



POLISH JOURNAL OF LANDSCAPE STUDIES

nr 6/2020

ISSN 2657-327X



Publikacja wydana ze środków grantu
0059/NPRH4/H2b/83/2016

Publisher:

Instytut Kultury Europejskiej Uniwersytetu im. Adama Mickiewicza
Instytut Filozofii Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego

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6/2020

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Editorial

Landscape narrated

“Beauty is in the eye of the beholder”

To paraphrase the old Greek proverb, we may say, that the landscape is in the eye, or mind, of the beholder. It is the sum of people’s experiences existing somewhere on the border between people and the environment they live in. The landscape is apprehended and judged by people who experience it aesthetically, according to its utilitarian purposes, the comfort or the labor and trouble it brings. Quite often it is evaluated according to values which people believe are important, cultural factors, imagination, or associations with childhood. When people talk about places, they say more about their fears, loves, and worldviews. This way, the landscape becomes a kind of story people live in. This story is crucially important for people’s identity; it co-creates it; it emphasizes their social position and reflects the picture of themselves they keep in their minds. The landscape says more about those who narrate it than the narration says about the people and places which are included in it.

The landscape is a phenomenon which is reconstructed through a medium. This medium can take the shape of memory, tourist tracks, museums, photography, movies, etc. All of them, one way or another, using their specific narration, create reality. Wittingly or unwittingly, those narrations take their inspirations from politics, religion, ideology, or simply entertainment. This is why we may also say that the landscape is invented through narration.

The presented volume is divided into three parts—*Memory*, *Tourism and museums* and *Film and photography*—reflecting the ideas described above and different ways people may use them to create their mental and physical landscapes.

The first part, *Memory*, includes texts by Kamilla Biskupska, by Karolina Ćwiek-Rogalska, and by Marta Kubiszyn and Stephanie Weismann. The first one presents the landscapes and greenery of Wrocław as they appear in the memoirs of city inhabitants. Karolina Ćwiek-Rogalska’s paper deals with the problem of post-expulsion landscapes in the context of post-war resettlements, as they appear in the narrations of people living in houses belonging to Germans before the Second World War. The pre-war Lublin landscape reflected in the memories and memoirs of its inhabitants is the topic of Marta Kubiszyn and Stephanie Weissman’s text.

All three texts show how deeply what people see depends on their worldview, their style of living, the concept of what is theirs and belongs to them and what is alien and belongs to others.

The second part of the volume, *Tourism and museums*, is opened by Natalie Moreno-Kamińska paper on the cultural route as a tourist experience. It may not occur to us too often that tourism and cultural routes can be treated as a kind of narration, but it seems they can. By telling stories about history, historical memory, and heritage, they teach us why some fragments of the landscape are meaningful to local people and how to protect them. The second article, by Monika Sadowska, shows how the stories narrated by stones with fossilized ammonites and belemnites are used as decorations in old and contemporary buildings. She states that the limestone elements in architecture could be treated as unique displays of cultural and natural history. The text by Monika Stobiecka presents the landscape as a kind of exhibition taking part in the process of the “musealization of archaeological heritage.” The phenomenon, as the author suggests, builds archaeological narratives beyond museums.

The third part of the volume, *Film and photography*, is dedicated to movies treated as a kind of narration and contains two papers on two directors: Roman Polański and Werner Herzog. Barbara Kita, the author of the first text, writes about the way Roman Polański uses aquatic landscapes to strengthen the intellectual and moral dimensions of his stories. Magdalena Kempna-Pieniążek, in her paper on Werner Herzog’s movies, goes even one step further when she states, that “Werner Herzog’s films grow out of landscapes.” The author demonstrates how Herzog treats the landscape in his documentaries as a medium through which we can reach “poetic” or “ecstatic” truth.

In order to close the volume we are publishing a selection of photographs taken by a contemporary Polish artist and photographer, Sławomir Brzoska (b. 1967) included in his project *Rok wędrującego życia* [A Year of Wandering Life]. The “photo-essay” is followed by Beata Frydryczak’s review of Brzoska’s project and book.

Magdalena Gimbut

I. Memory



Green Wrocław: Urban narratives of three post-war generations of Wrocław's inhabitants

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Abstract

This study is an invitation to reflect on issues that fall within the area of collective memory, an area that awaits further in-depth analysis. More specifically, this article is a proposal of a broader study on cultural landscape and places of memory than that which is dominant in the sociological literature. In particular, I examine the relationship between the inhabitants of the Polish “Western Lands” and the material German heritage of the cities in which they happen to live. I mainly focus on the relation between socially constructed memory and greenery—a “negligible” part of the space of human life. As I demonstrate in the article, the “green” narrations about Wrocław created after World War II are lasting and are still present in the stories of city's inhabitants today.

Key words:

Polish Western Lands, social memory, cultural heritage, greenery, Wrocław

The cultural landscape as a lived landscape: A sociological perspective

The starting point of my reflections is the concept of cultural landscape, which I understand as „a record of history in a specific space whose shape and identity are composed of both primary (coming from nature) and secondary (resulting from human activity) factors” (Kornecki 1991, 19). This definition, however, requires a clarification in the sociological perspective I adopt. The postulated „record of history in a specific space” is carried out by researchers most often in the macrosocial context—as in the definition of the cultural landscape proposed by Beata Frydryczak:

the cultural landscape is the result of human work and activity and of historical time. Traces of these activities are still legible. They can be read both in the topography of the landscape (roads, fields, avenues of trees), revealing its subsequent layers of meaning (landscape archaeology, stories, legends), and artifacts (monuments, historic buildings, memorials), which means going beyond nature towards historical human testimonies. (Frydryczak 2014, 198)

The artifacts distinguished by the researcher—historic places, memorials, and monuments—co-create the collective identity of a community, most often a national identity.¹ They are also part of the cultural landscape, which is most often the object of interest to sociologists.² In this study, I propose to adopt a different perspective on research surrounding the cultural landscape—a microsociological one. In this approach, the social researcher is interested in fragments of the everyday landscape³ present in the narratives of users of a given space:

adopting a perspective close to ... the subject's everyday life makes the researcher concentrate on everyday things and events marked by intimacy.... Shortening the cognitive distance changes both the aesthetics and the scale of the landscape. It's like giving up a panoramic landscape in the style of Johannes Vermeer in favor of the multitude of microperspectives characteristic of the style of Bruegel. (Julkowska 2017, 5)

The cultural landscape understood in this way is inscribed in the phenomenological category of the lived world (*Lebenswelt*): “It is the world we encounter in everyday life, given in a simple and direct experience—especially in observation and its derivatives: memory, expectation, etc.—independent from the scientific interpretation and primary to it” (Gurwitsch 1989, 151). An important feature of the lived landscape is its active presence in the life of recipients:

The space occupied by people is the area of past, ongoing, and future events, the scene, and the result of activities; it is the location of objects created by people. It is constantly shaped and transformed, being a material but also an ‘inspirer’ of certain forms of behaviour,

1 A thorough description of the legitimizing function of material commemorations co-creating national identity has been given by Barbara Szacka (2006). The relationship between the landscape and national memorial sites is presented in Frydryczak (2017).

2 Sociological studies relate primarily to various types of material evidence of the past that can be collectively referred to as, following Lech M. Nijakowski, a „monument”: „By a monument, we mean various commemorations and places symbolizing important events of the past, such as marked battle sites, houses inhabited by great figures, and death camps” (Nijakowski 2006, 66).

3 I subscribe to Kazimierz Wejchert's concept of the everyday landscape. He wrote about the social functions of an ordinary, inconspicuous human environment as follows: „the role played by minor impacts created by the everyday environment in the formation of individuals and communities is still underestimated, [and] one of the most important factors shaping individuals, so far lost in the shadow of other factors, is the organization of the surrounding space, the everyday architecture” (Adamczewska-Wejchert and Wejchert 1986, 38).

through the shapes, functions, and values given to it, which are read and perpetuated in the consciousness of its users on a daily basis, both in the form of images and beliefs. (Nózka 2016, 104)

The lived landscape is an important element in creating a sense of belonging and attachment to the inhabited space (see Kühne 2017; Dwyer and Alderman 2008).

The lived landscape is the lens through which I look at the social structure of Wrocław, one of the largest urban centers of the “Western and Northern Territories” or “Western and Northern Lands”—areas added to Poland after the Second World War as a result of the arrangements of the conferences in Potsdam and Yalta. It is a city that has undergone a violent and profound change in identity as a result of military operations and political arrangements:

In 1945, the city suffered the most severe shock that could be imagined. In the last weeks of the war, one of the most beautiful metropolises in Europe was transformed into a gigantic pile of rubble, and because soon afterwards the victorious powers of World War II decided that Wrocław was to be a Polish city from that moment on, a total population exchange took place there. In just three years, all the Germans were deported to the west and replaced by Polish settlers from the east. (Thum 2005, 16)

Wrocław—a city without memory?

