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### 1. Landscape as an interactive repository of values<sup>1</sup>

In the professional practice of a landscape architect, the notion of landscape is assumed to be one and the same with the notion of cultural landscape. The Polish Act on the Protection and Guardianship of Monuments (enacted July 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2003), defines landscape as a “space historically shaped by as a result of human activity, comprising products of civilization and natural elements.” The European Landscape Convention of October 20<sup>th</sup>, 2000, stipulates that it is “*an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors.*” In both cases, the definition of landscape lacks the adjective “cultural” though they contain indirect reference to culture—as human activity. The Cultural Landscape Commission at the Polish Geographical Society defines cultural landscape as

the entirety of features and physical properties, the visually perceptible expression of human culture on the surface of the Earth, combining elements of the natural and cultural environment. [...] Such landscape can be perceived as an anthropogenically shaped fragment of geographical space, which emerged as the result of combined environmental and cultural influences, thus constituting a specific structure, manifesting in regional distinctiveness that tends to be perceived as a peculiar physiognomy. (Krajobraz 2018.)

So the causative element which contributes to the formation of cultural landscape of space management is conjoined with the visual element.

Cultural landscape can also be defined as a perceived, developed space subjected to culture (Lat. *cultura* denotes agricultural cultivation). However, the culture of landscape does not unequivocally have to connote tilling of the land. It may also refer to the process of space management which is accompanied by its shaping in response to the needs of those who do so and in compliance with the values with which they identify. This includes traditions of agriculture, garden architecture and garden art which responds to the existing spatial circumstances, devised or modified as the space undergoes management. Cultural landscape—the outcome

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<sup>1</sup> This subchapter elaborates on themes contained in Gawryszewska 2013, 27-28.

of that process—may therefore be treated as a source of identity (Wojciechowski 2004, 25-26).

Phenomenological tradition comes to aid when landscape architects seek to define cultural landscape. According to Christian Norberg-Schulz (1990), landscape is comprised between sky and earth where the human abides, with their need for abstract thought and physical, not to say mundane necessities. Demands of both kinds are satisfied in the process of proper use and due care which Martin Heidegger (1977), and later Józef Tischner (1990) associated with interaction-based process of habitation. The interactions are built both among humans and between the human and the landscape—its non-human elements (Latour, 2004). Landscape is a stage on the way towards intersubjective interactions. In this approach, a cultural landscape is a kind of “repository” of values and meanings, both in a material and an abstract sense. While designing it, it may be considered a record of such values—just like the traces of everyday life that can be perceived in it. Landscape, a site of creation for the landscape architect, is simultaneously a reservoir of material and non-material values important for its inhabitant.

## 2. Post-environmentalism landscape in a semiotic approach

Landscape architects have grown accustomed to using semiotic tools in an extralinguistic domain. Architecture and landscape—as an effect of human accommodation in space in the process of habitation—is considered a language (Królikowski 2009, 160-163), while elements of cultural landscape are still being read and interpreted as a semantic code (Królikowski 2006, Spirn 1998). Even more so that cultural landscape is malleable, and can be relatively easily changed when the communication it conveys changes. As in architecture, the values encoded in the natural layer of landscape undergo transformations and the same applies to the meanings read from them. Previously, nature was treated as an exhaustible basic resource which had to be rationally managed to avoid disaster (as asserted in the two-centuries-old but still popular Malthusian concept). The values it represented were clear-cut and necessary for future generations. Apart from the layer of significations which remains valid, a new layer emerged in the contemporary times. In our post-Malthusian contemporary world, the environment described in the categories of a new geological era called the Anthropocene represents a potential for further development and a source of knowledge at once, derived not only from laws of nature but also from the specific way humans manage it. This shift of approach to environmental problems was not without consequence for landscape-related theories.

Contemporary notions regarding landscape and environment originated with the post-humanist approach. Concepts such as “working landscape” advanced by Peter F. Cannavò (2007) (who reconciles exploitation and landscape protection by combining its social and ecological functions) or Arnold Berleant’s “engaged

landscape” (which entails a sense of continuity with the surroundings that accompanies humans in their everyday aesthetic experience)—change the former perceptions of the function of landscape, treating it as an instrument on the one hand and the aforementioned stage of interrelations on the other. All this amounts to a post-environmental background, which would not have been viable without theoretical deliberations on the condition of the world today.

Currently, nature is no longer just a basic element, a foundation for a landscape architect to work on, one which should be monitored and protected. It is a vital component of social dialogue, a platform of participatory democracy and an underpinning of spatial policies. In the post-environmental approach, landscape contributes to the development of new technological and social tools of universalist planning, which shape living spaces into areas of collective debate on the quality of broadly understood environment, one that is healthy, beautiful, rationally shaped, while its resources are well-noted and suitably protected (Certomà, 2016, 65-75). Abandoning the previous concept of landscape as an object of conservation, post-environmental theories give preference to creative attitudes of users, which take advantage of the potential of the Anthropocene by means of new, “clean” technologies. One could hardly imagine accomplishing that goal without taking the research approach of the humanities into account.

