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If Archaeology is Not Just About the Past. the Landscape of the KL Plaszow Memorial

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In the years 2016–2019, interdisciplinary research was carried out related to the German Nazi concentration camp KL Plaszow. Its key component was non-invasive and invasive archaeological works. They resulted in uncovering thousands of artefacts and the documentation of the material heritage related to the camp, which has been preserved to this day in the local landscape. The discoveries made were also a trigger for broader reflection and investment activities. The results bring new insight into the role and meaning of the past, present and future of the landscape of KL Plaszow. Such a landscape ties the dead and the living, various people with their objects and comprises the legacy of unimaginable events during the Second World War.

KEY-WORDS: Poland, Germany, Second World War, Nazi, Plaszow camp, landscape, materiality

INTRODUCTION – BRINGING BACK THE LANDSCAPE OF KL PLASZOW TO THE DEAD (AND LIVING)

As opposed to the places that have the established status of memorial sites, and which are supervised by the museums or local authorities in Poland and elsewhere, it is a commonplace to say that the site of the *Konzentrationslager Plaszow bei Krakau* (KL Plaszow) is a green area where historical relics of the past are not discernible at first glance (e.g., Charlesworth and Addis 2002; Drozdzewski 2012). This is significant due to the post-war history of the terrain. The official historiography and memory of the Second World War and Holocaust has long been dominated by the

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KL Auschwitz memorial, which is located only 70 kilometers from Cracow. The first commemorations in KL Plaszow took place in 1947 being an initiative of the local community and authorities. The official unveiling of the largest monument located there today dates back to 1964. Over the next few decades, the concept of commemoration has evolved from a focus on buildings to numerous forms of commemoration including a park that allows for a reflection upon the camp's history in various ways (Kocik 2017).

Archaeology plays an important role in contemporary commemoration and protection projects concerning concentration and death camps as it provides information and pieces of evidence about a painful past (e.g., Kola 2000; Gilead *et al.*, 2009; Bernbeck and Pollock 2018; Carr 2018; Karski *et al.*, 2018; ; Sturdy Colls and Branthwaite 2018). It is an important complement to a traditional historiographic approach. Human witnesses of the event, former prisoners of KL Plaszow and other concentration and death camps, unfortunately, pass away every year. The history of KL Plaszow is slowly transforming into the domain of archaeological research. Material witnesses such as spatial structures and artefacts can broaden our knowledge and understanding of the site and the lives of its prisoners. They help in reconfiguration of the very idea of the landscape of KL Plaszow as well.

Following the above premise, the Historical Museum of the City of Cracow launched a series of projects that were realised between 2016–2019. In short, their underlying concept was always the same, which was bringing back the landscape of KL Plaszow to the dead (and living). The idea was to rediscover the abandoned and supposedly empty landscape of the previous camp. Historical, archaeological, and social approaches were combined and used by a team consisting of numerous researchers to document various aspects related to the history, archaeology and after-War “life” of the camp's site. This is the first such an attempt to holistically address various issues related to the camp. We tried to show the complexity of this supposedly empty landscape – as it has often been presented by scholars and mass media. The past, present and future of the landscape was under our scrutiny. The results of the research have already been incorporated into the idea (and material realisation) of a new museum dedicated to those who lived and died behind the barbed wire in KL Plaszow. We start our discussion with what the terrain of the previous camp looked like before the project began in 2016.

THE LANDSCAPE OF KL PLASZOW IN 2016

In the southern part of Cracow there is a green refuge commonly called Krzemionki. The huge area of 2.3 km² consists of limestone hills covered by greenery, bushes and



Fig. 1. The present-day area of KL Plaszow's campsite. 2016. Photo: Ł. Czech © KL Plaszow Museum.

woods stretching from the historic buildings of the Podgórze district through areas with traces left by mining and quarries. There are numerous buildings and structures that make up the specific landmarks of this part of the city. From the Krakus' Mound, which is one of the best-known archaeological sites in the city, through more notable destinations such as the St. Benedict's church, remnants of the Cracow Fortress, with Fort Benedict included and picturesque post-mining areas. Nevertheless, along with its cultural value, this area is also a noteworthy natural complex, treated partly as an ecological reserve. This place is attractive both for tourists and residents of the overcrowded city.