The settlement process in the Western and Northern Territories, begun in 1945, was difficult and complicated. For people who experienced the transition, the landscape of the pre-war eastern borderlands of Germany was foreign, even hostile. It was also incomprehensible—towns and villages annexed to Poland were more prosperous and more developed than those from which their post-war inhabitants came—mostly uneducated people, living in poor rural areas. The traumatic experiences of people subjected to forced displacement from the eastern borderlands of Poland—areas of Poland incorporated into the Soviet Union after the Second World War—should be added to the above difficulties. In the most ruined cities (like Wrocław), the post-war landscape was repelling, with ubiquitous destruction and hardships in everyday life—there was no food, water, electricity, or glass in windows, and armed gangs circulated around the city (see Thum 2005; Grzebałkowska 2015; Halicka 2015). The post-war image of the Western and Northern Territories was supplemented by an uncertain political context that caused living in the “Recovered Territories” to be associated with a lack of stability and security—verbalized in the repeated slogan “the Germans will return” (see, for instance, Thum 2005).

The indicated circumstances of the post-war landscape of the Western and Northern Lands also affected Wrocław as it became a Polish city—they left their mark on the urban narratives shared by successive generations of Wrocław's inhabitants. The key

in this context was the “crack between the place and the society” created in the first post-war years (Dyak 2011, 137). Its consequence was an ambiguity of existence in post-war Wrocław that lasted for decades. The living environment of the inhabitants of Wrocław was the surviving fragments of the city’s German landscape—the surroundings were filled with architecturally alien buildings, infrastructure, signs, books, everyday objects, etc. However, this whole space of everyday life has remained “unnamed,” “unspoken,” and “unexplained” for decades, both on the level of the everyday life of the inhabitants⁴ and in public discourse filled with slogans about the morally and historically justified return of Wrocław to the Fatherland:

A repatriate from over the Bug River or a settler from central Poland were going to the new territory as an area incorporated into their homeland.... In the construction of this new ‘small homeland,’ they were reassured by the faith and certainty that they were not colonizers in foreign areas, but they settle in the lands that, although once belonged to Germany, were reincorporated into Poland as a result of the war. They had a sense that the changes were just. (Nowakowski 1967, 183)

After 1989, the German history of the city began to be gradually included in public discourse, though often under the slogan of the multicultural past of the city—obscuring the problematic heritage of Breslau:

a specific myth of multiculturalism of parts of the Western Lands, for example, Wrocław or Gdańsk, acts as a factor weakening or “softening” the former Germanism visible on a daily basis, especially in the architecture and the civilizational shaping of the landscape. (Zawada 2015, 93)

Nowadays, the problems of the difficult pre-war heritage of Wrocław are more and more visible in the scientific studies of literary scholars (Rybicka 2011; Zawada 2015; Zybura 1999), culture studies experts (Miściorak 2015; Saryusz-Wolska 2011), historians (Praczyk 2017; Thum 2005), pedagogues (Kamińska 2017), and sociologists (Czajkowski and Pabjan 2013; Kłopot and Trojanowski 2015). What is more, some researchers postulate, based primarily on common sense beliefs, that subsequent post-war generations of Wrocław’s inhabitants adopt and accept the difficult heritage of their city. Here is one such enthusiastic voice:

⁴ As Stanisław Bereś, a Wrocław resident and professor at the University of Wrocław, recalls: „I lived in a German house where for generations German children had been born and old people had died. I slept on a German couch, looked at German paintings, bathed in a German bath, ate from German pots and plates.... Sometimes it occurred to me: ‘Jesus, we live on stolen things.’... Since childhood we had been raised in hatred and fear of the Germans, and at the same time our whole world, the whole cosmos of our everyday life, even our tastes, had been formed within the objects, equipment, forms, and spirit of Germany. Do you realize that? Do you think it does not affect a person in any way?” (Nowicki (Bereś) 1993, 51).

Wrocław has been conquered! It is already the second generation of the native inhabitants of Wrocław that have come into the world in a city incomparably more “their own” than that of their parents. They were not only seeds but young sprouts of local identity... the end of the struggle for the face of the inhabitants’ own identity is also related to the opening of the discourse to important areas that were previously excluded. I am thinking primarily of the German heritage of Wrocław but also its Czech and Austrian legacy. (Łaska 2006, 23)

Other scholars point out, however, that the Breslau wound, created decades ago and never cared for, has not yet healed and affects the modern processes of inhabiting the city: “The process of Polish citizens taking over the city of Wrocław has lasted for three generations and has not ended yet” (Dzikowska 2006, 167), and that “there has been a breakdown of long-term social structures, and, as a result, the subsequent, now third generation living in this area has become a participant in the dispute over memory” (Margiela-Korczewska 2011, 176).

At present, there is little to be found at the level of qualitative research, about the living landscape structures of modern Wrocław from the perspective of ordinary residents of the city.⁵ This is a subject that I undertake in the following study. The center of my reflections is the everyday landscape of the city present in the narratives of the inhabitants of Wrocław—more precisely, one of its aspects rarely addressed by social researchers: nature and its role in the processes of inhabiting a culturally alien space. In the case of Wrocław, this is a topic deeply rooted in the narratives of post-war residents and significant for building their sense of “being at home” in Wrocław.

Analyzed empirical material

Exploring the (non-obvious) themes of the cultural landscape of Wrocław, I reached for the rich literature on the subject—among others, the aforementioned studies by historians, sociologists, and cultural scholars, discussing various manifestations of post-war identities of Wrocław’s inhabitants from various perspectives. Published diaries and memoirs of the inhabitants of the Western Territories were also a valuable reference point and a source of information for me (see, for instance, Halicka 2015; Grzebałkowska 2015), including those of the inhabitants of Wrocław (see Bierut and Pęcherz 2015; Konopińska 1987; Mielewczyk 2018; Nowicki (Bereś) 1993; Suleja 1995; Tuszyńska 2003; Zawada 2015). In the following pages of the study, I will refer in more detail to two research projects. The first of these is the publication *Związani*

⁵ In 2014 and 2015, Katarzyna Kajdanek—a researcher dealing with, among others, the relationship between the public space and the cultural identity of Wrocław—conducted 20 free interviews with Wrocław experts—local politicians, city officials, journalists, architects, art historians, urban activists—see Bierwaczonek, Dymnicka, Kajdanek, and Nawrocki (2017).

z miastem. Opracowanie i fragmenty wypowiedzi nadesłanych na konkurs: Czym jest dla Ciebie miasto Wrocław? [Attached to the City; A compilation and excerpts of the statements sent in for the contest: What is the city of Wrocław to you?], which contains extensive fragments of memoirs written by the inhabitants of Wrocław in the second half of the 1960s (Jałowiecki 1970).⁶ The second is my research on the post-war processes of settling the city and the generational transmission connected with it. In this study, I will refer to the pilot studies I conducted from May to September 2018. The research consists of 18 narrative interviews conducted with representatives of the second (born in the 1950s) and the third (born in the 1970s) generations of citizens of Wrocław. An important aspect of the conducted research was to reach ordinary residents of Wrocław—not experts or activists of urban communities, whose knowledge and narration had already been used by researchers of urban processes.

The pioneer period—familiar greenery

The published memoirs of the first settlers arriving in the “recovered” areas of the Western and Northern Territories are dominated by the images of post-war destruction and ubiquitous unfamiliarity, already outlined earlier in this study.

In these narratives, there are also visible practices of searching for familiar elements in the surrounding landscape, on which one could build a sense of “being home.” Poles relied on the assurances of the communist authorities about their moral right to live in these lands:

What I have, in fact, once belonged to someone else, some German. And what will happen if they want to regain their property? This created a state of conflict and a sense of insecurity and instability. This in turn caused a more and more intense need to justify one's residence in the area and to justify possession of property (mine, not mine) given... These justifications were strengthened in the new ideology and in the ideologically determined type of national pathos, which was manifested in many historical falsifications presented in the media at the time and in the speeches of political activists at the central and local level. This ideology began to be assimilated. (Hess and Leoński 2001, 194)

However, apart from the internalized propaganda motifs, in the memories of the settlers, one can find more individual practices of taming the new space:

⁶ The publication contains the winning and distinguished written statements submitted for the competition „What is the city of Wrocław to you?,” announced and completed in 1966 by the Wrocław Branch of the Polish Sociological Association and the Department of Culture of the Presidium of the National Council of the City of Wrocław. The jury of the competition was composed of significant representatives of Polish sociology: Józef Chałasiński, Jan Szczepański, Aleksander Wallis, Janusz Goćkowski, and Bohdan Jałowiecki.

