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THE IMPORTANCE OF “THE CONTINUITY OF HISTORY”: IGNAZIO GARDELLA’S MONUMENT TO THE VICTIMS OF THE PARTISAN STRUGGLE AND THE VICTIMS OF PIAZZA LOGGIA

Ivana Passamani, Cesira Sissi Roselli, Ali Abu Ghanimeh

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Abstract

“The continuity of history” appears in the project report written by Ignazio Gardella for the monument built in 1984 at the Vantiniano cemetery in Brescia. The Vantiniano stands out as the first monumental cemetery in Italy (1815). The architectural layout, the relationship it establishes with the city and the unified composition of the project by Rodolfo Vantini will constitute a model for many 19th-century Italian cemeteries, such as the one designed by G. Barbieri in Verona (1829).

The paper traces the research in progress about the Vantiniano site from the historical-architectural and symbolic point of view, focusing on Gardella’s Monument to the Fallen of the Partisan Struggle and the Victims of Piazza Loggia, and introducing a study of its architectural features and symbolic aspects.

We propose to consider the cemetery not as a set of buildings and monuments placed within a perimeter (the city of memory separated from the city of the living people) but as a spatial system which must have a relationship with the city. This relationship is applied in Gardella’s project. The analysis and the survey of the monument demonstrate this link and highlight this architecture as a “continuity of history” symbol. Gardella’s monument embodies the theme of the external envelope and the relationship with the context. Its geometry and the brick façades give a modern touch to the cemetery and create an intense dialogue with the roughness of the brick walls of neighboring industrial sites.

Keywords

Cemetery, Ignazio Gardella, Monument to the Victims of Piazza Loggia, Architectural survey, Cultural heritage.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Vantiniano Cemetery is located west of Brescia along one of the main historic routes, the one from the west to the *Brixia Romana* [1]. The area was chosen outside the city center following the Napoleonic Edict issued in St. Cloud on 12 June 1804. It became, over the years, an area of industrial development: the monumental cemetery was besieged to the east and south by

factories of which, up to date, remain testimonies of industrial archaeology as evocative as they are loaded with questions about the choices to be made.

Bishop Nava consecrated the Cemetery on 10 January 1810. It did not initially have its current appearance and size; architect Rodolfo Vantini sketched the orderly, almost metaphysical layout that distinguishes it today. Algid



Fig. 1. Vantiniano Cemetery. Detail of the NE area with Gardella monument. Source: BAMSphoto-Rodella, flight 03/12/2021, photograph taken by helicopter flight.

in its lines and the color of Botticino stone, enlivened by monumental trees, it spreads out in a rectangular shape. It is slightly rotated with respect to the north/south orientation, standing with a short side to the south of Via Milano (Fig. 1). The laying of the foundation stone took place in November 1815, while the construction of the different buildings would continue for more than a century.

Due to its monumental characteristics, it can provide space for cultural initiatives aimed at the knowledge and appreciation of the site as a whole and of the historical-artistic heritage it holds. Above all, it can provide an opportunity to reflect on the historical, cultural and social value that a “city of memory” represents for the “city of the living people”. Reflecting does not only mean thinking about new strategies to broaden the horizons of knowledge but also looking in the mirror and extracting the founding characteristics from the reflected image.

Cultural and social references consolidate self-awareness as a community and civil society, helping to focus on the objectives most consistent with one’s history.

Suppose it is true that civilization begins when a population needs to bury its dead. In that case, it is necessary to initiate a process of awareness-raising aimed at the knowledge and enhancement of this place, which is a garden of collective/individual memory as well as a very important architectural complex.

The Vantiniano is the first example of a monumental cemetery where a constant order and space – a real module – is given to the various individual burials, avoiding the competition between different families for the wealthiest and most impressive monument.

In this sense, the architectural layout, the relationship it establishes with the city and the conscious and unified composition of the project make it the reference and mod-

el for other cemeteries built in Italian cities during the 19th century: in Parma, the Villetta monumental cemetery is designed by Giuseppe Cicconcelli in 1817, in Verona Giuseppe Barbieri designed the monumental cemetery in 1829 while the cemetery in Genoa-Staglieno began in 1835, designed by Carlo Barabino. Costanza Fattori highlights the cultural *koinè* in the Lombardo-Veneto area and in particular in Brescia and Verona, where the poets Ugo Foscolo, Cesare Arici and Ippolito Pindemonte started the Romanticism movement [2]. Rodolfo Vantini breathes this atmosphere [3]. In some cemeteries of northern Italy, beginning from Vantiniano, the theme of the “holy fence” – a high wall as a boundary – prevails [4]. Inside it, orthogonal axes organize the burial fields.

2. CASE STUDY DESCRIPTION

2.1. THE CITY WITHIN THE CITY

The cemetery layout is articulated according to a succession of two rectangular areas that are very different from each other and are divided by an axis avenue. At the ends of it, two twin buildings stand. The layout has an orthogonal matrix that quotes the one of the *cardo* and the *decumano* of the Roman *civis*. The geometry takes up the *cardo* and the *decumano* scattered by buildings that are not always passable.

A fundamental axis is a long avenue lined with rows of cypress trees that starts from the entrance and ends with the monumental architectural backdrop: the church of neo-classical matrix [5], the first building designed by Vantini (1815-1824) together with the two porticoed side wings.

The historic core of the cemetery is located in the second half of the cemetery layout. It was built in several phases according to a quadrangular plan with perspective axes reminiscent of the layout of the Roman *castrum*. Here, the space is densely occupied by buildings in the neoclassical style [6]. They emphasize the Vantini concept of alternating full elevations and high porticoes, connected by compact volumes: chapels with a square or circular base or large halls.

