

## SYMBOLICAL CEMETERIES AS AN IMPULSE OF TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN MOUNTAINOUS AREAS OF SLOVAKIA

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### **Abstract:**

*The primary aim of this article is to present symbolical cemeteries situated in Slovak mountain areas with an emphasis on the evaluation of their potential for tourism development and alternative form of tourism development – dark tourism. The specific intent is to highlight the social meaning of symbolical cemeteries, perhaps even commemorative sites as a memento, in reflection of the current trends in tourism and the sociological patterns of the modern society behaviour, from the position of demand carrier for tourism and its alternative forms. The benefit of this study is the spatial data analysis in the geographic information system application, namely through the obtaining, processing and evaluation of the available data that are spatially tied to the research area. The article suggests the possibilities of applying geographic information system as a tool for spatial data managing and as a tool for creating conditions for physical - geographic assessment of geosystems in mountainous areas of Slovakia. An expected outcome of mentioned activities is a digital, spatially georeferenced model of surveyed sites, which will be developed upon a vector base in GIS 10 application software that is utilized to process heterogeneous geographical data in a Geoinformatics environment, as well as the knowledge of geographic information system.*

### **Key words:**

*sociology of tourism, dark tourism, geosystem, geographical information system, geomorphology, division of the Carpathians*

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## INTRODUCTION

Within living memory, the society is confronted with death. Whether it is a real experience or it is mediated through the media and other communication and information devices and sources, death and the idea of dying are a daily part of human life. Cemeteries and burial places have been part of geographical and tourist space not only in the past but also in the present time. They ceased to be a peripheral sites or taboo and became an important destination, respectively a final destination. By the installation of memorial plaques, they are an important source of information and a reference for their visitors.

The aim of the presented paper is to highlight the symbolic mountain cemeteries in Slovakia, which have a specific position in the cultural and spiritual legacy of Slovaks. For much as we have mentioned places with the “symbolic” reference of these who lost their life in mountains, they rather take the form of pious places, respectively memorial places (memento) than real places, where the bodies of the victims lie.

The fact that the mentioned issue has not been discussed so far, the important contribution of the paper is spatial analysis of the objects by evaluating physical-geographical conditions of the chosen area and creating a digital spatially-georeferenced 3D model of the study objects, created in application software GIS 10.

## THEORETICAL BASIS

There are various viewpoints on a cemetery. According to *funeral act no. 131 of 2010 C.L. § 2* which defines basic terms, a **cemetery** is a burial ground designed for a burial ceremony, **grave place** is a place on a burial ground, which is designed for building a grave, a tomb or a place to store an urn and a **grave** is a place that was created by digging a hole to place a coffin with human remains into the soil.

Cemetery represents an anthropogenic form of relief, i.e. created by humans for the purpose of burying the deceased. From the genetic-morphological classification they belong to burial (funeral) forms. It is a surface form, which is spatially defined and created by the combination of underground (grave hole) and surface (gravestone, tomb) forms. Burial of the deceased into graves, which are localized in the areas particularly designed for this purpose, is typical for Christians, Jews and Muslims. These places are called cemeteries (Matlovič, 2001).

Cemeteries are often seen only as a special place for burying the deceased. However, for many people they have other functions and significations as well. Hupková (2009, p. 8) mentions that „*cemeteries are a significant part of cultural heritage. Cemeteries merge both material cultural message and historical message, which are presented by tombstones, symbols and epitaph with spiritual message. Thus, the specific atmosphere reflecting the culture of local inhabitants arises*“. Perception of death, way of burying people, rites and burial traditions, the visual aspects of a cemetery, legislative and economic relations, all of them are phenomena changing over time and space. The character of a cemetery is influenced by physical geographical features (relief, hydrometeorologic aspects, fauna and flora) and local socio-historical features (history and culture). If a cemetery has a special distinctive function, it is formed mainly by material objects and spiritual message blending.

A substantial culture is created by cemeteries, particularly through the cemetery's architecture. Graves and cemeteries are sometimes the only source of information about the very long gone past and about the people's way of life. The grave itself is a reflection of a burial rite. Cemeteries are also a significant component in urban planning (development forecast and new suitable areas for cemeteries) (Hupková, 2010).