There was no day off work in which I would not travel across the city in search of objects unknown to me and facts to be learned. That is how I was attached to Wrocław for an indefinite time, and the city absorbed me completely. (Jałowiecki 1970, 239)

That sense of familiarity resulting from personal contact with the space was facilitated by the nature that was present in the destroyed cities.⁷ For example, Ludwik Ejsmond, recalling the beginnings of his residence in the ruined Głogów, wrote that

families lived in ruins and basements. There was no water, electricity, or coal gas in the city. The people who lived in it ran a primitive way of life—dishes were prepared on artificially built hearths, water was taken from brooks, and wood or coal was retrieved from buried cellars... And yet I remained there—filled with faith in the possibility of rebuilding the city—full of flowers and greenery. (Ejsmond 1973, 189)

The greenery that survived the war's turmoil and overgrew the city's ruins provided a respite and a sense of normality in the hardships of post-war existence—it was an aesthetic, but also a therapeutic, escape from the ubiquitous destruction. However, it was not only solace but also something recognizable, something you could identify with—something you could grasp. The cultural landscape of the Western and Northern Territories was semantically empty for the post-war inhabitants—deprived of the artifacts mentioned above and, importantly from the community perspective, deprived of cultural points of reference—deprived of memories, legends, and stories of previous generations. Olga Tokarczuk notes that the life of the first post-war generation settled in the area was marked by a specific emptiness:

Hunger for a myth, hunger for a tale that will integrate this broken world, that will tame space and time.... Why was this little chapel built in the forest?... Who lived in the palace? Is it true that there was a windmill on the pass? Where did the road lead that ends suddenly in the forest?... Our predecessors took their memories with them, and we were thrown into the world without memory. (Tokarczuk 2001, 49; see Browarny 2008).

⁷ Małgorzata Praczyk (2018), based on several hundred diaries of settlers in the Western and Northern Territories, describes in detail the functions that nature (both vegetation and animals) played in their lives. Praczyk defines the issue of the relationship between man and the images of the natural environment, landscape, and its cultural formation as environmental memory: „Environmental memory is a type of human memory whose subject is the natural environment. Man, as one of the elements of the natural environment, enters into multidirectional and feedback relationships with its individual elements. These relationships are described in various narratives about nature, as well as in other cultural manifestations of human activity that reflect human experience related to the natural environment” (Praczyk 2018, 333).

In that meaningless landscape of towns and villages, greenery was an understandable reference point, a link to a safe past—I will again refer to the diary of Joanna Konopińska:

Today, in front of the house, under a high birch, I found early violets, not yet fully developed, but already pleasing to the eye. I made a small bouquet of them and carried them to my grandmother. “Put them, my child, on the bedside table,” she said, “they will remind me of my youth. The same flowers grew in Rakoniewice, and they smelled the same too.” (Konopińska 1987, 212)

The 1960s—the green Wrocław

The motif of greenery in narratives about Wrocław did not disappear with the post-war reconstruction of the city—clearing it of ruins and transforming it according to socialist standards. On the contrary, the analyzed narratives from the 1960s indicate that urban nature remained an important reference point for defining the identity of the post-war city. The authors of the memoirs published in the aforementioned volume *Attached to the City*, while answering the competition questions “Does Wrocław have its own image?” and “What is most characteristic about Wrocław?” very often begin their replies with descriptions of urban green areas—parks, gardens, and squares:

The city has pleasant and beautiful corners. This is visible on the quiet and majestic Ostrów Tumski, the beautiful streets, gardens, and squares of Karłowice, or, in my opinion, the most beautiful corner, stretching from Sępolno to Biskupin, with the grounds of the Olympic Stadium, Szczytnicki Park, the zoo, and the People’s Hall. (Jałowiecki 1970, 124)

I see the features of a big urban center in the beautiful parks and green areas of Wrocław, and especially in the vast expanse it covers, which is interestingly connected with a number of satellite settlements. This area and the abundance of greenery, and especially the Oder, which does not divide the city, but integrates it in some strange way, make up Wrocław’s own image. (Ibidem, 223)

For a full understanding of the role of urban greenery in the creation of the post-war identity of the city, it should be added that the parks so often present in the narratives of Wrocław residents—mostly founded in the nineteenth century or earlier—are the cultural heritage of Breslau.⁸ Designed on a grand scale, planted with exotic trees and enriched with infrastructure enabling spending free time in

⁸ For a detailed discussion of the history of Wrocław’s urban greenery, see Bińkowska (2011), Bińkowska and Szopińska (2013).

a way unknown to post-war residents (including inns and restaurants, canals for kayaking, fountains), they trace back to a wealthy middle-class culture. Looking from that perspective upon these fragments of the urban space, one could assume that they would constitute another motif of the city's alienation. However, the city parks of Wrocław are treated in the analyzed diaries as areas devoid of incriminating German origin. The green architecture in the discussed memoirs most often appears in contemporaneous term.⁹ It is also an element integrating Wrocław's community (*our greenery*). The extent of the urban greenery being *our own* can be seen in the following excerpt, demonstrating the two most important motifs contributing to the post-war familiarity of Wrocław—greenery (“magnolias in Szczytnicki Park”) and references to the Piast family's legacy (“Piast Eagles”):

First, an ardent search for all traces of the Polishness of Wrocław—Piast Eagles, historic churches with their old chapels, sarcophagi, tombstones, portals, tympana. Making sure that we walk on our streets and alleys. Every effort to clean up, and later to rebuild fragments of the city, pleased the eye. The heart was joyful when discovering magnolias in Szczytnicki Park, a charming pergola near the People's Hall. (Jałowiecki 1970, 263)

Defining the city's identity primarily with reference to its green architecture says a lot about the processes of taming the space in Wrocław in the 1960s. The image of the city emerging from these memoirs confirms the divergence between the matter of the city and its inhabitants indicated at the beginning of the study. The pre-war architecture, apart from the—accepted by the then authorities as “Polish heritage”—Gothic, Renaissance, and sometimes Baroque, is carefully avoided in the images of Wrocław sketched by the authors:

Someone once asked me what is worth seeing in Wrocław. A difficult question: what is there to choose, should we show them the historic, mossy districts—Ostrów Tumski, with its numerous monuments, or the new districts, scattered around the city? I think I would take the visitor to the Market Square, as we did with my wife and her relative who had regularly visited Wrocław for several years from abroad. That, in my opinion, is the center of Wrocław—as it was centuries ago. (Jałowiecki 1970, 169)

The advantage and the attraction of Wrocław are its magnificent historic places, mostly Gothic, less Renaissance and Baroque....The Gothic monuments are mostly loosely scattered sacred buildings (except the Town Hall). In the future, they will be a quiet

⁹ In only one case does one of the authors, using the term *for a long time*, indirectly indicate an awareness of the pre-war origin of the green spaces of Wrocław: “However, I hope that Wrocław, which has had many green areas for a long time, will remain beautifully green and spacious, that it will not be so bricked up like Warsaw. For there I felt like a person from the lowlands, who, being thrown into the mountainous surroundings, feels the lack of space” (Jałowiecki 1970, 215).

haven, a diversification among the monotony of modern buildings and the only souvenirs of the magnificent and rich past of the city. (Ibidem, 120)

Other architectural epochs—first of all buildings from the 19th century and from the first half of the 20th century—appear in the analyzed publication sporadically—in descriptions of destroyed tenement houses:

If after leaving the station [a traveler] goes to the left, it will not be so bad, because there are relatively wide streets and quite a lot traffic there.... If, however, our traveler goes to the right, it will be a little worse. He will come across the hideous, shabby, dirty, ex-German tenements that line streets like Pułaskiego, Traugutta, Miernicza, and others. There are more such areas in the city. I realize that it's not our—Poles'—fault. Repainting these tenement houses would involve large costs, made larger given all the sculptures “adorn-ing” the walls would have to be eliminated. That is why addressing the ugliness of these districts in a complete way is, in my opinion, impossible at the moment. (Jałowiecki 1970, 132)

The fact that the Wrocław of the 1960s is, at the narrative level, full of architectural areas of oblivion (first of all, the indicated 19th century and modernist architecture) is a consequence of the communist authorities' policies, which consistently surrounded “the nineteenth century with a barrier of silence in the history of the city” (Thum 2005, 356). Interestingly, an unique part of the city, eagerly included by the writers in their stories about their “own” Wrocław, is *Wielka Wyspa* (the Great Island)—a part of the city located in the north-east, separated from the center by the Oder and its tributaries. It is an area where important fragments of German cultural heritage can be found—the People's Hall, the zoo, and the workers' garden-like housing estates built in the 1930s: Biskupin and Sępolno, as well as Szczytnicki Park. This is a space that had not suffered as a result of warfare, and is full of gardens, squares, and parks.

21st century — the city of recreation

Reading the memoirs of Wrocław pioneers and diaries published in *Attached to the City*, I asked myself about the cultural functions of green urban architecture in contemporary Wrocław. I will answer this question by reaching for the empirical material collected during my own pilot studies. In the interviews gathered, greenery, just like half a century ago, is a key thread in the tale of urban space. It remains the most important reference point for questions about noticed urban architecture, and about the architectural identity of the city. For example:

KB: What is the most Wrocław-like in Wrocław? What architecture?

AK: The parks.

KB: The parks?