On the edge of the southern part of Krzemionki there is a large, open and accessible area. It is partially marked by the paths that run along the valley. The place is a convenient terrain for walks and recreation activities. However, it hides a dark side of its history (Fig. 1). A very similar landscape and its use was presented already two decades ago by Andrew Charlesworth and Michael Addis (2002) and a decade later by Danielle Drozdowski (2012). For example, as observed by the first authors: "there is evidence of informal management practices involving small-scale piecemeal private activities. The site is used by locals from the neighbouring houses and high-rise

complexes for fly-tipping and informal recreation ranging from dog walking, strolling, and children's and adult play to motorbike scrambling and mountain biking" (Charlesworth and Addis 2002: 232).

In 2016, the Historical Museum of the City of Cracow gained a grant to document existing material and non-material relics related to the camp. A methodology consisting of historical, archaeological, and social sciences approaches was applied in order to research the history, archaeology and ethnography of KL Plaszow (see also Sturdy Colls 2015; Kostyrko and Kobiałka 2020; Kobiałka 2022; Kobiałka *et al.*, 2023). Due to the abundance of the collected data, information and material relics, this paper sketches only some of the results related to the past, present and future of the landscape of KL Plaszow. Each aspect of the landscape is discussed in a separate section.

THE LANDSCAPE OF KL PLASZOW BEFORE 2016 – A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

A historical account of KL Plaszow goes much beyond the limits of this article. This has previously been presented in detail elsewhere by the authors, both in Polish (e.g., Karski 2021) and English (Karski *et al.*, 2018; Karski and Kobiałka 2021). We highlight here only some of the most important historical facts regarding the camp's opening and functioning, development, razing to the ground as well as the later re-use of its remains. Much of this information is omitted in articles published by non-Polish authors (e.g., Charlesworth and Addis 2002; Drozdzewski 2012).

Wola Duchacka and Podgórze, two districts of Cracow, were selected in the second half of 1942 by the Nazis as the location for a forced labour camp called *Zwangsarbeitslager Plaszow des SS- und Polizeiführers im Distrikt Krakau – ZAL Plaszow* (Kotarba 2009: 23–24). The first construction work took place on the terrain of two Jewish cemeteries in these districts. The camp was originally planned as a site of imprisonment of 2000–4000 Jews from Cracow (Bieberstein 1983: 101). The concept later underwent some important modifications.

A few weeks after the liquidation of the Cracow ghetto in March 1943, around 10,000 people were imprisoned in the camp. During the next few months, Jews from adjoining minor towns were also sent to *ZAL Plaszow*. In July 1943, a special area was separated for Poles, called *Arbeitseerziehungslager – AEL* (Kotarba 2009: 78–80). Members of Roma communities were transported to the camp as well.

In January 1944, the camp was transformed into a concentration camp – *Konzentrationslager Plaszow bei Krakau*. This stage of the camp's development is presented in Steven Spielberg's *Schindler's List* (see also Karski and Kobiałka 2021). In the

spring of that year, it became a transit camp for Jews from Slovakia and Hungary on their way to KL Auschwitz (Kotarba 2009: 71–72). At that time, prisoners from the eastern districts of occupied Poland were systematically gathered in KL Plaszow. Additionally, a few thousand Poles became imprisoned in KL Plaszow as a result of so-called “Black Sunday” – a preventive action aimed to catch Poles who may have been capable of fighting in a plausible uprising in the city (Kotarba 2009: 80). From March 1943 to the autumn of 1944, mass executions took place at the camp. As well as KL Plaszow’s inmates, people caught by the Gestapo were executed in the camp and then buried there (Blumental *et al.*, 1947).