Cemeteries and burial places have been part of geographical and tourist domain not only in past, but also in present. Cemeteries have become tourist destinations for further education and historical excursions. Tanaš (2004) outlines the functional change of old cemetery from funeral and memorial function towards tourist and symbolic one. Cemeteries ceased to be peripheral areas or taboo zones. They have become an important worth visiting destination, and for some people they represent places where to spend their free time.

Within the framework of a more complex and visual explanation of the symbolic cemeteries in the mountainous areas of Slovakia as a potential impulse of tourism development, the geographic information system (GIS), a tool for managing spatial data and evaluating the physical-geographical aspects of various geosystems, was used. Digital and spatially georeferenced database constituted a means of shapes were created using the GIS 10 application software.

Both location and geomorphological aspects of the area were created by vectorization of surface heterogeneous geographic data layers. We have created map outputs; height to surface area ratio, gradient of relief and cardinal direction orientation and a complex 3D model (see attachment); from input vector maps that were transformed into raster shapes (linked raster data created from line and points measuring data) by using ArcMap through the use of ArcToolbox – spatial analysis and triangulation. The final TIN layout in ArcScene represents coherent surface as a whole. We can work in this surrounding with the newly opened shapes by using different geo-information methods e.g. Spatial analyst (surface aspect; surface slope). These visual outputs form the basis for understanding complex topics of research and its application to the general lay public. They allow easier understanding and visualisation of the issue through sensorial perception.

### **Classification of cemeteries**

As it was already mentioned, cemetery, as a funeral form of relief, is very little explored in terms of theoretical point of view. The complex documentation and classification of cemeteries cannot be found in the literature yet; however we can outline several approaches.

In relation to urbanized area, the classification is as follows:

- a. urban cemetery**
- b. rural cemetery**

According to secular and ecclesiastical administration, they are often classified as

- a. communal cemetery**
- b. church cemetery** (typical sign of church cemeteries is confessional segregation, they are divided in catholic, evangelic, Jewish etc.)

In relation to military events, we divide them in:

- a. **civil cemeteries**
- b. **military cemeteries**

Of course there are also specific categories of cemetery, such as: national cemetery, symbolic cemetery etc.

In this paper, the main focus is given to **symbolic cemeteries**, which represent a specific category.

Typical features of symbolic cemeteries:

1. The dominant function is not burial (to bury the deceased) but reverent and commemorative. There are no deceased in these cemeteries. The main reason and symbolism of these cemeteries is best characterized by the motto on the oldest one: "In memory of the dead - as a warning to the alive".
2. The linking element is not the place of residence, gender, nationality or religion, but the place of (tragic) death.
3. Symbolic cemeteries are compositionally set in the surrounding nature, thus create one harmonic unit. They do not interfere with the environment, but enrich it.
4. The commemorative function is materially expressed by the presence of crosses and plaques, where the place, date of birth and death and the circumstances of the tragic death are stated.
5. The presence of a chapel and consecration of the place give a **spiritual dimension** to symbolic cemeteries.
6. Symbolic cemeteries as a **tourist attraction**.
7. Symbolic cemetery as a **historic monument**.

## **GENESIS OF SYMBOLIC CEMETERIES IN SLOVAKIA**

The very beginnings of symbolic cemeteries of the victims of the mountains stretch back to the 1930s, when a Prague artist, Otakar Štáfl, presented this idea. As the artist himself said, the ideas of creating a symbolic cemetery in the High Tatras were preceded by a negative experience from the field survey with his explanation: "to concentrate all depressing acting memorial plaques of victims at one accessible and dignified place, because until that time they were spread in different places of the Tatras."

For the first time, on 30 December 1930, Štáfl published his idea of the appearance of a symbolic cemetery in the form of a drawing in the *Večer* daily. Subsequently, there was a lengthy process of administrative - legal acts, as well as the searching for a suitable place for its location. Initially the location of the symbolic cemetery would have been in the settlement of Štrbské Pleso, in the Trigan part. However the management of national spa Štrbské Pleso rejected this intention and justified its statement by claiming that such object is not suitable, respectively does not fit into the spa environment where visitors are recreating and regenerating. The final decision where to place the symbolic cemetery was made in 1934. Thanks to zealous efforts of a Prague writer Eugénia Vyskočilová to agitate the idea of establishment of a symbolic place, the "place of places" was found – the stone pine wood under the western wall of Ostrva, where Eugénia Vyskočilová presented the memorial sentence:

“Here will be the place for remembrance to the dead and a warning to the alive.” The motto was taking over the others symbolic cemeteries and the places of reverence of mountains’ victims. Our eldest cemetery of the High Tatra Mountains’ victims was officially opened to the public since the 1940.