The various signs traced on the ground (avenues, paths), the rows of trees, and the different architectural elements are part of the settlement language and render

the cemetery a city within a city. The presence of the surrounding wall, a physical and symbolic boundary between the two settlements, constitutes a warning to those who cross it at the entrance. It triggers the visitor’s perception of entering a place where individual and collective memory is celebrated. Just as in the city of the living, historical figures and events are remembered through toponyms and monuments, so in a cemetery, every single tombstone, every memorial stone and every building tells the individual story as a sort of resonance chamber for the celebration of the collective one. Half pilasters rhythmically punctuate the wall and maintain a visual relationship with the city on the Via Milano side: large openings with wrought iron window bars allow for a visual exchange between the two cities, made even more effective by the perfect axuality of the windows with the main internal pedestrian avenues [7] (Fig. 2).

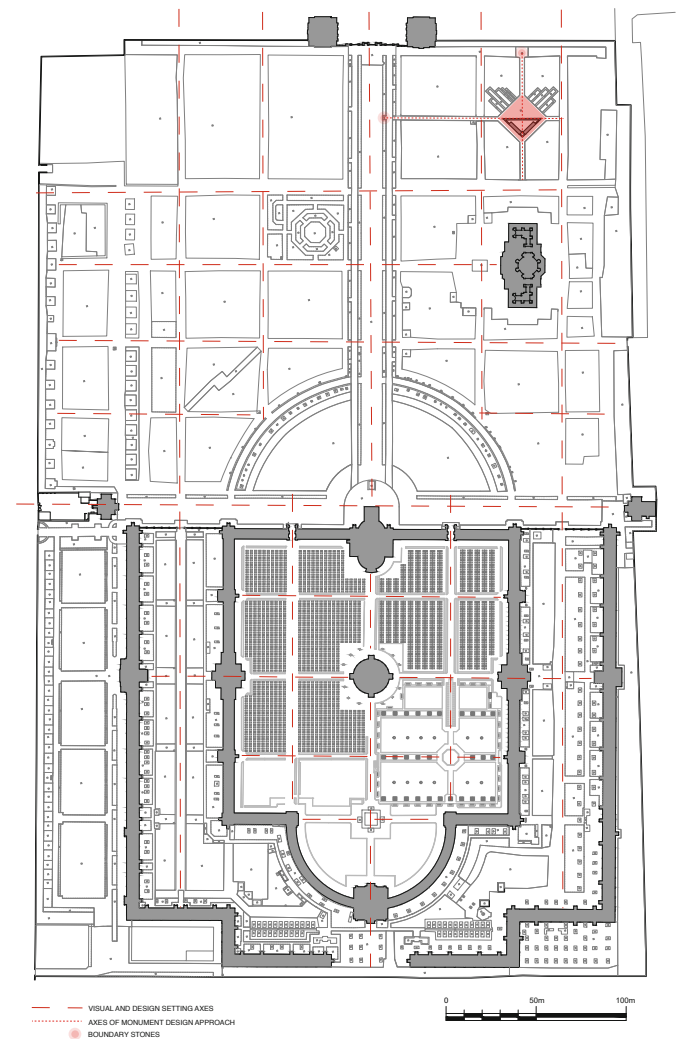


Fig. 2. Vantiniano survey plan and visual axes.

2.2. THE FOCUS: THE CELEBRATION OF COLLECTIVE MEMORY AND THE DOUBLE DEDICATION TO THE PARTISANS AND THE FALLEN OF PIAZZA LOGGIA

The first quadrangular sector of the cemetery is a large green park composed of evergreen trees, mainly conifers. Few architectures are placed in this area, hidden in the dense vegetation. On the right, there are garden tombs arranged in a large octagon, and, in the background, family chapels are placed in two neat rows. On the left, one can barely catch a glimpse of a single building chromatically and materially different from the homogeneous character of the Vantiniano: the Monumento ai Caduti di Piazza Loggia e alla Lotta Partigiana, designed by Ignazio Gardella in 1980. South stands the massive Monumento ai Caduti, designed by Oscar Prati in the 1930s to honor Brescia's fallen soldiers in the First World War. In this area of the cemetery, the architectural language of the Twentieth Century becomes the bearer of collective memory.

Here, men who fought for a common cause or, in the case of the Fallen in the terrorist attack in Piazza Loggia, demonstrated for a common cause are celebrated chorally.

On 28 May 1974, during a demonstration against neo-fascist terrorism, a bomb was detonated: 8 people died and 102 were injured. One of the most severe attacks of the *Anni di Piombo* era left an indelible mark on the population. In 1980, the Municipality of Brescia launched a call for ideas to design a commemorative monument. The site indicated is where the Memorial designed by Gardella now stands.

Considering the distance and diversity of the events represented, it may seem unusual that a monument should be conceived with a double dedication. The first dedication is for the partisans of the Second World War, and the second is for the fallen in Piazza Loggia in 1974. The unification of the remembrance was, indeed, a controversial and much-debated issue in 1978, as several archive documents testify.



Fig. 3. Gardella's Monument, north façade, 2023.

The solution proposal identifies «not a single monument, but a common area appropriately arranged by an artist or an architect or the collaboration of both, which would include the separate signs referring to the partisans and the fallen of Piazza Loggia» [8]. This approach is taken up in the text of the Notice of Competition, which indicates as the site «the tree-lined area to the left of the driveway adjacent to the war dead ossuary» and in Article 3 where it states that the monument «shall express the high ideal and unitary value of the events to be commemorated, but at the same time bring out their distinct specific meanings». As will be seen later, these indications were realized in Gardella's project (Fig. 3).

2.3. HISTORY, STARTING FROM THE COMPETITION

The *Bando di concorso per il Monumento ai caduti della lotta partigiana e alle vittime di Piazza della Loggia* was announced on 20 November 1979 by the Mayor Trebeschi, whose father Andrea died deported to the Gusen concentration camp in 1945. The notice is a text divided into 13 articles as concise as it was clear in its objectives. The first article states: «In order to jointly celebrate the ideal motives that animated the struggle for the liberation from Fascism and for civil and national freedom, and those that nourish the democratic and anti-fascist conscience of Italy born of the Resistance, still and always firm against any cowardly attack, the Municipality of Brescia announces a national competition for a monument to be erected in honor of those who died in the partisan struggle and the victims of the Piazza Loggia attack on 28 May 1974». Thus, a single architectural gesture is entrusted with the complex task of remembering the victims of two different and distant events as a warning to future generations. Article three specifies: «It shall express the high ideal and unitary value of the events to be commemorated, but at the same time bring out their distinct specific meanings». This is the starting point for reading Gardella's monument in its symmetry, which simultaneously unites and separates the two facts. The inscriptions look at each other, autonomous but related by the vertical split in the wall on which they are placed.