AK: The parks ... so, erm, what I like and what I think that is.. in Wrocław is that, that I think it is just a nice place to live, the parks among other things. The things that are happening here along the Oder. [interview 16]

KB: What do you like about the city architecture?

PŚ: It's hard to enumerate. Well, I like the whole city. I adore the parks in Wrocław, the big ones, you know. Szczytnicki Park, Millennium Park, Kozanowski Park. We often ride our bikes there with my son. [interview 6]

Wrocław's greenery—above all the urban parks—are the most frequently indicated architectural (or maybe “architectural”) themes in the city. The respondents refer to greenery equally often as to the two most important fragments of the city in terms of the city's image and tourist attractions—the Market Square and Ostrów Tumski. Based on the pilot studies, it is difficult to answer the question about the reasons for this. Perhaps the indication of urban greenery as the city's architecture in this context results from a sense of lack of discursive competence that makes it possible to express opinions on buildings. Such knowledge is not part of everyday experience. On the other hand, parks are a component of the city that is understandable, noticeable, and (to some extent) subject to reflection. Wrocławians talk, walk, and ride bikes in the city parks. In other words, they make that space a part of their everyday lives.

However, awareness of urban architecture cannot be reduced to the ability to name architectural styles. Architecture is a carrier of values, certain social visions—it is a discourse which should be understood as “a form and a set of practices used to communicate social meanings and maintain the vision of a social world whose shape is subject to constant cultural and political negotiations” (Prośniewski 2014, 15-16). Architecture, or rather its social reception, contributes to the identity of the city; it is also the voice of the past, the heritage of every city. Therefore, perhaps, the focus on urban greenery present in the narratives of subsequent generations of Wrocław residents is a way of avoiding facing the Prussian architecture of Wrocław, which still gives it a significant architectural trait.¹⁰ A good example of how one can read buildings is Andrzej Zawada's description of his contact with the architectural foreignness of Wrocław in the 1960s:

¹⁰ I will only mention as a side note that by adopting this view on the significance of architecture, one can take a different look at the places most frequently cited by the respondents: Ostrów Tumski and the Market Square. These parts of the city, which during the Polish People's Republic co-created the image of the „recovered” Polish Wrocław, may still be woven into the narrative because of this particular story of a familiar medieval past.

I felt like an immigrant in Wrocław for a long time... Whenever I went outside, I felt like I was abroad. And although I could hear the Polish language around me, it did not diminish the power of that feeling. The soaring gothic of the churches, the barracks-like rhythm of the neo-gothic, dark red facades of numerous schools, hospitals, offices, the faces of the neoclassical tenement houses, lined with gray-yellow clinker, all that gave the city a sharp edge of Germanic rigor. (Zawada 2015, 9-10)

What clearly links the narratives from half a century ago with current ones is the absence of the 19th century architecture—the type of buildings still characteristic of Wrocław despite the passage of years—in the constructed images of the city. In the interviews I have collected, 19th century tenement houses are only present in the narratives of people who lived or still live in such buildings. Here is a fragment of an interview with a person who spent their childhood and part of their adult life living in such a building in the city center. It is worth noticing that the description of the urban space begins with an indication of the urban greenery:

KB: What do you like in Wrocław?

MW: (a long moment of reflection) I don't know, you know. I mean, I surely like a lot of greenery, a lot of old trees. (moment of reflection)... Certainly those districts where those old five-story houses are. The revitalized ones are especially nice. Unfortunately, the streets spoil them, because they are not done yet and so on. [interview 15]

The Prussian architecture being “unnoticed” by Wrocław residents is also described by Katarzyna Kajdanek, a researcher who analyzed the results of quantitative research on the cultural identity of Wrocław (as well as Gdańsk and Gliwice). Discussing the answers of the inhabitants of Wrocław, Kajdanek states that

the picture of Wrocław emerging from the results brings to mind a glossy folder in which from page one we can see an aesthetic city, inhabited by young, open people—a city vibrating with an energy of investments and new ideas. The historic buildings are part of this picture, a part not subjected to in-depth reflection, accepted with a sort of unconsciousness of where it came from and what its meaning is. (Kajdanek 2017, 143)

And perhaps it is this, shared by successive generations of the inhabitants of Wrocław, the unconsciousness of where the inherited architecture came from and what its meaning is, that is the cause of the narrative turning away from it and the focusing in the stories on the motif of a “green Wrocław.” As Karl Schlögel notes, “only those who know something can notice anything. Those who know nothing will not notice anything” (Schlögel 2009, 56).

In the narratives I gathered, urban greenery is referred to in the places in Wrocław in which my interlocutors “feel at home.” The city's green spaces are where the

residents of Wrocław like to stay, second only to their own neighborhoods. It is worth noting that my interlocutors no longer really understand the question “what is Wrocław-like?” in the city space—a question that the authors of the memoirs from *Attached to the City* broadly answered. Contemporary residents of Wrocław were happy to answer the questions “what they like in Wrocław” and “where they feel at home in Wrocław.” And the answers to these questions are the empirical material analyzed in the pages of this study. These are mainly depictions of the city parks and green areas of the Great Island. In other words, the image of the city emerging from contemporary narratives consists of the same motifs that were used by the writers of the diaries in Wrocław in the 1960s:

KB: Where do you feel at home in the space of Wrocław?

WW: Certainly not in Krzyki (laughs). Because I am from this “fraction” which belongs to the Szczytnicki Park area, it is my whole life. Szczytnicki Park, the Olympic Stadium, that is Opatowicka Island. That is, the Oder, the park, the greenery and the area of the Great Island between the Great Island and Grunwaldzki Square. [interview 11]

KB: Where do you feel at home in the space of Wrocław?

PŚ: Południowy Park. Wonderful. One of my favorite parks.... It is nicely restored; there are beautiful trees, a small puddle in the middle. You can sit on the grass, I don't know, you can eat cotton candy ... now there are some food trucks, something like that. Well, it's quite nice. And then the People's Hall area. The pergola, the Japanese Garden. Beautiful Szczytnicki Park, wild, great. One of the largest parks in Poland. [interview 6]

Despite this significant similarity (continuation) of the motifs describing the “familiar” city, in the analyzed empirical material one can notice a significant transformation of the context of the functioning of the greenery. Wrocław citizens, writing about their city half a century ago, created a public, official picture of the city. These green areas were part of a wider and important theme that is present in all the memoirs in the analyzed volume—the defense of Wrocław as a friendly and indisputably Polish city. In other words, the admiration of Wrocław's parks legitimized the Polishness of the city—which in terms of green architecture was not inferior to Warsaw or Cracow, or even outranks them in that context, for example:

Our greenery is very Wrocławish, after all, it is hard to find such wonderful parks anywhere else in Europe. I consider Szczytnicki Park and its Japanese Garden as first-class gems. Południowy Park is also valuable. (Jałowiecki 1970, 113)

The abundance of greenery is a plus side of our city. I knew we had a lot of it, but nevertheless I was surprised to read in the press that Wrocław had the most green areas among the municipalities in Poland. Until then I was inclined to assume that Szczecin

was ahead of us in that respect, where streets, or rather the avenues, are just drowning in green, and Cracow, where, willingly or unwillingly, wherever you go, you can always come across Planty Park. (Ibidem, 131)

In today's narratives of the inhabitants of Wrocław, the reference to public discourse about the city is disappearing. The indicated greenery is first and foremost a part of the residents' favorite private space—these are the places where they rest, where they escape from urban noise:

KB: Where do you feel at home in Wrocław?

LC: Well, above all, in my neighborhood. My neighborhood, that is Psie Pole, Zakrzów,... and Pawłowice surprisingly—there is this park there, there is the castle, I like to stay there, I also like to walk, ride a bike, and yes, those areas, plus Kielczów. [interview3]

KB: Where do you feel at home in Wrocław?

MB: Hmm, at home, in the garden [smile]—well, it's Old Zakrzów, there are single-family houses and gardens—and under my apple tree. Each of us has their own intimate place in the world—old people have their armchairs, don't they? Well, I don't, I have this apple tree [laughs]. [interview 2]

KB: Where do you feel at home in Wrocław?

BW: Here [quiet laughter] in this district ...somewhere in Huby, Krzyki...When I don't go to work, I move around Krzyki, I don't like to go to the center [laughs]. Somehow, for example, I am in the Market Square very rarely these days. Somehow, I am not attracted to it, there is more greenery here, more peace I think.... I prefer to stay here. [interview 12]

Conclusion

In this study, I set myself two goals. Firstly, I wanted to show that the lived landscape contains socially significant motifs that are inconspicuous, trivial, or almost unnoticeable to an external observer (researcher): “significant elements—omitted so far, marginalized, ideologized one-sidedly—of the multicultural history of the city can also be found ‘between,’ ‘at the junction,’ ‘underneath,’ on the edges and scraps, in voids, gaps, breaches, holes, and pieces of junk” (Taraneck-Wolańska 2013, 151; see Kamińska 2017). These details, lasting in all their inconspicuousness somewhere “in between” the themes forming the official image of the city, affect the experience of the urban space and of the socially (narratively) established images of that the space.