**Table 1:** *The symbolic mountain cemeteries in Slovakia*

<b>1st CATEGORY: SYMBOLIC CEMETERY</b>	
1.	Symbolic cemetery of Liptov region, part of Western Tatra Mountains’ Victims, Žiarska dolina (Krásnô), 1995
2.	Symbolic cemetery of victims in Orava region, part of Western Tatra Mountains (Zverovka), 2009
3.	Symbolic cemetery under the edge of Ostrva in High Tatras (Popradské pleso), 1940
4.	Symbolic cemetery of Low Tatra Mountains’ victims, Ostredok (Stodôľky), 1954
5.	Symbolic cemetery of Low Tatra Mountains’ speleologists (Jaskyňa mŕtvych netopierov)
6.	Symbolic cemetery of Malá Fatra Mountains’ victims, Vrátna dolina, 1998
7.	Symbolic cemetery of Veľká Fatra Mountains’ victims (Kráľova studňa), 2011
8.	Symbolic tramp cemetery in Košariská (Malé Karpaty), 2003
9.	Symbolic tramp cemetery of the White cross (Malé Karpaty) – the end of 20th century
10.	Symbolic tramp cemetery in Ružín
11.	Symbolic climber cemetery in Manínska úžina, (Súľovské vrchy), 1960
12.	Symbolic forester cemetery in Vydrovská dolina (Veporské vrchy), 2004
13.	Historical forester cemetery (Čierny Váh forest settlement), 1780
14.	Symbolic cemetery of Tisovec speleologists in Míchňová abyss (Muránska planina), 1991
15.	Symbolic cemetery of Slovenský Raj victims (Kláštorisko), 2010

Source: <http://hiking.sk>

14 years later the next symbolic cemetery was opened – The symbolic cemetery of The Low Tatras’ victims, Stodôľky (Ostredok). In the next period, there was stagnation in establishing these memorial sites for political reasons; they became “unacceptable” for the political apparatus of the then regime. Significant changes have been recorded in the genesis of symbolic objects in the 1990s, when their numbers have begun to increase. Especially the last decade represents the period of a significant progress of the establishment of the symbolic cemeteries in mountainous areas (see table 1).

## **SYMBOLIC MOUNTAIN CEMETERIES**

1. The symbolic cemetery under the Mount Ostrva (The High Tatras, Popradské pleso) 1940
2. The symbolic cemetery Stodôľky (The Low Tatras, Demänovská dolina) 1954
3. The symbolic cemetery Krásnô (The Western Tatras, Žiarska dolina) 1995
4. The symbolic cemetery in Vrátna ( Malá Fatra, Vrátna dolina) 1998
5. The symbolic cemetery near the Chalet Zverovka (The Western Tatras, Roháče) 2009
6. The symbolic cemetery of Kláštorisko (Slovenský raj) 2010
7. The symbolic cemetery under range of Križna (Veľká Fatra) 2011

**The Stodôľky symbolic cemetery** is the oldest symbolic cemetery of mountain victims in the Low Tatras, located in a picturesque area of Demänovská dolina. The installation of a statue of mountain (partisan) pieta in July 1954 is considered an establishment of the cemetery. This place of reverence was officially opened 55 years later, on 26<sup>th</sup> June 2010, by the delegates of the Demänovská Dolina village, The Mountain Rescue Service, The Seniors' Club of The Mountain Rescue Service. It took name The Symbolic Cemetery of the Low Tatras Victims. In the mentioned year, a six metre high carved wooden cross with a portrayal of mountain pieta representing a statue of a mother and her child (author: academic sculptor Alfonz Groma) was installed. In the same year, a chapel with very accurate inscription „*In memory of the dead - as a warning to the living*“ (SME, 2010b) was built within the cemetery. The site of the symbolic cemetery together with all objects is gently set into the natural environment that represents its genius loci.