The competition has a mixed formula: open to all Italian artists, architects and engineers and by invitation. The invited sculptors were: Cascella, Consagra, Guerrini, Giò Pomodoro, and Spagnulo. The invited architects were: Baldessari, Gardella, Gregotti, Sottsass, and Valle.

On 28 May 1980, an exhibition of the projects was inaugurated in the halls of the Associazione Artisti Bresciani. This way, a participatory architectural action was activated: citizens were invited to view the design proposals and express their opinions. The judging committee met for the final examination of the projects, and the first prize was awarded to Gardella. The monument was unveiled four years later on the tenth anniversary of the massacre (28 May 1984) and completed between 1988 and 1989 with the addition of two memorial stones at the end of the paths leading to the monument and with the project for the burial of the partisans' remains on the ground facing the entrance to the monument.

Gardella's project was significantly published in 1980 in the *Controspazio* magazine special issue dedicated to *The presence of the past*, the 1st International Architecture Exhibition of the Venice Biennale edited by Francesco Cellini and Claudio D'Amato. The issue opened with the article *The re-emergence of archetypes* by the curator of the exhibition and editor of the magazine Paolo Portoghesi [9].

3. METHODS: ARCHITECTURAL SURVEY VERSUS PROJECT DRAWINGS

The monument stands out for its dual capacity to configure a space of both recollection and sharing. The architecture is set along the natural continuation of the visual axes designed by Vantini but constitutes an outpost of modernity. The campaign to survey the monument, which used direct and indirect surveying instruments, therefore aimed to bring out the relationships that Gardella's project intertwines with Vantini's project (Fig. 2) and restore the geometric instances generating the monument. 1,500 measurements were taken from 50 separate topographic stations at the cemetery's site. In particular, 3 topographic stations surrounding Gardella's monument were identified to take all the measurements of the building (Fig. 4).

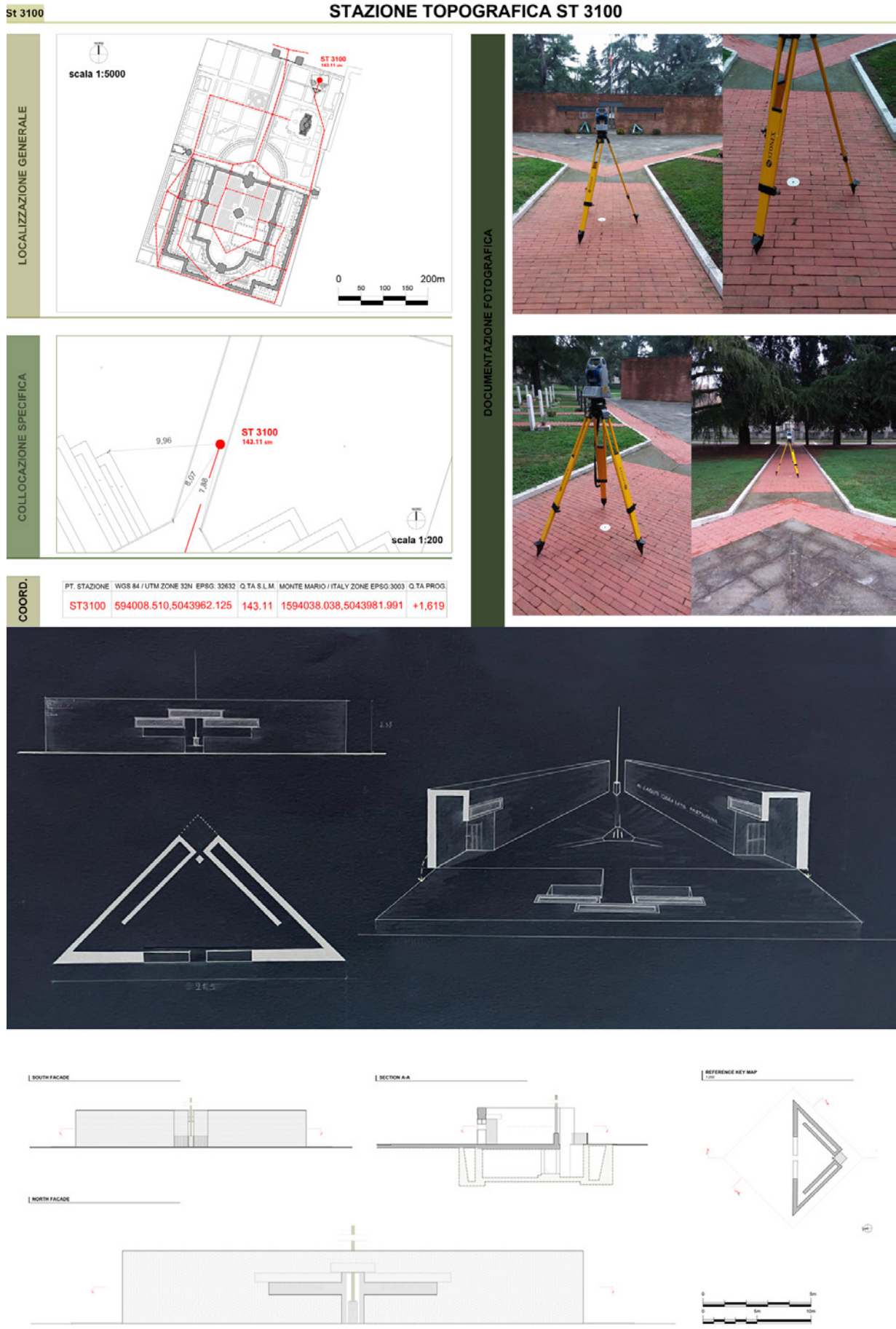


Fig. 4. Gardella's Monument. Top: topographic survey, datasheet of station point n. 3100. In the middle: sketches. Down: architectural survey, 2023.