At its peak in the middle of 1944, the camp imprisoned up to 20,000 people. It consisted of approximately 200 camp structures. Among them were barracks for prisoners (separate ones for men and women, and one for children), buildings used by the camp’s administration, various warehouses, workshops, stores for food, and so on. The camp covered approximately 80 hectares (see more in Karski 2020).

In August 1944 the camp was liquidated. The prisoners were transported toward camps located further to the west. The camp’s infrastructure was systematically dismantled and transported to the west as well. Mass graves were exhumed, and the corpses of the victims were burned to cover up the evidence of the crimes that took place in the camp. The last prisoners left the camp on 14 January 1945. From 18 January 1945, the campscape was occupied by the Red Army, whose soldiers further destroyed the camp’s material remains.

During the post-War period, the campscape was partially overbuilt by shops, stores, warehouses, and blocks of flats, among other things. In 2002, 37 hectares of previous KL Plaszow were listed on a local heritage register. From that moment on, the terrain of the former camp has been officially protected as a cultural heritage site. This area became the target of archaeological research that took place between 2016 and 2019.

THE LANDSCAPE OF KL PLASZOW BETWEEN 2016 AND 2019 – AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

It seems that the landscape of KL Plaszow is usually understood as an empty place. Consider just two cases functioning in an Anglophone discourse – the papers written by Andrew Charlesworth and Michael Addis (2002) and Danielle Drozdowski (2012). In both articles, the contemporary landscape of KL Plaszow is almost completely erased of its historical, original relicts. Discussed are only monuments that were built on the campscape after the war and some of the remains of tombstones that have

been preserved until the present. Both articles present the landscape of KL Plaszow as an area of meadows, trees and bushes – an empty site without history (material heritage of the past; see also Owoc and Karski 2018).

The impact of nature on KL Plaszow is ambivalently presented by the authors too. Its role is usually perceived as something negative that increases the destruction of material relicts of the camp. This is true, but it is a one-sided perspective. Trees, bushes etc. in many cases prevent further destruction of each site made by human beings (e.g., Kobińska 2014). This is exactly what takes place in the landscape of KL Plaszow. Nature helps in preserving many examples of heritage related to the camp. Our archaeological point here is simple: a landscape does not only consist of what is seen above the ground. Its inherent and constitutive part is also what is below the ground and unseen at first glance. As we will show below: to fully grasp the complexity of the landscape of KL Plaszow, one has to make use of archaeological methods and techniques. Then one can easily come to the conclusion that the problem is not that there is almost nothing left of the camp. The problem is the opposite: we discovered using archaeology so much heritage of the camp that it will take years to analyse the materials. It is a true case of abundance (Fig. 2).

Our landscape research at KL Plaszow had three main objectives: 1) mapping the topography of the camp with a special focus on locating a mass grave related to the liquidation of the Cracow ghetto in 1943, 2) cataloguing the preserved ruins in the landscape of the camp, 3) unearthing material culture (material witnesses) related to day-to-day life and death in the camp which were understood as an essential element of the local landscape and history.

The first step was to carry out archival research in Poland and in institutions abroad. Historical and contemporary aerial images enabled us to document the landscape during the opening, functioning, and final abandoning of KL Plaszow and post-War transformations of the campscape. The research team obtained LiDAR data for the terrain of the camp. The data were processed in order to prepare a Digital Terrain Model, which was interpreted apropos of mapping camp remains. The next steps were to carry out surface surveys, which included the use of metal detectors, and to create an inventory of above-ground remains (e.g., ruins of concrete foundations of barracks).

Relying on the results obtained, terrains for below-ground non-invasive research were carefully selected. Magnetic and Electromagnetic, Ground Penetrating Radar, and Electrical Resistivity Imaging surveys were carried out. These permitted us to document the buried remains of the camp infrastructure. The scale of research is worth highlighting. An area of about 20 hectares was researched during the magnetic survey, while 8100 m² were researched through the electromagnetic method.