The symbolic cemetery is localized in the Demänovská dolina, on the Ostredok, ground elevation Stodôľky. Ascent to the cemetery is not difficult and a visit can be done even without using special hiking equipment. The shortest route to the cemetery leads from Jasná, along the ridge of Ostredok and takes approximately 30 minutes. Along the route, tourists can find routing tables with information about direction and remaining time to the destination.

**The Symbolic cemetery Krásňô** is dedicated to the mountain victims of The High Tatras. This place of reverence located in Žiarská dolina (valley) was made accessible on 22.10.1995 with help of volunteers of The Mountain Rescue Service, the owner of the Žiar chalet, the municipal office in Žiar and territorial-lords (urbárik) (SME, 2012).

The Symbolical cemetery Krásňô is located in the upper area of the Žiarska dolina in Krásňô, under the Príslop hill, not far away from the Žiar chalet. Tourists need to follow the green tourist sign in direction towards the Šarafiov vodopád (waterfall) (Trstenský, 2013).

In the altitude of 1525 metres, near to Popradské pleso (The Poprad Tarn), under the western side of Ostrva, in stone pine vegetation, a **symbolic cemetery** dedicated to the reverence **of the victims** of mountain disasters **in the High Tatras** is located. Initially, the memorial plaques dedicated to the mountain victims of The High Tatras were placed at the points of mountain disasters (Vysoké Tatry, 2014). For the first time, in 1936, an academic painter Otakar Štáfl expressed an idea to create a memorial place. Later on, Alojz Lutonský (the secretary of the Tatra Commission of The Czechoslovak Tourist Club), Eugénia Vyskočilová (the author of motto: In memory of the dead - as a warning to the living) and many other enthusiasts joined him (Plus 7 dní, 2013). The construction of the symbolic cemetery was finished and officially opened to the public on 11.8.1940. On the symbolic cemetery, apart from the victims of mountain disasters of The High Tatras, there are also plaques dedicated to important Slovak mountain climbers, who died during foreign expeditions, and to important polish “Taterník” (Tatra enthusiast) (Vysoké Tatry, 2014)

The symbolic cemetery is situated in the Mengusovská dolina valley in a stone pine grove on the Limbovec hillock under the western side of Ostrva near the Popradské pleso. Several hiking trails lead to the pious place, the shortest one leads

from the chalet near the Popradské pleso with approximate-duration of around 30 minutes (Trstenský, 2013).

Since the 1998, the pious place of the victims of the mountain disasters in The Malá Fatra is located in the Vrátna dolina under the Biele skaly. Establishment of **the symbolic cemetery of the victims of Malá Fatra** has risen from the idea of the members of The Mountain Rescue Service. Thanks to the voluntary financial support of a Mountain Rescue Service member, Jozef Mič, the symbolic cemetery was officially opened to the public on 25.7.1998 (SME, 2010a).

The symbolic cemetery is located in the Vrátna dolina – Stará dolina under the Biele skaly above the valley station of the funicular railway to Snilovské sedlo.

On 8.11.2009, **the symbolic cemetery dedicated to the victims of Roháče** (the Orava part of the Western Tatras) was officially accessed near the Zverovka chalet. Around 20 years ago, Ján Jurina (the former chief of the Mountain Rescue Service ZT North) had expressed the idea of establishment of a place of reverence. There were more proposed localities at that time but after all, the locality under Poľana in Zverovka was the most appropriate. The architectural design with the features of Orava architecture was developed by Lucia Maruščinová. With the aid of rescue workers from Roháče in cooperation with the municipal office in Zuberec and with the financial support of sponsors, the effort of the establishment of a place of reverence was accomplished (in) the same year (Roháče, 2014).

The symbolic cemetery is located in the Orava part of The Western Tatras in The Roháčska dolina- poľana Zverovka near the Zverovka chalet.

In the heart of The Slovenský raj, on the Poľana Kláštorisko meadow, **the symbolic cemetery of the Slovenský raj's victims** and a place of reverence for personalities of The Slovenský raj was officially opened on 20.11.2010. The symbolic cemetery is a free-standing object situated next to the partially reconstructed ruins of a Carthusian monastery. The cemetery is an exterior gallery full of wooden works of art of the young artists from the Spiš region. Plaques with the names of victims will be installed on these sculptures. (Slovakia Travel, 2014).