The project report states: «The system of orthogonal axes underlying Vantini's design is thus resumed, while the inner space of the enclosure, whose closure is intended to invite a moment of recollection, meditation and memory, is also perceived by passers-by without stopping, and flows and interpenetrates with the outer space of the cemetery as if to emphasize that those commemorated are not isolated facts but facts that are part of the continuity of the history of yesterday, today and tomorrow» [10]. The survey confirmed a respectful and coherent insertion with Vantini's structure. It is fascinating to compare both survey and project drawings.

Dramatic use of shadows emerges in Gardella's drawings, enriching the plan representations with three-dimensionality. The elevations are recounted in their most material aspect (the survey had the same attention rendering brick walls), allocating to the use of solid face brick the emphases of the horizontal lines that mark the dynamism of the wall partitions. The use of representations such as bird's-eye views and airy perspective views clarifies the relationships between new and old architecture. These drawings make perceivable those invisible threads that link the focal points on which the built space of the cemetery is articulated (easy to see comparing Fig. 2, Figs. 5 and 6). The boundary stones placed at the entrance to the paths prop up like cardinal points the axes of the paths that coincide with the visual axes, and only at their intersection does the monument take shape (Figs. 5 and 6).

In Gardella's drawings, from views that suggestively outline the context, we move on to framing boards where the monument, thanks to a full and decisive stroke, is defined in all its sharp geometry and then to detail boards, where details are rendered with executive exactitude. In these latter drawings, great attention is paid to the definition of the materials and the construction techniques for laying the tombstones and the foundations.

The project was then also rendered three-dimensionally, as required by the competition, with a wooden maquette carefully photographed from various viewpoints. The choice of wooden slats and framing emphasizes the sharpness of the figure of the triangle that pivots the entire project.

4. INTERPRETATION

4.1. GARDELLA'S MONUMENT AND ITS RELATIONSHIP WITH THE CONTEXT

As often in his architectural production, also in this project, Gardella resorts to the elementary form of the quadrilateral cut along the diagonal; the main compositional axes connect with the main axes of the cemetery and also establish a strong visual relationship with the outside space and with the city. To do this, Gardella exploits one of the openings in the boundary wall on Via Milano. The two main axes coincide with the two pedestrian access paths to the monument. Two driveways, one orthogonal to the other, start from the cemetery's avenues, marked by two square-based memorial stones with pyramidal tops, a contemporary interpretation of the funeral memorial stones found in large numbers and models at Vantiniano. The memorial stones are placed exactly in the center of the paved access paths. As anticipatory signs of the monument, they are simultaneously impediments to the path's entrance, concrete obstacles that impose a moment of reflection on the visitor, accentuated by the fatigue of continuing the walk.

In harmony with the orthogonal grid of the site, the design layout proposes two different viewpoints. The first has a north-south direction. It is possible both from the urban space outside the cemetery (Fig. 5), through the opening in the surrounding wall from which anyone can see the main front of the monument and catch a glimpse of the shrine, and in the opposite direction, to connect the interior space with the space of the city. The second one unravels in the west-east direction and interacts with the monument in a tangential way, highlighting its acute spike that accentuates the monument's dynamism and drama.

The expressive meaning of Gardella's project is also subtly linked to the peculiarities of the site. The monument takes up, in a contemporary key, the theme of the wall with inscriptions (only the material changes, here it is brick) that delimits «the enclosure of remembrance» [11], isolating a commemorative and sacred area. Contradicting the very meaning of the enclosure, Gardella leaves the triangular shape open so that the view from the