The second aim of the article was to present these fragments of the lived landscape of Wrocław, which, despite the passage of years and the changes to which

the city and its residents have been subjected, are still an important (albeit hardly noticeable from the perspective of public discourse) reference point for creating the identity of post-war generations of Wrocław residents. The city's greenery, although shifted narratively from the official image of the city to a private, socially shared one, has functioned since the 1940s as a way to deal with the still-difficult and often silenced architectural heritage of the German Breslau.

Greenery, in all the urban stories I analyzed, both those from the 1960s and those of today, has a rooting, settling, and soothing function (see Praczyk 2018, 328). Interestingly, even for the first generation of Wrocław residents, the greenery motif is not sentimentally colored—in those memories there is no longing for landscapes from their earlier lives, the places of their childhood and adolescence. The image of Wrocław emerging from the collected material is an image of a city living in a timeless present—as one of my interlocutors notes:

In Wrocław, we are having fun now. It's here and now. And whatever happens later, we will worry about it later. In Poznań, everyone is worried in advance. We have to provide children with this and that, what will happen, what about this, what about that. And they worry all their lives. And in Wrocław it is here and now and we will worry later, right? It's a lot... it's cooler". [interview 6]

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“It’s scary here.” Haunted landscape as a research tool to look into post-expulsion landscapes

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Abstract

The article deals with the idea of “haunted landscape” as a research tool in analyzing post-expulsion landscapes. I propose a new perspective on analyzing narrations concerning expulsion and resettlements of lands where a drastic demographic change took place. I use existing research connected with the idea of Jacques Derrida’s hauntology, as well as other analytical sources dealing with folktales of different regions. As material for analysis, I propose various records from ethnographic research conducted in the Czechoslovak borderlands, stored at the Institute of Ethnology of the Czech Academy of Sciences, concerning the space of a “traditional house” and the new settlers’ views on their new home.

Key word

haunted landscape, borderlands, post-expulsion landscape, hauntology, Czechoslovakia

<i>KONRAD</i>	<i>KONRAD</i>
<i>Wyście pomarli. Trupy i upiory. Nędza duszy!</i>	<i>You’re dead. Corpses and ghosts. Misery of the soul!</i>
<i>MASKA 19</i>	<i>MASK 19</i>
<i>Tyś bogacz.</i>	<i>You’re a rich man.</i>
<i>KONRAD</i>	<i>KONRAD</i>
<i>I przyszliście mnie kraść.</i>	<i>And you came to rob me.</i>
<i>MASKA 19</i>	<i>MASK 19</i>
<i>To jest idea. Napisz to jako artykuł.</i>	<i>That’s an idea. Write it as an article.</i>

Stanisław Wyspiański, *Wyzwolenie* [Liberation], lines 1904-1907.¹

¹ Translated by Michał Rogalski.

Introduction

As Owen Davies provocatively stated in the very first sentence of his social history of ghosts, “England has long had a reputation for being haunted” (Davies 2007, 1). It is possible to say the same about most of the countries in Central-Eastern Europe. Why? Davis argues why England is so haunted: “It is primarily a consequence of our [English] religious, social and cultural development over the last 500 years” (Davies 2007, 1). And hardly any European region has undergone more turbulent and eventful development than Central Europe has, so why not use that as an excuse to investigate the problem of what haunts the landscapes of this area?

I find it tempting to use hauntology as a research method since “spectrality seeks less to take the place of other approaches or concepts than to supplement them with another dimension ... by offering a new, truly ‘other’ perspective” (del Pilar Blanco and Peeren 2013, 21). It seems that it is worth incorporating as part of landscape studies. Hauntology can be seen primarily as a rather Western-phenomena-oriented method (del Pilar Blanco and Peeren 2013, 19), but I argue that it is also possible to use it in cases of Central European origin. Especially when we keep in mind that writing from a perspective other than the mainstream is always a kind of writing about ghosts (Gordon 2008, 17).

My article aims to answer questions about the possibility of using the concept of “haunted landscape” that I want to propose as a new analytical tool in landscape studies, in particular, as applied to the case of the forced migration of German-speaking inhabitants from Czechoslovakia after 1945 and the resettlement of the so-called Czech borderlands (*pohraničí*). My research questions are as follows: how can we understand “haunted landscape” as a separate phenomenon? Where does it come from? What does it mean that a landscape is haunted? What is the force haunting a landscape? What places can be haunted? For illustration I use oral sources and fieldwork materials collected by Czech ethnologists between 1981 and 1983 in different parts of the borderlands, since they are richer in their description of the post-war period than newer research is, and also because of their relative temporal proximity to the post-war years. Using older research can raise other questions, since it is not only about looking into the problems of the interviewees but also of the interviewers. Examining ghosts is always examining our own ghosts (Bell 1997, 831).

Moreover, using “haunting” and “ghosts” as valid categories of analysis can not only help us to see other perspectives, give voice to usually voiceless entities (such as landscapes), or narrations that are not mainstream, it can, as was pointed out by American media scholar Jeffrey Andrew Weinstock, tell us something about our society’s “hopes and desires, fears and regrets—and the extent to which the past governs our present and opens or forecloses possibilities for the future” (Weinstock 2004, 8). Since the Czech borderland seems to be a region governed by the past, it is worth examining to what extent it proves the point of being “haunted.”

What is a "haunted landscape"?

When we are dealing with such terms as "haunted landscape" or "ghost landscape," they function in academia more as metaphorical nicknames to describe empty or wasteland landscapes than as research terms. For example, Tina Rosenberg, in her acclaimed book on the political transformation of Central-Eastern European countries, uses the term "haunted lands"; however, she does not operationalize it (Rosenberg 1995). So, to begin with, we should ask: what is a "haunted landscape"? The term is present in today's scholarship in different forms. The easiest is to say, like the literature scholar María del Pilar Blanco, that a haunted landscape is a landscape where a haunting takes place (del Pilar Blanco 2012, 1). Although it sounds rather common-minded, del Pilar Blanco continues that "haunting ... is linked to doubt because it depends on that crisis of perception expressed in questions surrounding a landscape ('what is there that I cannot see, but I nevertheless sense is there?'). Doubt is also a reminder of the unfinished business that is experience and its necessary open-endedness: It indicates a site of action that does not know its outcome or even its purpose" (del Pilar Blanco 2012, 25). A haunted landscape is a kind of landscape that forces us to doubt what we see, if we see what we are claiming that we see, as well as a landscape that exhibits some incompleteness of processes, a rupture in activity that was developing there.

There is one crucial thought when it comes to what example to choose to illustrate the issue: there are some particular landscapes that are more haunted than others. So, where do they come from? Scholars mostly agree that "haunted" places are to be seen where something "has vanished, what has been lost, what has gone awry, and what remains unresolved through the passing of the generations" (Maddern 2008, 363). It originally comes from Jacques Derrida's thought of ghosts emerging from ruptures and cracks when something is "out of joint" (Derrida 2016). So that's from where ghosts appear: from unstable, unfinished, or deteriorating spaces.

But what does it actually mean that a landscape is haunted? There are many definitions of "haunting" or "visitation," another term that is used when one tries to describe how a ghost appears somewhere. They are in accordance with one another as well as with the basic Derridean principle that "haunting" is an action that disrupts "order and stability" (Trafton 2013, iii). It obliges us to ask questions about the nature of reality, since our "experience of reality is itself always already haunted by the profound limitations of human subjectivity and the incomprehensible vastness in the reality beyond" (Trafton 2013, iv). Reality is a social construct. But unlike postmodern philosophies, such as Slavoj Žižek's position (Žižek 1999, 64-66), there can be more beyond it, we just do not know what. "Ghosts" are an immanent part of our reality as signs of what transgress it at a given moment, we just do not know it is happening until the "haunting" occurs. Through "haunting" one can see the limitations of reality and, in this way, can be a way of understanding how

reality works. Scholars also refer to the point that haunting is an unwanted activity (Maddern 2008, 365; see also Hetherington 2004, 157-173), and it is a persistent activity that takes place in one given place (Davies 2007, 3).

What is the force haunting a landscape? It is impossible to understand “haunting” as such; therefore, we need a figure of a “ghost” that haunts (Trafton 2013, 12). It is not necessarily a “ghost” as in an unnatural entity or some kind of supernatural being. As has already been shown by hauntologists, ghosts could be understood as figures or concepts that help us deal with marginalized subjects and voices (see Bell 1997; Wolfreys 2001; del Pilar Blanco 2012; Marzec 2015; Derrida 2016). To use these categories is also to try to “represent the unrepresentable” (Holloway and Kneale 2008, 297).