The cemetery is located between the chalet and the ruins of the Carthusian monastery in the Slovenský raj, the Kláštorisko plain.

The latest **symbolic cemetery** is located under the range of The Krížna and is dedicated to the victims of mountain accidents **in The Veľká Fatra**. From 20.8.2011, the place is opened to the public. The central motive of the memorial place is a cross, which was designed by architect, Vladimír Tomala. The cross is a symbol of obeisance to those people who could not come home to their relatives and at the same time it admonishes current visitors not to underestimate the dangerousness of the mountains.

Beside the cross, plaques with the names of the victims have been installed there as well. Not only the members of the Mountain Rescue Service in Slovakia and The Club of Seniors of The Mountain Rescue Service, but also the town of Banská Bystrica, Self-Governing Region, The Club of Slovak Tourists and others helped with the constructing and financing the symbolic cemetery (SME, 2011).

Place of reverence is located near the Kľačova Studňa – The Cliff of Smrekovica, nearby the cairn of the fallen in the World War II., between the Kľačova studňa hill and the Smrekovec hill.

**Table 2: Basic data to symbolic objects**

name of object	year of foundation	GPS
Symbolic cemetery of Low Tatra Mountains' victims	1940	N49°08.937' E20°04.783'
Symbolic cemetery of High Tatra Mountains' victims	1954	N48°58.89' E19°35.072'
Symbolic cemetery of Western Tatra Mountains' victims	1995	N49°10.963' E19°43.153'
Symbolic cemetery of Malá Fatra Mountains' victims	1998	N49°12.431' E19°2.904'
Symbolic cemetery of Roháče Mountains' victims	2009	N 49° 14.951 E 019° 42.721'
Symbolic cemetery of Slovenský raj victims	2010	N48°56.619' E20°25.226'
Symbolic cemetery of Veľká Fatra Mountains' victims *	2011	N48°52.977' E19°2.452'

geomorphological area boundary	important tourist object	website
Vysoké Tatry (Popradské pleso)	Chata pri Popradskom plese	<a href="http://www.popradskepleso.com/sk/titulka/">http://www.popradskepleso.com/sk/titulka/</a>
Nízke Tatry (Demänovská dolina)	Mikulášska chata	<a href="http://www.mikulasskachata.sk/sk">http://www.mikulasskachata.sk/sk</a>
Západné Tatry (Žiarska dolina)	Žiarska chata	<a href="http://www.dolinky.szm.com/chata.htm">http://www.dolinky.szm.com/chata.htm</a>
Malá Fatra (Vrátna dolina)	Chata Vrátna	<a href="http://www.chatavratna.eu/">http://www.chatavratna.eu/</a>
Západné Tatry (Roháče)	Chata Zverovka	<a href="http://www.chatazverovka.sk/">http://www.chatazverovka.sk/</a>
Slovenský raj (Kláštorská)	Chatová osada a turistická chata Kláštorisko	<a href="http://www.slovenskyraj-info.sk/chata_klastorisko.php">http://www.slovenskyraj-info.sk/chata_klastorisko.php</a>
Veľká Fatra (Križna)	Hotel Kráľová studňa	<a href="http://www.kralovastudna.com/">http://www.kralovastudna.com/</a>

\* Symbolic cemetery with the status of place of reverence

## PHYSICAL-GEOGRAPHICAL CHARACTERISTIC OF THE STUDY AREA

Symbolical cemeteries are situated in our highest mountains (see table 4 in attachment). All the while, mountains have been well known thanks to unique beauties of nature – peaks, tarns, gorges, clefts, etc.

In terms of geomorphological subdivision (Mazúr - Lukniš 1980), symbolic cemeteries are located in the sub-province of Inner Western Carpathians in the Fatra-Tatra area; the latest cemetery is located in the geomorphological area of the Slovenské rudohorie.