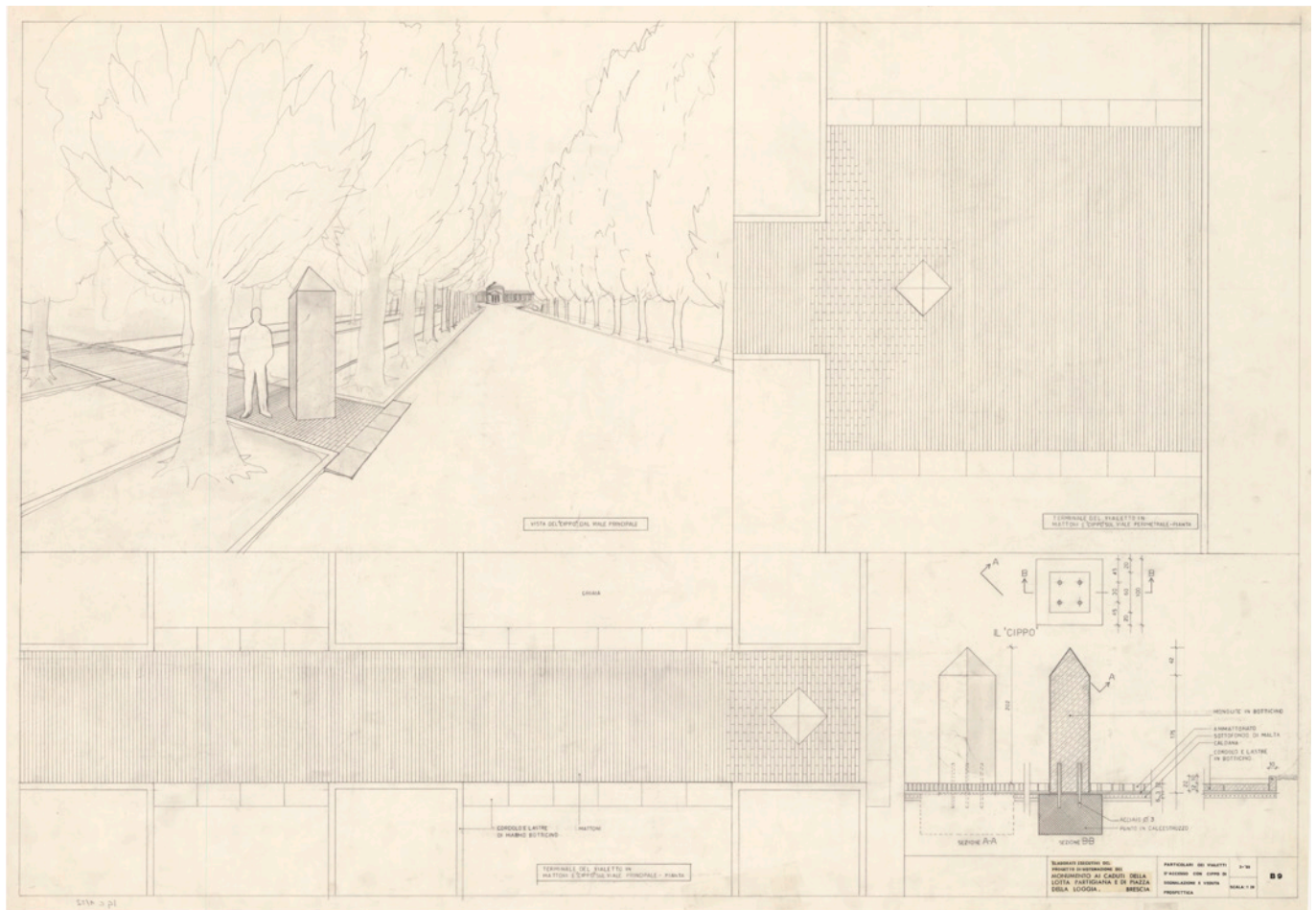


Fig. 5. I. Gardella, visual axis and marker stone, Balerna. Source: Archivio del Moderno, Fondo Ignazio Gardella - Monumento ai caduti di Brescia.

outside is fluid and guarantees a visual connection with the war memorial charnel house.

The plan drawing consists of a square rotated by 45° with respect to the orthogonal axes that order Vantini's project [12] (Fig. 6). Gardella's architecture is thus generated by diagonal geometries that leave half of the square untouched and half of the walls emerge to form an isosceles triangle. Therefore, the project's layout informs the visual and geometric relations it entertains with the site in which it is located and attaches itself while affirming its own lineage and autonomy. The monument stands as an enclosure within the larger enclosure designed by Vantini.

The architecture is substantiated by clear lines that take on depth where they accommodate a function that is no longer only symbolic but also practical: along the hypotenuse – the diagonal of the starting square, the access passage to the monument opens up, while along the two cathetes of the triangle are housed two staircases leading

underground to the ossuary, one for descent, one for ascent, thus tracing the univocal direction of a ritual path. The square continues to be perceived in its unity thanks to the design of the paving that maintains the same finish between the inside of the monument's enclosure and the outside, like a large carpet that abstracts from the pavement of the Vantini cemetery and leads to another dimension.

The accent between interior and exterior space is also emphasized by the choice of maintaining the pre-existing trees whose thick, vast foliage becomes the natural cover of the Monument.

The grey trachyte paving, the red bricks, and the steel beams are humble materials that speak of simplicity and dignity. Gardella writes in the project report: «I think that the two different facts to be commemorated can find the substantial unity of their ideal value in the rigorous unity of architecture, even more than in symbolic figurations [...] I believe that the monument must be easy for the people to read» [13].

