late 1960s, metal gratings and crosses were stolen in the cemetery, marble tombstones were removed, and residents planted potatoes. In the 1957 it was decided to close the cemetery and turn it into a city greenery. But it took time. In the seventies, when the city management was able to revive and implement the idea of creating a park in the former cemetery, the name of M. Mazvydas was chosen for this park (*Klaipėdos skulptūrų parkas ir jo tapatumų iššūkiai*, 2012). This park had to become a sculpture park, have not only a recreational but also an exhibition purpose, and the sculptures had to be created in Klaipėda and donated to the city. Today, 116 sculptures of various themes are exhibited in Klaipėda Sculpture Park, created by 67 sculptors during the sculptors' symposiums in Smiltynė (1977–1991) (Fig. 1.12).



FIG. 1.12. City Cemetery from 19th till 20th century, Klaipeda, Lithuania (Source: photo by Žygimantas Gedvilas)

The sculptors' symposia took place during the summer and were the most significant cultural initiative of the time, not only in the city but throughout the country. In the 1986 Klaipeda Sculpture Park was declared as a natural monument of local significance. Each sculpture in the park tells its own story, has a certain meaning, meaning or thought. In the sculpture park you can also find the first half of the 19th – 20th century's tombstones remembering the history of Klaipeda city (Fig. 12). Today, the territory of the Sculpture Park includes and unites several dimensions (*Skulptūrų parko istorija*, 2017): 1. historical memorial legacy, commemorating the memory of famous people buried in the City Cemetery; 2. the artistic legacy of modern decorative sculpture, which is currently well preserved and maintained; 3. the use of this place as a public space for a cultural event.

1.4. Conclusions

The cultural values of these three European cities can be an example of what is already being done, but also of the possibilities this can have of a better understanding both of our past and present, to build a future more sustainable and resilient future, sharing and communicating them to new European citizens.

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