The most (three) of the symbolic cemeteries are located in the highest mountains – Tatra Mountains. Their location is dependent on relatively long historical period of tourism and the attractiveness and uniqueness of Slovak mountains. The other factor is also difficult and “trappy” alpine terrain, which was underestimated by the tourists. That is why, beside all superlatives connected with the Tatras, we also have to allege the highest number of the victims of mountain accidents which have conditioned the creation of the symbolic cemeteries.

As it is noted at the table above, Tatra Mountains are geomorphologically part of Fatra-Tatra area. They are the highest part of Carpathians. They are located in the northern part of Slovakia, where they create a natural boundary with Poland –three quarters of their area are located in Slovakia. Tatry are core mountains. They are built by three significant geological mega units. Tatric is the basement zone formed by crystalline rock and their sedimentary mantle lapped by subtatras nappes – lower križňanský nappe (fatrikum) and upper Choč nappe (hronikum). Nappes are mainly formed by Mesozoic carbonates – limestone and dolomites. At the end of paleogene and paricularly during the Miocene a massive uplift movement had begun. (Nemčok et.al 1993). While the formation of Tatra Mountains, an important role had an iceberg. The motion of the iceberg created the typical glacial forms - moraines, tarns, gorges, cirques, etc. Tatra Mountains are divided into 2 subunits – Western and Eastern Tatras which are separated by Kôprova dolina (Kôprova valley). In the Eastern Tatras, in a part of Vysoké Tatry (Hihg Tatras), the oldest symbolic cemetery in Slovakia is



located. This cemetery is not far from Popradské pleso (Poprad Mountain Lake) under the edge of Ostrva. The altitude of High Tatras is high indeed, because we can find there 29 peaks with the absolute altitude over 2500 meters. The highest, Gerlach Peak (2 655 m) is not only the highest peak of Tatra Mountains but also of the whole Carpathian belt. The western Tatras are formed by Variscan granites and granodiorites. The south part of the area (Liptovské Tatry) is formed by paragneisses, schists and migmatized gneisses with patches of amphibolites from the era between Proterozoic and upper Palaeozoic, and also by orthogneisses and migmatites from the same geological era. Crystallinicum and Mesozoic of the northernmost part are divided by a narrow belt built of slates, claystones and quartzites of lower Triassic. Roháče are well known thanks to their 2 highest peaks resembling of devil's horns. Mountain rescue service took up the activity in Roháče since 15 May 1054.

In addition to the Tatras, „whether High or Low“, we can find symbolic cemeteries that are dedicated to the memory of the victims, who died during mountain tragedies, also in our others mountains, namely in Malá and Veľká Fatra.

The latest symbolic cemetery is located in the Hôľna Fatra subunit, which is a part of the geomorphological unit Fatra. It is a relatively widespread **core** mountain. The Granite core rises to the surface only in the area of Smrekovica and Lubochnianska Valley. The rest is built mainly by Mesozoic sedimentary rocks.

Next to the last cemetery was founded the Symbolic cemetery of Slovenský Raj victims, Kláštorisko. In contrast to the others, this cemetery is located in the area of Slovenské rudohorie. Slovenský raj along with Muránska planina form geomorphological unit of Spišsko-gemerský kras. Slovenský raj is geologically a part of Gemer (Gemicum). The part of Slovenský raj is built by the Northern Gemicum synclinore, the periphery of the synclinore consists of Werfen formations (Lower Triassic), slates of varied layers and approximately 150-300 m thick gutenstein and wetterstein limestones and dolomites. Slovenský raj is very popular among tourists for its unmistakable atmosphere and natural value - karst plains, gorges, waterfalls, etc. Moreover, tourists seek this National Park because of its unique hiking trails. They can find ladders and steps planted directly in the rock, which offer an unforgettable experience. On the other hand, this terrain is difficult and treacherous even if the path is in good condition.

## **SOCIOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF TOURISM AND ITS REFLECTION IN DARK TOURISM**

Technical and technological progress brings innovation, information and communication accessibility, which have their basis in the development and application of information communication technologies and also contribute to the strengthening of globalization and social relations transformation.