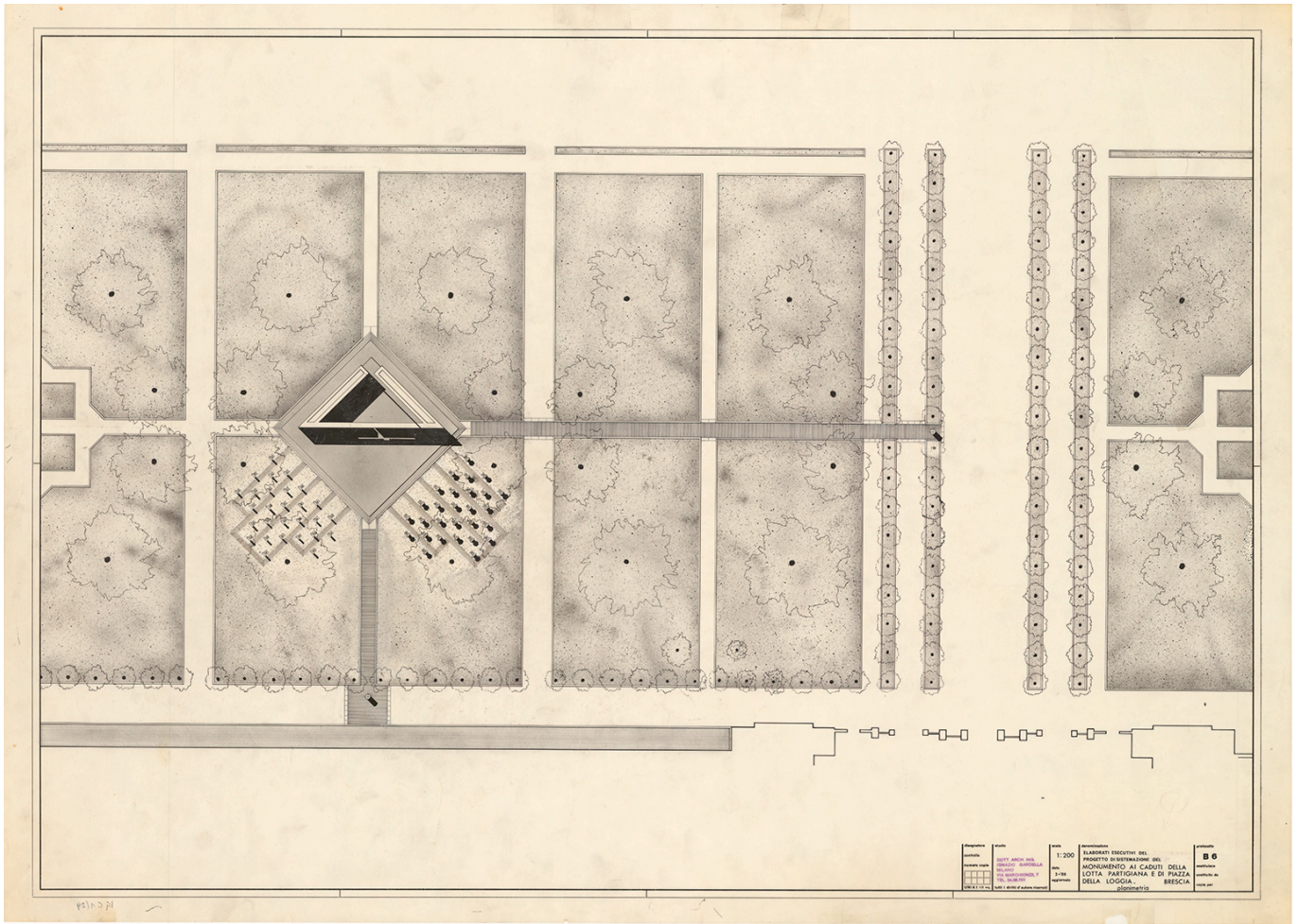


Fig. 6. I. Gardella, plan with shadows, Balerna. Source: Archivio del Moderno, Fondo Ignazio Gardella - Monumento ai caduti di Brescia.

The entablature is adorned only by the grooves of the “corten-a” steel architrave, which breaks and rises by a module at the entrance space threshold. A horizontal cut opens up below the beams, framing and making the two commemorative epigraphs readable from the outside. The two walls – on which the dedications to the victims of the two historical events are placed – converge towards a flagstone that embraces the two tragic events of Italian history in the tricolor. The two walls unfold like two pages of a history book united by a gap: a slit opens between the two walls and places them in direct dialogue with the Memorial to the Fallen of the First World War by Oscar Prati, which can be glimpsed just beyond the split. «In this way, the wall is restored to its original task of dividing, of separating two open spaces; at the same time, these walls become two great epigraphs, in memory of those who died» [14].

4.2. SYMBOLIC ARCHITECTURE

Article 3 of the Competition brief states that the monument must «harmoniously fit into the valuable landscape and monumental context of the Vantini complex».

Gardella adheres to these indications by resorting to the basic elementary forms of the quadrilateral cut along the diagonal. The design adopts diagonal geometries where the entrance axis divides the square into two triangular segments; one is left open and untouched, while the other emerges to form an isosceles triangle (Figs. 6 and 8). One of the triangular spaces encloses the sacred and memorial area, while additional triangular space is created by planes on the two short cathexes housing access stairs to the ossuary.

Nevertheless, the unity of the square is maintained through the paving design that keeps the same finish between the inside of the monument’s enclosure and the



Fig. 7. Gardella's Monument compared with the texture of the nearby brick wall of the former industrial area, Brescia 2023.

outside, like a large tapestry abstracted from the pavement of the Vantini cemetery.

In the abstract design of the Memorial, architecture outgrows historicism and pushes towards formal typologies, where geometry plays a crucial role not only as a symbol for the manifestation of the sacred but also as a limitless framework for the simple design, which it strives for. The simple geometry is the ultimate testimony of the artificial striving for rationality and universality within the irrationality and locality of nature.

To quote Tadao Ando, «Creation by geometry is always accompanied by the struggle between abstraction and representation. Rational and irrational. Whole and part. Artificial and natural. These dualistic propositions surface one after the other to torment the mind of the creator. [...] The deeper and more intense the opposition between pure abstraction and diverse representation, the more the creation comes alive. There, beautiful, robust and rich geometrical expressions emerge» [15].

Gardella created a mix of modern and traditional architecture. On the interior, the walls establish a serene zone that encloses a more private space, sacred and personal, that counters the dynamics of the surrounding nature. On the exterior, the walls shield the surrounding nature. This sculptural geometric form goes beyond its

pragmatic function and becomes the Yorishiro-object in which a spirit is drawn, which symbolizes the unity of the living and the souls of the dead.

The design places much importance on nature, light, and material, and the walls shield and allow nature into the structure. The enclosed space created by means of the two cathexes creates both a place for the individual, a zone for oneself within nature, and a sacred space for the dead. As it is a holy space, the walls are without openings, thus isolating the interior space from the forces of the environment, yet through material use, it creates an interior that is full and satisfying.

The cross is the only sign designating the Memorial as formally Christian. Nevertheless, the cross is not physically present; it is present as absence because it is cut out of the wall. The design of the cross as an *Aperture* denies the symbolic character of the cross in classical architecture in favor of a more expressive dimension; the cross becomes a non-object, pure expression that serves more to express, that is, to make present, than to represent. Its presence is dramatized by the light passing through the *Aperture*, thus defining the emptiness as sacred. Furthermore, as an *Aperture* cut in the roof looking towards the sky, the cross brings together nature and the sacred, earth and sky, and exteriority and interiority.