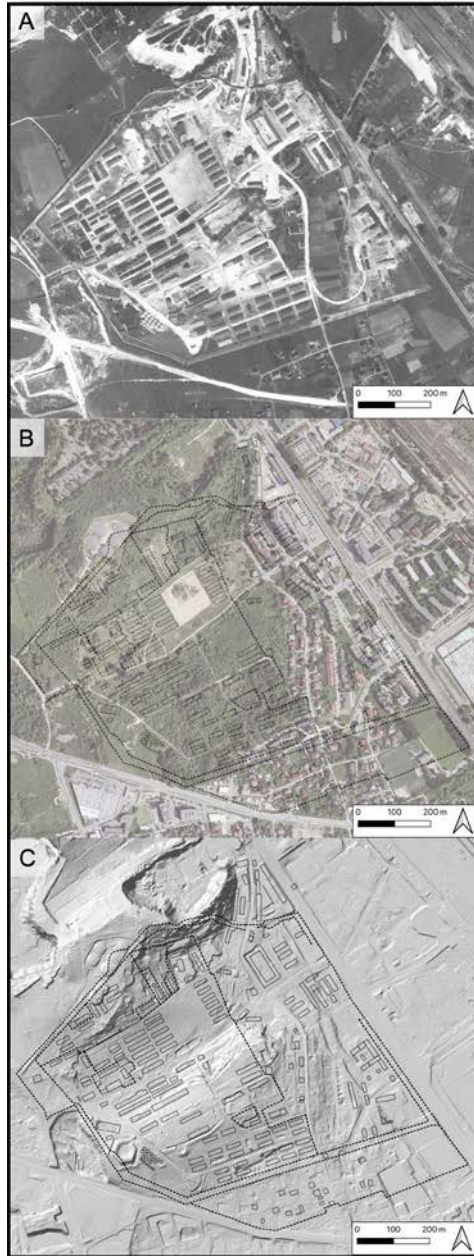


Fig. 2. Overview of historical and present-day campscape maps. 2022.
Graphic elaboration: K. Karski © KL Plaszow Museum.

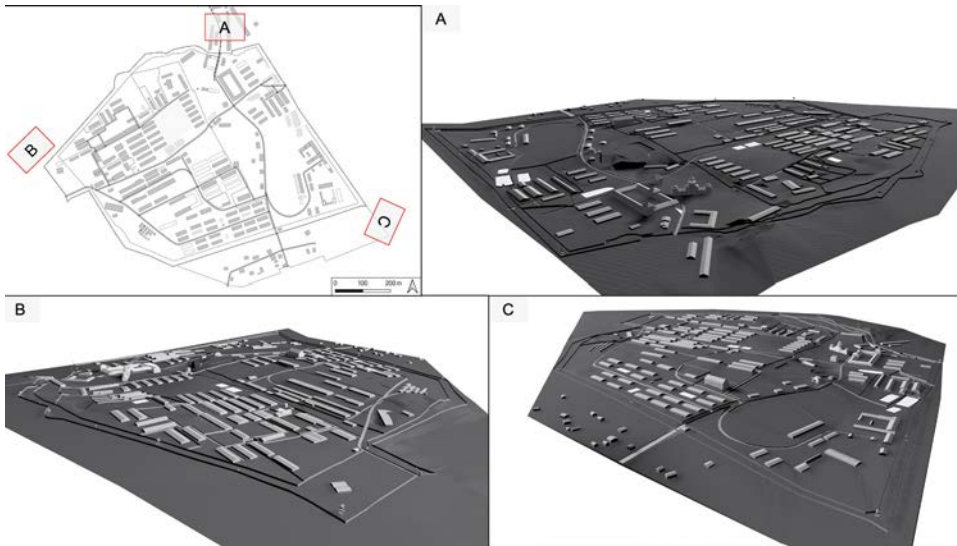


Fig. 3. 3d model of KL Plaszow in mid-1944.

Graphic elaboration: R. Kulig and K. Karski © KL Plaszow Museum.