In consequence of globalization we can observe the process of generalization in the society, i.e. in such environment the social status of an individual is being transformed. According to (Keller, J.) the phase of modernity, chronologically belonging to the last quarter of the 20th century, is characterized by the effort of a human being to be free of the repression effects of social structures and to assert more expressively in the need for self-identification and self-realization. This sociological

trend can also be observed in the subject of tourism (tourists). Its consumer demand tends largely to such tourism products that allow them (tourists) to confront their own experience and environment. Individualization, as an interpretation scheme of contemporary society guarantees more authenticity and more space for self-fulfillment of an individual. We can observe these trends in travellers' habits, when the participant of tourism, on the base of experience, is more flexible and pragmatic in choosing within the offering standard. Increasingly, consciously or unconsciously, tourist enforces their individual personality. Individual consumption of tourism contributes to the genesis of the alternative forms of tourism, an example of what dark tourism is.

The genesis of dark tourism as a concept has its origins in 1990s. The term, dark tourism, gained ground in 1996, when John Lennon and Malcolm Foley (from Caledonian University, Glasgow) used this term in the academic journal „International Journal of Heritage Studies“. Dark tourism is defined by Foley and Lennon (1996) as “the phenomenon which encompasses the presentation and consumption (by visitors) of real and commodified death and disaster sites“. Taking the basic definition of dark tourism into account, we can discuss about the motivation, respectively about visitation of the objects (or places) that associate with death, disaster, tragedy, suffering, etc.

## **DEATH IN THE CONTEXT OF TRAVELLING AND TOURISM**

Interest in death is a new social phenomenon. As an example of the early forms of tourism in association with death and dying, which demonstrated some signs of organized activity, we can mention gladiatorial fights from the ancient Roma, pilgrimage and middle-age public executions. Another example is the first registered sightseeing in England – 1838, linked with the train excursion in order to witness the execution of two killers.

Maccannell (1989) noted that Paris sightseeing was preceded by visits of morgues in 19th century, which could be considered as the forerunners of “Body World’s exhibitions”. Seaton (1999) sticks to the idea that death, suffering and tourism, have been existing in mutual interaction for over centuries. For instance, he shows surviving records of the visits to the battlefield at Waterloo in 1816, where the visitors could directly watch the running of the fightings, moreover the dying of the participants.

There are many other examples that lead to broad categorization of the dark tourism. It should be noted that the following categorization is not definitive.

**Table 3: A categorisation of dark tourism**

<b>Divisions of the dark</b>	
<i>Perilous places</i> Dangerous destinations from the past and present	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• towns of horror</li> <li>• dangerous destinations</li> </ul>
<i>Houses of horror</i> Buildings associated with death and horror, either actual or represented	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• dungeons of death</li> <li>• heinous hotels</li> </ul>
<i>Fields of fatality</i> Areas / land commemorating death, fear, fame or infamy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• bloody battlegrounds</li> <li>• the hell of Holocaust</li> <li>• cemeteries for celebrities</li> </ul>
<i>Tours of torment</i> Tours / visits to attractions associated with death, murder and mayhem	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• mayhem and murder</li> <li>• the now notorious</li> </ul>
<i>Themed thanatos</i> Collections / museums themed around death and suffering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• morbid museums</li> <li>• monuments to morality</li> </ul>

Source: (Sharpley, Stone, 2009)

No matter how diverse the views on death are, it always contributes to the understanding of the life itself. It points out the goals and possibilities that the life brings and also admits that the life have its own limits (Aries). This idea is reflected in symbolic cemeteries too. On the one hand they present, for their visitors, a kind of a database with names, causes and places of death, i.e. they point at the limitation of human life, and on the other hand, these places are a kind of a message to show the importance of human life and the need to protect it. Cemeteries attract more and more attention, whether the visitors of mountainous areas who seek these objects on purpose or those whose visit of destination was not planned (primary); as well as general and professional public.

## CONCLUSION

Since the mid-twentieth century, the building of burial places and cemeteries away from residential areas has started not only in our country but also in the rest of the world. What makes symbolic mountain cemeteries special and unique is their location i.e. their “positioning” in the landscape, the nature environment by using existing materials and resources: forests, rock formations, etc. All of these create space for the application of new architectural principles, genesis of atypical funeral forms but also interdisciplinary approaches to the study of these objects.