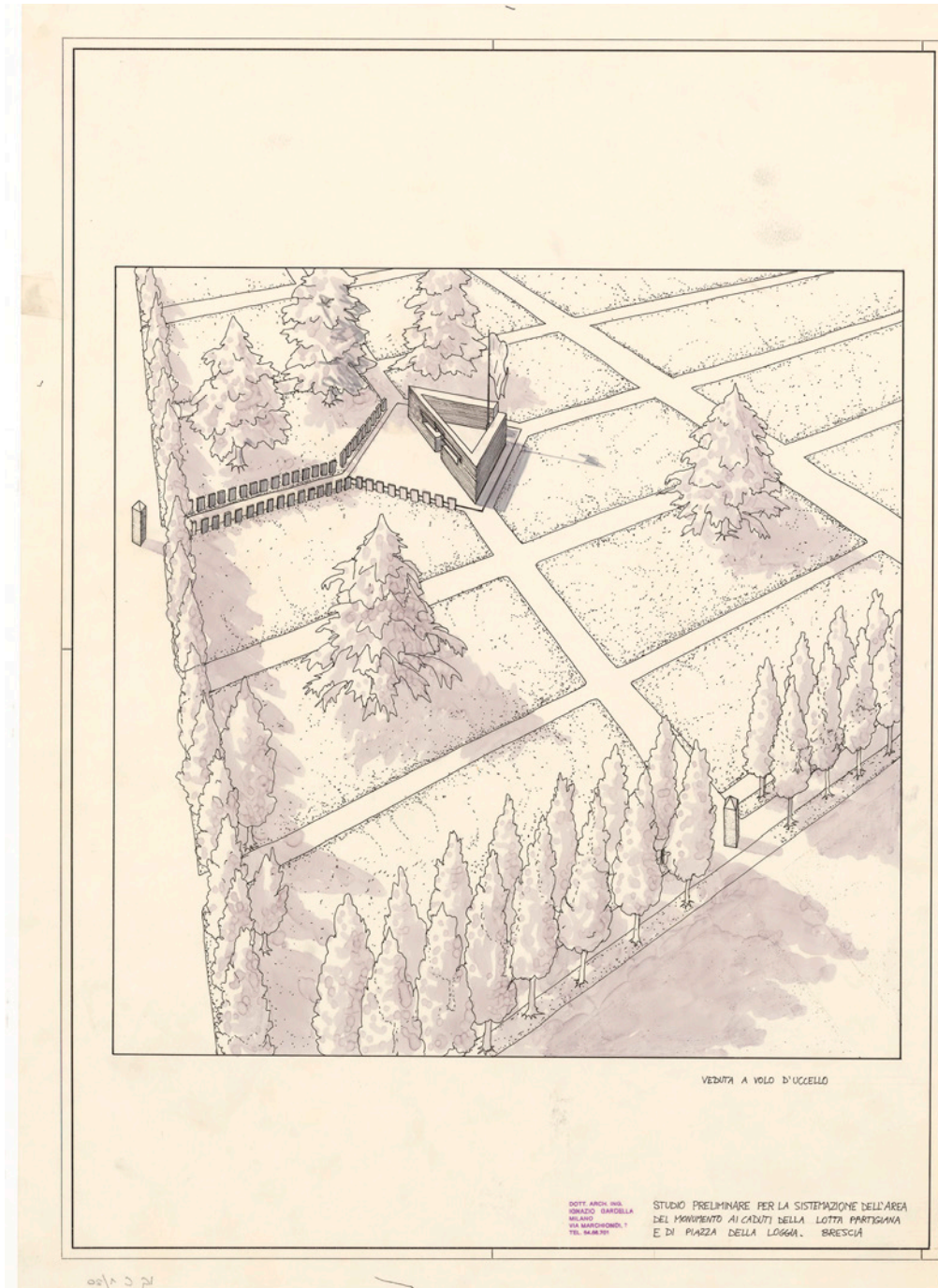


Fig. 8. I. Gardella, bird's eye view, Balerna. Source: Archivio del Moderno, Fondo Ignazio Gardella - Monumento ai caduti di Brescia.

The monument's design resembles Ando's architecture in creating a haiku effect, emphasizing serene nothingness and empty space to represent sacred and simple beauty. Nevertheless, the simplicity of the architecture emphasizes sensation and physical experiences as one walks through the path and reaches the monument.

Gardella has done more to create a space for gathering; he has created moments for contemplation. The walls of the simple geometry became instruments for inwardness,

stillness and prayer. Placing the walls, a strange element in the landscape creates a camera frame effect where a specific part of nature is created, generating vistas and transformative spaces. As one walks through the main axis towards the Memorial, one is transformed from observer to participant; the entrance places one in the comfortable position of a distant observer, but gradually, one is gently taken in by a fascinating architectural event that opens itself and oneself to greater things (Fig. 8).

As a final note, the triangular spaces within the square make a metaphoric link to the number three, which has several high symbolisms across ages. Three is the first number to which the meaning “all” was given. Three denotes divine perfection; Seven denotes spiritual perfection; Ten denotes ordinal perfection; and twelve means governmental perfection.

The ancient Greek philosopher Pythagoras postulated that the meaning behind numbers was deeply significant. In their eyes, the number 3 was considered the perfect number, the number of harmony, wisdom, and understanding. It is The Triad. It was also the number of times – past, present, future; birth, life, death; beginning, middle, end; heaven, earth, waters. It is human as body, soul and spirit – it was the number of the divine. Hence, the number three points us to what is real, essential, perfect, substantial, complete, and Divine. This symbolizes a triad or trinity. It is a symbol of the unity of body, mind and spirit.

5. CONCLUSION

The research leads to the updated survey of the entire Vantiniano Cemetery, which is interpreted as a system of complex relationships involving both the built part and the open spaces. This survey that looks at the Vantiniano cemetery from a systemic point of view has paid particular attention to the restitution and enhancement of the visual and sense relations that link the Cemetery to the City. The research work at the archive [16], the survey and photographic campaigns led to an overall restitution of the Vantiniano. We set an integrated survey, where the drone and direct surveys, with traditional instrumentations, flanked the topographical measurements using the total station.

The survey investigated both the built part and the “trees architecture”, from the contextualization of the cemetery at the urban scale with the inclusion of a new topographical reference network to the detailed survey at a scale of 1:20. These graphic, photographic and textual materials now constitute a reservoir of up-to-date technical and historical information, usable for future maintenance and restoration work on the monuments, but above all useful for a renewed collective awareness of historical and cultural heritage.