2700 m² were documented through the application of Ground Penetrating Radar. Additionally, Electrical Resistivity Imaging was used to survey an area of 3000 m². There were cases where two or even three methods were used in the same area.

Finally, relying on the results of non-invasive surveys, the research team carried out excavations in various zones of the camp landscape. In total, an area of 1600 m² was excavated between 2017 and 2018. Fragments of barracks for men (Building no. 24), children (Building no. 5) and for surgery use (Building no. 20) were unearthed and documented. Barracks used as various workshops (Buildings nos 84, 90, 92) were also researched, as well as the remains of two laundries and a male latrine (Buildings nos 23, 27, 32), bakery (Building no. 38), food warehouse (Building no. 31), and a first aid station (Building no. 17). During the excavations, elements of the camp infrastructure such as pathways and fire-prevention ponds were also mapped (Fig. 3).

The excavation took the form of test trenches of various sizes. An exception was Building no. 24, which was completely excavated in the preserved area. Respecting Jewish beliefs, human remains discovered during the research were documented and left in situ (see more in Sturdy Colls 2015). The results of the field research give a general insight into fragments of the landscape of the camp during its various stages of functioning and their contemporary preservation. As always, as archaeologists, we

study the fragments of (material) past in the present (Shanks 1992). Additionally, 13,730 artefacts and their fragments related to life and death behind the barbed wire at KL Plaszow were found. We present and discuss some of them below.

YOU CALL THIS AN EMPTY LANDSCAPE?

An astonishing variety of material culture was discovered during field research that shed light on various aspects of life and death behind the barbed wire at KL Plaszow. The first category includes objects related – as we named it – to living in the ghetto before imprisonment in KL Plaszow. Objects related to life in the ghetto constitute a relatively large (over 60 pieces) assemblage of artefacts discovered on the terrain of the camp (Karski 2019). These are mainly badges and armbands, and they may be related to the marking of prisoners as some of them were working outside the camp in the city. Most of the preserved artefacts are made of light, cream-coloured plastic with a blue pattern of a braided Star of David. Some of them have also additional fasteners, such as framed eyelets or a place to thread an elastic band or string (only one is complete).

After the transport to Belzec in October 1942, additional workplace markings were used for the remaining Jews. They were worn in the form of plastic or metal framings that bore letters indicating employment in a specific sector: “R” – *Rüstung* (defence industry); “W” – *Wehrmacht* (Nazi army) and “Z” – *Zivil und Landarbeit* (civil). The tags were applied on pieces of white plastic or embroidered with black thread on a white cloth. The artefacts were made of both materials embroidered with black thread and a material similar to the bands previously discussed. They were worn pinned directly onto clothes at the height of the chest or tucked into a metal frame with transparent plastic surfaces (two objects are complete, while a few pieces of plastic bear faded traces of painted letters). An object related to life in the ghetto and in the camp is the only known *Ordnungsdienst* badge from Cracow, which took the form of a round pin attached to the clothes (Fig. 4).

Another category of the uncovered artefacts can be linked with the religion and beliefs of those who were kept behind the barbed wire at KL Plaszow. The group of Judaica from KL Plaszow is small. In total, just four items were discovered during our work on the terrain of Barrack 24: a dreidel, a fragment of a metal atara, a Kiddush cup, and a pendant in the shape of the Star of David. The cup, in the form of a typical, small vessel with a tulip-shaped cross-section, is decorated with a four-field engraving showing alternating architectural decorative motifs (city views) and a bouquet of different species of plants. Less typical is the dreidel – a spinning top



Fig. 4. Fragments of armbands directly after excavation. 2017. Photo: K. Karski © Cracow Museum.

traditionally associated with the game cultivated during Hanukkah. Usually, these spinning tops have a tetrahedral shape and are described with Hebrew letters. The specimen discovered in KL Plaszow is cubic and contains inscriptions in German. A fragment of an atara (an embroidered strip of fabric or a metal ornament sewn on the upper edge of a tallit) is equally unique. Small, silver, shell-shaped pieces are decorated with pseudo-filigree. There is only one item related to the Christian religion. It is a small pendant with a figure of Saint Bernadine.