What places can be haunted? Although Owen Davies gives us a comprehensive overview of places that are haunted more frequently than others, it does not exhaust all the possibilities. In the second chapter of his book, entitled “The Geography of Haunting,” he lists such places as “insides” (such as houses and even particular rooms in a house), “landscapes of death” (such as churchyards, gibbet sites, and battlefields), “treasure sites” (where something precious is hidden and guarded), “water” (as liminal spaces that are between known and unknown, civilized and wild; it is also connected to other liminal spaces such as bridges or crossroads), “mines” (because the nature of the work of a miner is dangerous), but also “cities” (especially in the modern era) and “tourist sites” (Davies 2007, 47-64).² What links all those places is the fact that “ghosts” apparently appear where their mortal body had died; hauntings are more frequent in such places, as well as in different liminal spaces and—what is maybe the most interesting among Davies’ observations—where the landscape has changed because of industrial revolution, melioration, draining, and other similar process. Such change of the landscape makes haunting no longer comprehensible: it is hard to understand why ghosts haunt such place (Davies 2007, 46; see also Richardson 2003, 17-31). Nonetheless, it is still clear that they haunt.

Materials

Interest in hauntology relates to the post-modern disbelief in the easy versions of known stories (Weinstock 2004, 3). Therefore, I would like to analyze materials collected by Czech ethnologists in 1980s. In this paper, I will use materials stored at the archive of the Institute of Ethnology of the Czech Academy of Sciences.³ Investigating materials collected by somebody else, especially in a “personal” discipline

² As he puts it, “the landscape is still full of ghosts but you are better off looking for them on the tourist trail than on a trek through the countryside” (Davies 2007, 64).

³ I would like to thank Marcela Suchomelová from the Institute of Ethnology of the Czech Academy of Sciences for her help with finding the materials.

like ethnology, means looking not only into the achieved results but also into the methods, aims, and personal thoughts of the researchers who collected them. Therefore, this kind of research is a kind of double ghost-hunting: firstly, I am looking into ghosts that haunted landscapes researched by Czech ethnologists and, secondly, into these researchers' objectives, so they seem nowadays like different kinds of ghosts. Among the materials archived at the institute are their fieldnotes, working materials, and the questionnaires used during their fieldwork.

The materials that I have analyzed come from very wide-ranging fieldwork which had different aims.⁴ It was led by Iva Heroldová, one of the most famous Czech ethnographers interested in national relations in the borderlands. It took place from 1981 to 1983 in different parts of the borderlands. I will use data from three places: Osoblaha in the Bruntálsko region, Staré Město in the Bruntálsko region, and Branná in the Šumpersko region. They are stored in the archive as written questionnaires—although there are some remarks about tapes with recorded interviews, none were found there. The research was aimed at the study of traditional architecture, but in a questionnaire named "Traditional House" (*Tradiční dům*), among 86 different questions, as many as 19 concerned connections between new settlers and old inhabitants, their housing habits and practices just after the war, and in what way German property was included into post-war economic and social reality. Along with each questionnaire, there was also a separate one concerning individual interviewees, called "Data about informant" (*Údaje o informatorovi*), where 13 questions out of a total of 57 concerned his/her views on German property left behind and memories about German inhabitants. Some of the materials from this fieldwork were used in collected works, such as *Etnické procesy v českých zemích* (Ethnic processes in the Czech lands), but were never used to actually investigate the situation of cohabitation of Czechs and Germans in the borderlands or the settlers' treatment of the remnants of German-speaking culture.

The "haunted landscape" of the Czech borderlands

Although the research that I am dealing with was done during the times of a socialist regime in Central Europe, some remarks from late capitalism landscape researchers seem to be of use here, mostly because they show how "ghosts" change our vision of time as a linear phenomenon that evolves into one direction of so-called "progress" (Benjamin 1999; Maddern 2008, 367; O'Callaghan, Boyle, and Kitchin 2014; López and González 2014). It is also worth addressing because of the turning point

⁴ Therefore I decided to quote whole questions: they were usually long and detailed, enlisting possible answers in case an interviewee could not answer them with his/her own words. A particular attitude toward the researched subject is sometimes seen in their construction: for example, in the question concerning the cohabitation of new settlers and old inhabitants, there is a suggestion that the Germans could have done some kind of harm or sabotaged a farm that was previously theirs. The question of the image of German-speaking inhabitants in the questionnaire is a separate one and should be further investigated.

for when the “haunted landscape” of the Czech borderlands took place: the expulsions that started in 1945 and can be seen as a start of an immense and still ongoing crisis in Czech society (Černý, Křen, Kural, and Otahál 1990).

According to Žižek, there is no other reality than the one that we are trying to “cover up.” Through this process we experience reality, and in this way reality is “symbolically constructed.” What is interesting, nonetheless, is that there is always some small space between the event and its recording (“covering up”)—which is more intense in times of crisis, because the symbolic frame that is built by the given group is “out of joint.” The symbolic frame no longer reflects our “covered up” reality (Žižek 1999). The new, post-war reality of the borderlands is unified by the construction of new symbolical fictions from the leftovers of persisting but muted history (see O’Callaghan, Boyle, and Kitchin 2014, 124). Why is there a need for ghosts in this post-expulsion landscape, why has it become haunted? New settlers came to regions that seemed strange to them, and they needed something to define them in opposition to the “strange,” thus “uncivilized,” lands and remains of a culture that was described as “foreign.” Therefore this strategy seems to be similar to what David Punter and Glennis Byron point out about the English literary Gothic: “[it] always remains the symbolic site of a culture’s discursive struggle to define and claim possession of the civilized, and to abject, or throw off, what is seen as other to that civilized self” (Punter and Byron 2004, 5). The settlers built their new order, ejecting what seemed to them “barbaric.” It is worth noting that in the context of the English literary Gothic, “ghosts” were accused of being a “barbaric heritage” (Trafton 2013, 30), and the “German” culture of the borderlands seems to be a distant relative to this claim.

Ghost stories of the borderlands

As researchers who are dealing with the subject of literary and folk ghost stories argue, there are several indicators characteristic of this kind of storytelling. Among them, one of the most important is the lack of logical explanation for events (Briggs 2015, 177). It is not necessarily the case that the unnatural beings that do the haunting in these types of works are the dead returning to our world. These are creatures who inhabit the world according to their own rules. Rules in the world of ghost stories are not “rational” but rather set “inside a kind of imaginative logic in which the normal laws of cause and effect are suspended in favor of what Freud termed ‘animistic’ ways of thinking, in which thought itself is a mode of power, in which wishes and fears can actually benefit or do harm” (Briggs 2015, 178).

“Strangeness” and “ghostliness” are achieved through the impression of truth, giving the receiver the possibility of feeling a pleasant thrill—like we sometimes have remembering an unhappy past event, turning it into an anecdote. It should be maintained within certain *decorum*, but the mechanisms of “ghostliness” should

be kept in the shadows. Moreover, the stories should be contemporary to those who relate it (James 1929). On the other hand, it is important to remember that ghost stories are a genre where darker aspects of human nature have a voice: "ghost stories often deal with the most primitive, punitive, and sadistic of impulses, revenge being one of the commonest motifs present in the form" (Briggs 2015, 182).

Having that in mind, one can ask if a ghost story as a narrative scenario for storytelling about one's experiences after the war in the borderlands, during expulsions and the resettlement process, is a proper choice? I would argue that it is, because all of the elements that are characteristic of ghost stories are also characteristic of the stories that are told by the new settlers and inhabitants who were not expelled. It is a story filtered and told by the experiences of the researchers who collected the questionnaires, so we do not get them in first-hand form. They are made more "literary" and, hence, more open to interpretation as literary sources.

Uncanniness

As historical and demographic research shows, the re-colonization of this region was not successful (von Arburg and Staněk 2010). Therefore, the resettlement of the borderlands that started already in 1945 bears the marks of "uncanniness." As Renée Bergland argues, the uncanny is "the unsettled, the not-yet-colonized, the unsuccessfully colonized, or the decolonized" (Bergland 2000, ii). Cutting off German-speaking legacies in the borderlands also meant orientating the landscapes of the region toward the future. Such activity relates to a historical amnesia and leads to the feeling of timelessness (Tuan 2013). Without "ghosts" it is impossible to speak about the past of the land and it is impossible to settle it. There is always something "uncanny" that disturbs it.

"Uncanny" (*Unheimlich*) literally means "un-homely" or "unfamiliar." It is a fitting name for spaces that were deprived of their status as homelands through expulsions and new resettlement strategies, which were often—as in this case—not successful. The "uncanniness" of the borderlands is also visible in what the interviewees repeated. Like in Freud's classic narration about *Unheimlich*, where the researcher wanders in narrow Italian streets and starts to feel bothered, the repetitions of "events, images and localities is one of the recurrent motifs of the uncanny" (del Pilar Blanco and Peeren 2013, 396). So, if the feeling of "uncanniness" also accompanies individuals who are dealing with "haunted landscapes," it is possible to widen the Freudian analysis of "unheimlich" to something that is present in the experience of haunting. Landscapes become "haunted" (or "spectral," as del Pilar Blanco and Peeren propose to call them) because of repetitive observations concerning the same things.