### **3. Landscape pluralism requires varied viewpoints—landscape crowdsourcing in practice**

Being so multi-faceted, landscape compels one to employ an interdisciplinary approach. Philosophy, environmental psychology, sociology, geography, art, landscape architecture, architecture and urban planning address various aspects of landscape in which they fuse its abstract and material dimensions. Just as there are many landscapes and multiple ways of perceiving the same landscape, so a multi-aspect approach enables one to see more levels, themes and peculiarities of landscape, thus facilitating the envisaging of its structure. Contrary to appearances, this assumption does not serve knowledge-oriented studies exclusively, although the interdisciplinarity of research does offer a wider range of tools of inquiry which help the achievement of a comprehensive image of the managed, inhabited and shaped space we call landscape. A multi-aspect viewpoint on landscape makes it possible to comprehend it better, and therefore develop mechanisms and algorithms of its shaping which prove all that more effective as they approach its essence.

This encourages one to search for answers not only among researchers but also other players in the game of landscape. Today, participatory design and participatory democracy in decision-making related to landscape seem an obvious, almost paradigmatic platform for the process of landscape shaping. Nevertheless, the participatory mode can also serve exploratory studies. The ever-new directions

and premises of landscape transformation force us, researchers, to look for new tools of its analysis, therefore it has become a widespread practice to form interdisciplinary teams, including local inhabitants. Their role is not limited to being stakeholders with a casting vote: they possess knowledge of their surroundings, a knowledge whose value cannot be overstated. The authors of the project called “Invisible City” who undertook a study of the social aspects in contemporary transformations of metropolitan landscape, saw that they were inherent in simple forms originating directly from the inhabitants, proving that “the city is alive, and owes it to the inhabitant who not only ‘use’ it but co-create it, leaving diverse traces of their activity in its space” (Krajewski 2013). In the post-environmental approach, the importance of collaboration between inhabitants and researchers is defined as an asset of power by networking (Certomà 2016, 71).

When interpreting landscape, treated as a medium of communication on the one hand and a work of art (architecture, garden art) on the other, one should also make allowance for the changing aesthetic and usage preferences with respect to landscape, especially its natural components, such as urban greenery. Furthermore, the perception of unkempt greenery, wasteland or undeveloped areas changes as they are not only natural assets functioning as a tool of rehabilitation and re-cultivation of landscape; they are valuable also because inhabitants wish to spend time there appreciating the beauty of natural forms and processes which take place there (Gawryszewska 2016).

The description of space seen through the eyes of its inhabitants, authors and actors in the “landscape-building” process of management appears to be the only method to convey its peculiarity, and thus to understand its essence and outline the direction of its further transformations. This is also why the collaboration of experts representing the humanities and social sciences with landscape architects, urbanists, artists and inhabitants in public space, witnessed on regular basis nowadays, has become so important.

#### **4. Seeing landscape—protecting landscape**

Designers agree that the perception of landscape is not only a prerequisite but is also the first, fully-fledged stage of design (Skalski, 2007; Rylke, 2016). At the outset, when commencing work of this kind, we must be aware of the essence and value of the place we wish to transform. To read the landscape and recognize the values inscribed in it, a realization of their existence should take place first of all. The history of shaping landscape resulted in forms, structures and topoi which one must learn so as to perceive those values. They are recorded in the shapes of buildings, in urban arrangement and the image of garden, shared throughout Europe and associated with dwellings or habitation (Gawryszewska 2013).

Travelling in countries known for spatial order such as Switzerland, Great Britain or Scandinavia, one cannot fail to notice certain regularities which accompany that order: a shared respect for the tradition of building in landscape and knowledge of its values. Obviously, several factors should be mentioned here: the widespread participation in decisions concerning landscape in one's place of residence, the transparency of the actions of authorities and the awareness, both on the part of the authorities and the inhabitants, of the value of landscape and the duty of care towards these assets.

Adequate assessment of the value of landscape requires the knowledge and experience required to develop a hierarchy. So, landscape education should begin as early as possible—at the nursery level. In view of landscape's multiple aspects, the task is not a difficult one; it may start with education in the plastic arts and natural science, and then gradually integrate architecture and garden art, ultimately arriving at a holistic view of landscape with secondary school pupils.

Design workshops for children and adolescents conducted by architects and landscape architects are becoming increasingly widespread. The method employed in the course of these workshops also constitutes a method of landscape education. One could here point to the workshops for pupils of junior secondary school entitled "Building a garden—the world of our values", which this author ran in 2007-2008. Asked to come forward with a design for the surroundings of the school, the children drew a representation of a school garden, using a standard set of coloured pencils and stereotypical imagery of an equally archetypal garden equipment and features (benches, swings, sandpits). After a walk when children had the opportunity to survey the surrounding area, they began to use colours they saw in the landscape and design the surroundings of the school in relation to the existing elements. So, identification of the values of landscape resulted in compositions which were not detached from it (Gawryszewska, 2008).

Participation of inhabitants, also adult participants, in all phases of the design process—i.e. at the stage of identification of values, planning of changes and implementation of the design—also constitutes landscape education. In the course of debates, public consultation and workshops which today accompany development processes, participants who are not design professionals certainly learn much about landscape. However, this does not suffice to create an environment of habitation that is resilient, i.e. flexibly responds to changes expected of it and the inhabitant community, an environment which resists sudden shifts of economic circumstances and at the same time offers the inhabitants a permanent foundation for their everyday activities (Pickett, Cadenasso and McGrath, 2013). In instances like these it is difficult to create conditions for a sustainable cultural landscape—what is necessary for further landscape development as well as protection. Without the awareness of the value of cultural landscape, and thus landscape education, one can hardly hope for democratic traditions and, even more importantly, participatory procedures

ensuring that it is provided with adequate care, which in its turn would result in the ability to experience its beauty.

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