The third type of objects consists of personal belongings of the prisoners and their day-to-day life behind the barbed wire in KL Plaszow. Valuable items such as parts of jewellery (12 items), watches (10 items), metal pencil holders (4 items), glasses (5 items) and cufflinks (4 items) are usually preserved only in fragments. The exceptions are a small brooch with a pink glass element, a silver locket engraved with “SR84” and “EG” (the initials of the goldsmith) as well as a wedding ring. Particularly noteworthy are also clasps (brooches?) made of insulated wires formed in the shape of the names Marek, Jonas(z), Jerzy, Helenka, Susi (?). Similar artefacts were found on other post-camp areas, e.g., in the Kumholf extermination camp. As far we

cannot be sure about their functions and meaning. Few interpretations are possible, while most possible is that those small brooches with names rendered in the familiar form, could be treated as a gift for children. These are practically the only items in the entire collection that contain additional information about their owners' details. This group of personal items also includes toiletries: hairpins and combs (19 items), 5 toothbrushes, toothpaste (about 15 items), and 2 brushes, soap packaging, razor and tweezers. Another category of the discussed objects are items related to eating and drinking – dishes and cutlery. Some of the group of more than 20 pots and pans have the signatures of their manufacturers, such as the ones made in the Westens' factory in Olkusz (later Emalia Olkusz), as evidenced by the characteristic marking in the shape of a teapot with the letter "W" inscribed in it, or the factory in Bielsko.

The collection also includes a single, severely damaged pot produced in Deutsche Emaliewarenfabrik (DEF), managed by Oskar Schindler. Most of the cutlery are tablespoons (17 items), forks (7 items) and teaspoons (6 items) from various, often quite exclusive, tableware. In addition to items made of alpaca, there is also plated cutlery, such as a small mocha spoon or a fork made by the company of the Fraget family in Warsaw. The group of glass items among the artefacts is represented by various types of round-shaped glass medicine bottles and containers (about 20 items). Characteristic of them are containers for shoe polish, decorated on the bottom with the stylized inscription "Dobrolin", and the so-called "pharmacy glass" – small bottles, containers, and ampoules (18 complete items in total). Work tools are the last characteristic group of artefacts. They include hammerheads, an axe, pincers and pliers, among other things.

The above discussion on material culture discovered during the excavation at the landscape of previous KL Plaszow shows how simplified was an assumption that almost nothing was left of the camp until the present. Materiality that is unseen at first sight is the very part of every landscape. The last component of the applied methodology concerns an ethnographic understanding of the role and meaning of the camp landscape among the living. We present only a selection of social and cultural initiatives that took place between 2016 and 2019.

THE LANDSCAPE OF KL PLASZOW BETWEEN 2016 AND 2019 OR HOW ARCHAEOLOGY WORKS SOCIALLY

Education in places of genocide is one of the basic activities of martyrdom museums, sometimes referred to as the "pedagogy of remembrance". It was drawn directly from the necessity to treat memorials of the difficult past and dark heritage as partners

of the researchers, who share responsibility for the functioning and future of these places (Wysok 2018: 89–90). It is not without reason that a critical reflection on the possibilities of “circum-martyrdom” and this model of education arose around research on memorial sites. They were created relatively early, and knowledge about them became common, mainly due to the availability in the mass media. Nevertheless, according to Elke Gryglewski (2018: 76), the work of museologists and their current activities are not widely known at all, and the perception of the general public of the educational content generated by museologists remains negligible.