What is haunted

What kind of “haunted” spaces are there in the analyzed material? Although what Davies observes is right, so the “insides” of houses and farm buildings are in large part spaces of “haunting,” there are other places that seems to be “out of joint,” “out of order” (Derrida 2016), and where “something is not right” (Sendyka 2014). When it comes to houses, it is mostly about colors and decorations, as well as pieces of furniture. What concerns farm buildings is mostly the presence or lack of animals. Not only can given rooms be haunted, as Davies argues, but given objects inside the house can be haunted too. Moreover, a whole village or town could be seen as haunted. Also, a landscape as such may seem to be “out of joint”: there the perception of weather conditions seems to be especially important. Let’s try and analyze the materials to see what places are truly “haunted” in the Czech borderlands.

“Outside”

Throughout the questionnaires, it is noticeable that some places seemed “stranger” than others to the settlers, and there the possibility of haunting begins. What catches the eye in the beginning is question 8 from the “Traditional House” questionnaire. It reads as follows: “In what state was the house when you got it? In what shape were the farm buildings?” Among the answers are:

“damaged, they had to insert glass in windows, there was no roof” (Moldavian expatriate, woman, Osoblaha); “the house—the roof was full of holes, the facade was destroyed, the stable—very destroyed” (Czech man, Osoblaha); “destroyed windows, roof, the facade was destroyed by shrapnel” (Czech man, Osoblaha); “in bad shape” (Czech man, Staré Město); “the house was in very bad shape.” (Czech man, Branná)

The omnipresent destruction is evident: houses are generally in bad shape, being more ruins than habitable buildings. The signs of war are still visible (“facade ... destroyed by shrapnel”). It is important that most of these answers concern facades: first view that was to be seen by settlers after they came to the borderlands. What is “inside” is not yet visible in these answers.

It should also be noted that there are no remarks about who did this to the villages and towns that were meant to be re-settled. Question 31 from the “Data about informant” questionnaire about the activity of so-called “gold-diggers” (looters) brings some answers. The answer that “most of the houses were plundered” (Czech woman, Branná) shows that there were some forces behind the state of the village, though not visible—more like invisible forces that brought catastrophe and then vanished. Also, those who came later complained that “in the house they bought there were a lot of things missing—the first settlers took everything left from the

houses" (Czech woman, Branná). "Gold-diggers" and "first settlers" are invisible, yet powerful creatures who left their marks in the landscape but are no longer there.

It is interesting that these remarks were made without further consideration concerning what to do—they were seen as past, as something that was presently no longer seen, and the settlers could say proudly that they did what had to be done and adapted as necessary. Only one interviewee, immediately after stating the bad shape of the property, said "[the house was] in very bad shape; everything needed to be adapted and remade" (Czech man, Staré Město), while another added that "it was necessary to fix it" (Moldavian expatriate, woman, Osoblaha). Adaptations and renovations done by the settlers could be called "cautious." As one of the interviewees stated, "a new facade [was constructed] in 1968 (but only because the previous one was in bad condition)" (Slovak woman, Osoblaha). There was nothing to be done except the most urgent things. The power of destruction was more present than the need to adapt or fix what was left behind. We do not, as in a ghost story, know the precise mechanism standing behind the destruction—we only know that it took place.

Treasure sites

There are, however, some places that are almost "tangible" traces of these—and other—forces. In the settlers' narrations, we can distinguish another similar category of "haunted space" in accordance with Owen Davies remarks. It is a specific kind of "treasure site." The stories of German-speaking inhabitants hiding valuable things by burying them are frequently mentioned by the interviewees as proof that "the Germans" believed they would shortly return. As one of the interviewers noted, "They [Germans] believed they would come back. It is evidenced by their burying valuable things. Apparently, they were often discovered" (expatriate from Romania, woman, Branná). The same was mentioned by another interviewee: "Hidden things in houses, buried things" (Czech man, Branná). Beside these marginal and maybe more anecdotal mentions, we can find also more elaborated stories, where interviewees were trying to make sense of this activity of "burying things." As was noted by one of the researchers in the margin of the questionnaire of a Czech woman in Staré Město:

[The wife of a German school director] asked her to prevent them being expelled, [she] answered that she can't, and she doesn't want to; there were rumors that the director's wife was able to shoot and at night buried the corpses. [She] allegedly took out some permission and she came back for some time and she even tried to bury things from the farm. (Czech woman, Staré Město)

It can serve as a kind of explanation of how the “supernatural” works, yet it lacks more dramatic details. It also works in this “kind of imaginative logic” that I was describing when it comes to ghost stories. It gives the story a pleasant thrill, and expulsion is shown as a benefiting opportunity to get rid of a “strange” and dangerous being that could not be helped: she seeks revenge but could not find any. The German teacher’s wife is dangerous as such but is at the same time harmless. She could not do any harm to the new settlers.

The haunting—yet not physical—presence of previous inhabitants connected with “burying” things sometimes brings to mind detective work. It also helps to uncover who was there before the settlers came: “The house was occupied by a shoemaker. The informant found a buried bottle of nails.... [but] he never met any Germans.” (Czech man, Staré Město)

Weather

Unfriendly, haunted neighborhoods are discernible in the new settlers’ opinions about the weather, climate, and landscape as such. As one of them stated, one of the most difficult things to get used to was the “different character of the landscape, at home they wore any shoes from spring until autumn, here they couldn’t go barefoot even in the yard. Different kinds of plants—they couldn’t grow their own hops, it bothered her husband” (Czech Volhynian woman, Osoblaha). The climate was much harsher there than where the new settlers came from, especially for so-called “expatriates” from Volhyn (Ukraine), Romania, or Moldova. They were afraid of the conditions: “The climate [was difficult]. She came from the south, where there was almost no snow” (Czech woman, Staré Město); “It was colder here” (Slovak woman, Branná). The cold as a characteristic mark of the borderlands is reminiscent of places that are “haunted,” dead. Those who come back from the dead are usually described as colder, since there are no longer any organic fluids in their bodies. In this case, the whole land is seemingly colder, since it lacks the circulation of the forces that previously gave it life.

Villages of ruins

So what did places like Osoblaha, Staré Město, and Branná look like at the time of the settlers’ arrival? It is striking that the modes of description that we can distinguish are like narrations familiar from ghost stories. The description of a ruined, empty “ghost town” is dominant. Each house that is allocated to settlers or is taken by them has been previously partially demolished: this repetition is a sign of “unheimlich” visible in the materials. Repeated stories about destroyed houses that seem to be like one another and yet feel “strange” to newcomers are a sign of haunting. Answering question 50 from the “Traditional House” questionnaire,

"Who were your neighbors at the time [of your settlement]?", one of the interviewees claimed that "it's hard to say, in destroyed Osoblaha everyone and no one" (Czech woman, Osoblaha). It shows us a space that is so empty that it is hard to set any borders. The same is even better visible in a report precisely noted by the interviewer: "In [village name] I shout to the neighbors and they hear me on the other hill, here he wouldn't be able to hear me if he were behind his house" (Czech man, Osoblaha). Disturbances when it comes to the border affects how the space is used (that is: communicating with neighbors), and traditional behaviors cease to make sense there. Answering a question about the state of their house, another interviewee said that it was as bad "as all of them" (German man, Branná). But we do not have to guess, another settler was more explicit: "Because it was just after the war, the situation was totally bizarre, the village was practically totally ruined" (Czech woman, Osoblaha). She used the Czech word "*zvláštní*" (bizarre) to set the mood: the world the new settlers came into was the reverse of what they were used to. Instead of homes ready to be settled, they came to a land of ruined houses. It worried them: "She was mostly concerned with the state of Osoblaha, it was 'cut off' from the world" (Slovak woman, Osoblaha). It is a perfect setting for ghost stories: no one there can hear screams for help.

The settlers liked to emphasize the bad shape of the village as such. One of them stressed that: "The village was in very bad shape, without electricity; there was no culture here" (Czech woman, Osoblaha). We find a similar idea in another interview: "It was so sad here, there was no culture here" (Czech woman, Branná). It is interesting that this lack of culture indicates the lack of the possibility of entertainment (culture understood as access to a theater, cinema, library, culture house, etc.), but it also places this narration in the framework of "our culture" vs "their lack thereof," as I was describing in the case of the English literary Gothic.

The character of a far away, empty village is very well described by one of the interviewees. Among the questions we find one that concerns the feelings of new settlers (question 33, "Data about informant"): "What was in the beginning hard to get used to for you (or your family, group) (character of the landscape, residential form of the village, character of the farm work, work conditions, contact with original inhabitants, with different groups of settlers, etc.)?" What is worth noting is that there are auxiliary questions in case an interviewee had problems with listing anything. Answering this question, one of them, a German woman that was not expelled, said that it was hard to get used to "this loneliness. It was all empty" (German woman, Branná). But was the picture of an empty village actual? Were there truly any ghosts emerging from the cracks of ruined houses? Before I answer that question, I would like to examine "inside" spaces that seem to be haunted.