The phase following the survey campaigns includes a series of proposals for the possible use or adaptation of some free spaces available for temporary uses (exhibitions, events, performances – recalling the theatrical use since the Middle Ages) that would allow the transmission of the culture of this place while respecting the value of memory. To this end, five thematic routes have been prepared [17, 18], proposed at various levels of complexity to meet the most diverse cultural and educational needs. Gardella’s Monument has been included in the “Historical Events and Eminent Personalities” path. In fact, it represents the most emblematic case of

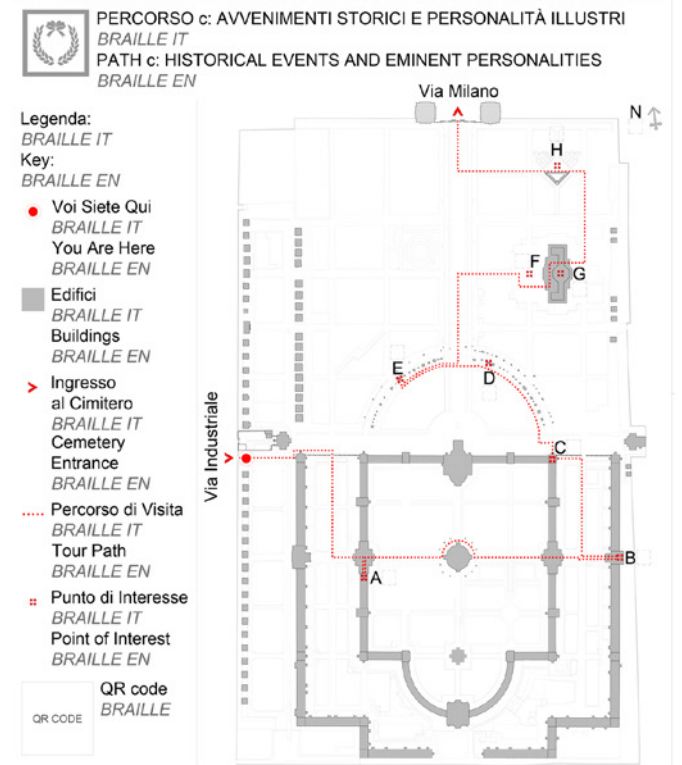


Fig. 9. Top: tactile maps placing. Down: Path C “Historical Events and Eminent Personalities”: Gardella Monuments (H point), 2023.

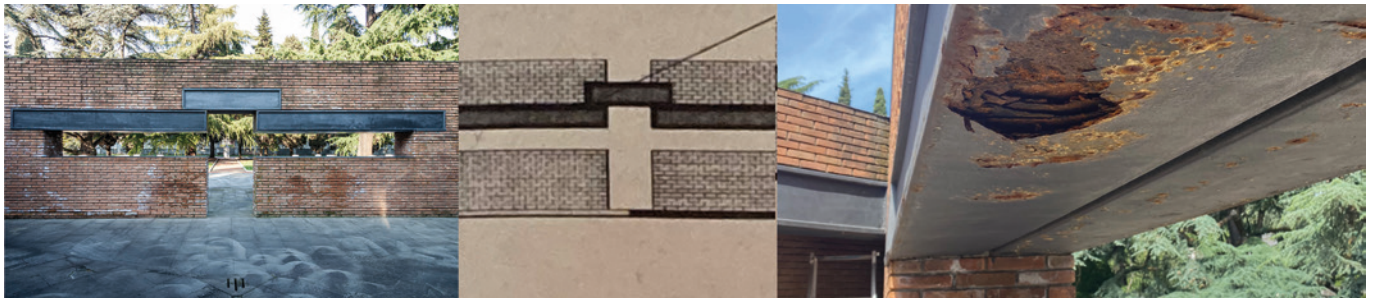


Fig. 10. Photographic image of the front of the monument compared with Gardella's original design panel, highlighting the current state of conservation of the beam.

modern architecture in the cemetery and one of the most significant examples of Italian authorial architecture of the 1980s for the city of Brescia.

An app is also being developed to make the exploration of the Vantiniano more interactive and dynamic. At the same time, a new wayfinding system is being studied for visually impaired persons, with the aim of making the visit to this place increasingly comprehensive and inclusive (Fig. 9).

The survey analysis revealed a medium state of conservation of the monument. The most compromised part concerns the corten steel entablature of the entrance portal. Its deterioration led to the investigation of Gardella's early drawings, where this threshold appears very different. The curtain wall, in fact, breaks at the portal, leaving a void above the architrave. This idea of suspension is later modified by Gardella, who will continue the wall septum along the lintel. On the one hand, the idea of suspension and lightness of the first proposal is lost; on the other hand, the monument gains in compactness and compositional unity (Fig. 10).

The solution adopted here is reminiscent of the degree of abstraction and geometric solidity of works such as those by Gianugo Polesello (in particular, the analogy with the triangular plan proposed for the Competition for the Offices for the Chamber of Deputies in Rome, 1966) or Gino Valle (Monumento alla Resistenza in Udine, 1969, where the idea of architecture as enclosure recurs) [19, 20].

Furthermore, when comparing the realized project with Gardella's drawings, it emerged that the dedicatory epigraphs were initially intended to be placed in the recess of the beam and not in the cut below where they were later inserted. This location would have certainly

improved their legibility and visual impact. Gardella had also planned a front gate that was to give the possibility of closing the monument. This gate was not realized, leaving the work more open to visitors and rooting it more to the always open perimeters of the Vantini monuments [21].

In conclusion, the research is not yet complete, but it has reached two important milestones: the book *Rilevare e valorizzare la memoria. Analisi e proposte per il cimitero Vantiniano* [22], with the reference to the chapter concerning Gardella [23], and the exhibition *La città della memoria nella Capitale della Cultura: Conoscenza e valorizzazione del cimitero Vantiniano di Brescia* [24].

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Authors contribution

Despite having shared objectives, methodologies and results of the research, it is highlighted that I.P. is the author of paragraphs 1, 2.1, 2.2, 3, 5; C.S.R. of paragraphs 2.3, 4.1; A.M.A.G. of paragraph 4.2.

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