We believe that archaeology may be a kind of remedy for this situation. Its importance in the community of educators in martyrdom and archaeology of the contemporary past is not obvious. Nevertheless, archaeology opens up a new field of experience and participation for the public. On the one hand, it destroys the feeling of isolation of archaeological objects in the context of a museum exhibition, highlighting the fact of detailed field research. As Tomasz Kranz noted (2017: 56), it is significant here that the education is supposed to bring the museum pieces closer, but at the same time enables them to be experienced. Contrary to educational activity, its task is not so much to popularise museum collections but to spark cognitive and creative processes in connection with the artefacts. Thus, museum education should be understood as a reflective process embedded in the interpretation and internalization of cultural heritage, and museums as spaces of self-reflection and dialogue, places of meetings with objects, with the content they generate.

In the case of KL Plaszow, the situation seems more complicated. There is no museum space in which there is an exhibition about the history of the former camp and prisoners. The main goal of education is to build awareness of the place *in situ*. Most of the educational activities focus on guided tours and lecturers presenting various threads from the past and present of the memorial site. The first walks devoted to the archaeological heritage of KL Plaszow were carried out in 2017. They consisted of two parts. The first of them was carried out stationary in the buildings of the Cracow Museum (Krzysztofory Palace, Podgórze Museum, Oskar Schindler’s Enamel Factory). It was a popular science lecture on the results of archaeological research. During it, the main assumptions and goals of the archaeological project as well as artefacts, sometimes excavated just a few weeks earlier, were presented. The second part included a guided walk dedicated to both the history and archaeology of KL Plaszow. It included traditional narrative methods as well as the possibility of independent exploration of a memorial site. The strategy of educational activities of the KL Plaszow Museum is based primarily upon the mutual interaction of the guide with the visitors. With a few people in a group, it is possible to create what one might call a “knowledge laboratory” where participants not only receive “ready-to-go”



Fig. 5. *Archaeology of KL Plaszow* – guided walks in 2021. Photo: K. Bednarczyk © KL Plaszow Museum.

information but are also encouraged to interpret and make conclusions of their own (Figs 5, 6).

The main goal is to get to know the place each time through its chronology, covering not only the Second World War. The issues are presented in the framework of a historical process that is not finished. Hence, for example, the metaphor of a multi-layered archaeological site is used. Such treatment of the memorial site resulted in the first walk devoted to the archaeology of KL Plaszow in September 2017. The meeting entitled *Mental Archaeology* was based on the idea of using



Fig. 6. *Archaeology of KL Plaszow* – guided walk in 2021. Photo: K. Bednarczyk © KL Plaszow Museum.

archaeological terms and descriptions to learn about the past and the functioning of the memorial site today.

The modern topography is the second key to getting to know the post-camp area. Each of the participants of the classes receives maps with the buildings of the camp in 1944. Thanks to the guidance, it is possible to transfer and track the paths of the walks on maps. Anyone can also choose their path or set a route through free Google Maps tools. Sometimes the route can be modified depending on the needs of the group. Awakening the will to observe the natural landscape of KL Plaszow gives people the chance to discover the memorial site on their own.

The popularity of guided walks has shown that the archaeology of the contemporary past is an attractive way of talking about the past of a memorial site. Thanks to this, a decision was made to introduce them to the permanent features of the Museum. However, their scenario has been modified. The nearly three-hour meetings took place only in the field. Apart from maps, the participants also had access to the original documentation of excavations. And thanks to the acquired knowledge, they could also interpret archival photographs of the outdoor exhibition. From 2020, the guides also have small models of 3d buildings and archaeological objects discovered during excavations.

Due to such great interest, two popular science publications were also released. The first of them is a free album, in which, apart from photographs of nearly 100 artefacts, photographs from archaeological research are presented. The album is also available for free download in a PDF file from the Museum website. The second publication is an archaeological guide to KL Plaszow that presents the reader the site during the fieldwork (Karski 2019; 2020).