These objects can be considered also as an important sociological phenomenon. They are interesting touristic places for all tourists, who go to mountainous areas knowingly and wilfully or unknowingly (accidentally) with the variability in motivation of their visitation. Symbolic objects are turning into places of passive recreation that allow visitors to identify themselves, respectively to confront their own life with reference to those who lost their lives in the mountains; to understand the meaning of their life and the importance of protecting it.

At the same time, we can perceive these places as an ongoing cultural and religious reference of the Early Slavs to whom the forest represented characteristic

environment for living and also it had an important function during burial ceremonies.

The present society is exposed to daily “consummation” of information mediated by the media. Death itself and the topic of dying are becoming “publicized phenomenon” that contributes to de-taboo death. Here it is appropriate to emphasize the importance of ethics in the way of mediation and interpretation of death and awareness, what is morally acceptable for a human individual or a society, and what is not.

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## ATTACHMENTS

**Table 4:** *The localization of symbolical cemeteries within the geomorphological units (according to Mazúr - Lukniš 1980).*

Subsystem	Province	Subprovince	Area	Unit	Subunit	Part
Carpathian Mountains	Western Carpathians	Inner Western Carpathians	Fatra-Tatra Area	Tatra Mountains	Eastern Tatras	<b>Vysoké Tatry (High Tatras) 1</b>
					Western Tatras	Belianské Tatry
						Červené vrchy (Red Mountains)
						Osobitá
						Liptovské kopy
						<b>Liptovské Tatry 2</b>
						<b>Roháče 3</b>
						Sivý vrch (Grey Mountain)
				Low Tatras	Kráľovoľské Tatry	
					<b>Ďumbierské Tatry 4</b>	
				Malá Fatra (Little Fatra)	Lúčanská Malá Fatra	
					<b>Krivánska Malá Fatra 5</b>	
				Veľká Fatra (Great Fatra)	Bralná Fatra	
					<b>Hôľna Fatra 6</b>	
					Lysec	
					Revúcke podolie	
					Šiprúň	
					Šipska Fatra	
					Zvolen	
			Slovenské Rudohorie (Slovak Ore Mountains)	Spiš-Gemer karst	<b>Slovenský raj (Slovak paradise) 7</b>	
					Muránska planina (Murán Plateau)	

1 The symbolic cemetery under the edge of Ostrva

2 The symbolic cemetery of Krásno

3 The symbolic cemetery near the Chata Zverovka

4 The symbolic cemetery of Stodôľky

5 The symbolic cemetery near Vrátna

6 The symbolic cemetery under range of Krížna

7 The symbolic cemetery of Kláštorisko



***Image 1: Memorial plaques of Mountains' victims (The Symbolic cemetery under the edge of Ostrva)***



***Image 2: The Symbolic cemetery of Slovenský raj victims (Kláštorskó)***

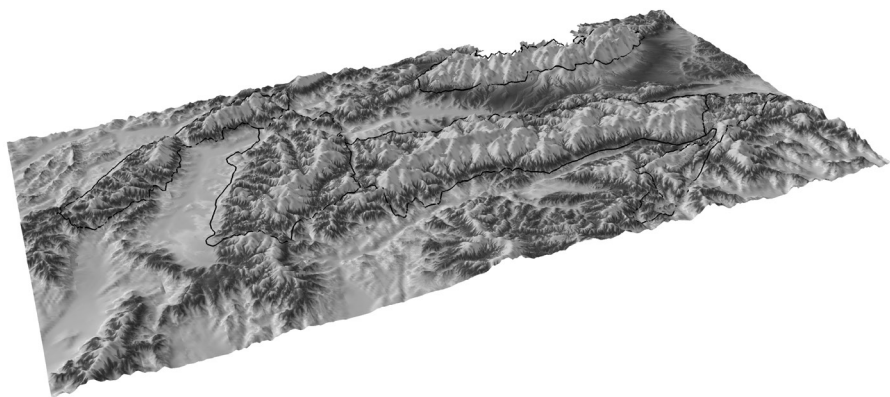


**Image 3:** *The Symbolic cemetery of Roháče Mountains' victims (Zverovka chalet)*



**Image 4:** *Memorial plaque of “heroes of The Slovak National uprising” (Symbolic cemetery of Low Tatra Mountains' victims, Stodôlky)*





***Image 5: Digital model of the studied area with the localization of symbolic objects***