THE LANDSCAPE OF KL PLASZOW – PROSPECTS FOR THE FUTURE

Archaeological research conducted between 2016 and 2019 had also a significant impact on the planned construction of the infrastructure of the KL Plaszow Museum (Fig. 7). In view of the earlier plans, major modifications were made. In line with previous arrangements, prior to the commencement of field work, the area of the memorial site will not be significantly transformed. However, thanks to the surface research and field inventory, new markers will be introduced. These will be small pedestals about 30–40 cm high, on which brief information will appear with the number of the building and its function. Thanks to this procedure, each visitor to the memorial site will be able to follow or set a path on their own. The unveiling of authentic relics of the infrastructure and architecture of KL Plaszow will be arranged. Structures of this type will be located at Barracks 24, a bakery, and a hospital.

The permanent exhibition of the Museum will be located in the building of the so-called Memorial. The building will be located outside the historic area of KL Plaszow, in its immediate vicinity. Blended into the natural landscape of Krzemionki Podgórskie, it will be an introduction to the past of a memorial site. The last segment of the exhibition, however, will also be devoted to the period after 1945. As a result of the excavations, several thousand artefacts were discovered. Apart from historical materials, such as photographs, documents, they will be the objects presented at the permanent exhibition. Thanks to conscientious maintenance, it is also possible to make them available. An important aspect of the Museum's activity will also be the presentation of not only special objects, but also mass artefacts, such as nails, fragments of installations and infrastructure of the camp.

The so-called “Grey House”, a villa re-used by the Nazi during functioning of KL Plaszow, will be incorporated into the main exhibition too (Karski and Kulig 2020). The building consists of a few small rooms which are difficult to arrange to present a lot of artefacts related to the history of the camp. However, the idea is to use the building as a kind of “media library”. Each visitor will have the possibility to do “own research” regarding the prisoners kept behind barbed wire at KL Plaszow.



Fig. 7. Comparison of memorial site's landscapes from 1944 and 2021. The archival photography panorama was created using sources from the collection of Institute of National Remembrance of Poland (by W. Jodłowski and K. Karski), contemporary images were taken by Ł. Czech in 2021 © KL Plaszow Museum and Cracow Museum.

The media library will consist of a database, archival materials and information about archaeological discoveries made between 2016 and 2019. Thanks to this, knowledge about the works being carried out will be generally available. In a way, each tourist will become a historian or archaeologist for a moment.

CONCLUSION

After the Second World War, many former concentration and death camps were changed into museums and memorials. Sites of unimaginable and unspeakable evil became places of remembrance and commemoration. However, for a long period of time, the former KL Plaszow was not one of them. The terrain of the former camp was partially overbuilt, and the other part became a park.

When starting the archaeological project at KL Plaszow, a very important assumption was made. The key to understanding the future of the memorial site is the present. And thanks to this relationship, the landscape of KL Plaszow can be an important place for education for future generations. The amalgamation of various perspectives, methods and scientific disciplines enabled us to discover, document, map and interpret approximately 200 camp structures. No less relevant is the fact that one of the research results was unearthing 13,730 artefacts related to day-to-day life at the camp. Broken *matzevoth*, spoons, rusted nails and shells, personal belongings of the prisoners and even such small and intimate artefacts as pieces of metal wires changed into names uncover various aspects of life and death in the shadow of the Holocaust. They are at the same time the material evidence that gives some insight into what happened at the KL Plaszow between 1942 and 1945. The landscape of KL Plaszow cannot be perceived as consisting only of what is seen above the ground. Its part is also hidden and buried material witnesses of the crime that archaeology is able to discover, document and interpret (e.g., Karski and Kobiałka 2021).

Our research has also broader social and cultural implications. Its idea was to integrate the past, present and future of the landscape of former KL Plaszow. Archaeology is always about these three horizons of time which overlaps with each other. Our multidisciplinary research at KL Plaszow was carried out as a part of the plan related to building and opening the museum. The memory about the camp's prisoners is alive and vibrant today, among other reasons because the enormous success of *Schindler's List* movie directed by Steven Spielberg. These memories will also live on through the museum, which is dedicated to telling the story of KL Plaszow and its prisoners. Part of this will be said, presented and materialized through those small, usually broken and rusted objects and their fragments which were collected during the archaeological research at KL Plaszow.

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