“Inside”

When it comes to describing what was in the houses, there are several things that seemed to be strange to the new users of these spaces. One interviewee said that “[The house] had been plundered, empty; there was no electricity” (Czech man, Branná). The lack of electricity, modern light, is one of the signals that there is something not right here, that the village has no connection to the outside world, moreover that it is dark and unfriendly. Even if there were some things consider to be archaic, not modern, they could still be of use. One of them was bread stoves. In most cases they were still in place and helped some settlers feel at home. Others stressed that they were unable to use them because they could not bake their own bread.

It is worth looking into the ways interviewees depicted the general “insides” of the houses. Question 57 of the “Traditional House” questionnaire concerns the furniture: “In the case that the house was still furnished at the time of your arrival, what elements of the furniture and the rest of the facilities did you use, for example, for some time? What elements of the furniture and the rest of the facilities that were previously German do you have to this day? What elements of the furniture did you not use and why?” The answers provided to interviewers varied. Some settlers did have furniture owned previously by German-speaking inhabitants, such as:

“an old cupboard, a bed—informant didn’t use them, he had his own furniture” (Czech couple, Staré Město); “he does not know if it was left by the Germans or previous Czech settlers, he used a sofa and a bed for some time” (Czech man, Staré Město); “in the hall there was ‘Tyrolian’ furniture: three corner benches, a table with a foot rest, chandelier, book cases.” (Czech woman, Staré Město)

The furniture is “old” or bare, some marks of being “foreign” (“Tyrolian”), and there is some feel of “strangeness” in it—it is not even very clear who the previous owner was. Moreover, the pieces belong not to the most useful but are rather of luxurious character (cupboard, chandelier). Most of the interviewees stressed that they did not use it or keep it: “They took everything out of the house and brought it to a stockroom for other settlers who came here without furniture” (Czech man, Staré Město); “They did not keep anything, they wanted to have only ‘their’ (‘our’) furniture” (Czech woman, Branná).

“German rooms”: practical and decorative things

As Davis has stated, even particular rooms in a house could be haunted. It is interesting that most of the interviewees answer in detail the question about the look of

the interior of their house. Question 44 of the "Traditional House" questionnaire concerns that issue: "With what furniture and other facilities were particular rooms equipped? What were the floors covered with? How were the walls of the rooms painted? What were the decorative objects in particular rooms, such as paintings, pictures, crosses? What else? How were the decorative objects spaced?" These stories reveal a similar pattern of things disappearing with time. Some answered that "there were no decorative objects—they were dismantled before [the family] came here" (Czech man, Osoblaha). Others emphasized that they used things that were in place only for some time as the only available option: "The informant used to live with German furniture for a year, in her room she had a sofa and a wardrobe" (Czech woman, Staré Město); "Some possessions left by Germans had indeed been there, but they did not keep them" (Czech woman, Branná). But there are also curious stories about "German rooms" as places that the settlers did not want to go: "The informant doesn't know [what the Germans' rooms looked like], he has never been there" (Czech man, Staré Město). Some spaces occupied by Germans were intentionally left unaccessed.

What was left were some decorative objects of no precise use:

"Piano left by Germans, nothing else" (Czech woman, Osoblaha); "there was a picture left—photography" (Czech man, Staré Město); "the furniture was given to the National Committee by the informant. In storage beneath the stairs, there were two printed pictures with hunting motifs left by Germans" (Czech woman, Staré Město); "there was only a decorative porcelain plate left, it is in the living room as a decorative object in a display cabinet." (Czech man, Staré Město)

Some of them act as trophies and are placed by the new owners where they can be seen (in a display cabinet), others are stored not to be seen (beneath the stairs).

What is the most haunted in the rooms are the colors. In the questionnaire "Traditional House," there was a direct question (55) concerning that: "Was there, in the house, in particular rooms, paintwork left by Germans? How was it? Did you change the decoration in the rooms? How? Did you try to decorate the house according to your taste? What did that mean at that time? How long did you decorate the house and particular rooms like that? Why did you stop? Did it just stop like that, or was it because of the lack of materials or utilities?" It was one that got the most frequent and longest answers. "Distinctive" or "vivid" were the gentlest descriptions of "German" paintwork. Others called it more "dark" and "unusual":

"Dark red and a purple base and big roses made with pattern in the living room, a dark green base and colorful flowers, as well as golden intersected lines" (Czech man, Staré Město); "big flowers made with pattern, he doesn't remember the colors" (Czech man,

Staré Město); “rooms were painted in dark colors, glaring combinations of patterns.”
(Czech man, Osoblaha)

“Dark” colors are seen as something unusual, different, ghostly. They seem to be scary. The shapes that were painted intimidated the settlers.

It was also described in terms of mystery:

“In the course of painting, the original paintwork peeps out: in the living room strong black lines and blue flowers, in the kitchen purple flowers in squares, vivid colors” (Slovak woman, Osoblaha); “he happened on the original paintwork while working on the electricity, ... colors—colorful, grave, mainly blue, no roller, but patterns with a use of a paper pattern; ... he painted over it himself.” (Czech man, Branná)

The paintwork was no longer something that was just there when they came. It has its own strange power of bothering settlers: it “peeps out,” reminding them of the previous owners, often during activities we would call “modernizing” the space, such as adaptations, wiring, or painting the walls. It is like a ghost of the past haunting the “modernized” space of the “insides.”

Farm buildings

What is visible in the stories told by the interviewees about their first encounters with “German” farms are the stories about farm animals or lack thereof on the farms they were meant to “get” or “have allocated to them.” There were several detailed questions about farm buildings and animals *per se* included in the questionnaire. Some of them concerned facilities like pigpens or stables—others concerned animals as such. It is interesting to see what they led to. For example, question 36 of the “Traditional House” questionnaire reads as follows: “Where was the pigpen? How many pens were there? How many swine did you keep there? How was it furnished?” And there was one that led to answers concerning animals that were brought with the settlers. We can read, for example, that “the informant brought with her a swine; it was first placed in a stable for a goat, then they built up a brick pen after they demolished the previous one” (Czech woman, Staré Město). The situation described bears the marks of uncanniness: the animal is kept in a space that is not appropriate (“for a goat”). To put it in the right place means to destroy and rebuild the existing pen.

Some of the questions concerned animals that were on the farms at the time of the settlers’ arrival. Like question 37 of the “Traditional House” questionnaire: “How many and what kind of farm animals were on the farm at the time of your arrival? How many did you get as an allocation for settlement? How many animals were kept by Germans?” What is striking here are two separate images: of animals

waiting in pens as if there were no humans in the neighborhood or there being no animals at all. In both cases, interviewees also often mentioned animals that they brought with them.

The lack of particular kinds of animals could be interpreted as something strange or diminishing; while describing the state of the farm and "German" farming culture: "Where there were Germans, [there was] one goat, the informant had it even after the Germans left; they did not even have hens" (Czech woman, Stare Město). The "strangeness" of the animals that were there is explicitly stressed in the words of one of the interviewees: "She did not take anything German, and she did not want to. They handed over [German] rabbits to a pub (*hospoda*)" (Czech woman, Staré Město). Getting rid of "German rabbits" means making the space more "familiar." It means that what is German, including animals, is seen as "unfamiliar," "strange," and animals as such could play the role of ghosts that still remind them of the unwanted presence of someone who took care of them in the past. But these are not the only ghosts present in the expulsion landscape of the borderlands.

Who is haunting

Although sometimes one can have the feeling that the empty, ghostly landscapes of the Czech borderlands are truly empty, that is, there were no humans there and settlers came to houses that were no longer inhabited, the picture that is further developed by interviewees differ. There were already some signs of a "strange" presence: mythical "first settlers," ominous "gold-diggers," and "German" animals that needed to be taken care of. But among the "ghosts" that haunt the landscape, we can also distinguish German-speaking inhabitants that were not expelled until the late 1940s, 1950s, or that were not expelled at all.

When they came, in different villages and towns in the borderlands, settlers often had contact with "previous" or "former"—as they are described in the questionnaire—owners of the properties that they were now meant to take. Sometimes this contact was rather intimate in character: both families lived together for some time and were forced to set some rules about how to use the newly common space. It is worth seeing how "Germans" are described. In terms of ghost stories, some were described as kinds of gatekeepers that vanished as the property became "disenchanted": "[At the time of his arrival, there was] one old German woman. They didn't live together. She was expelled before the informant's family came; he had only one meeting with her, when he first came to the sawmill" (Czech man, Staré Město). The woman is old, the settler sees her only once, and then she is expelled and disappears.

One of the questions important for the researchers was question 42 of the "Traditional House" questionnaire: "How did you share a house with Germans? Where did they sleep and cook, and where was your family? How did you tolerate

one another? Did they give you advice, for example, what to do in the house or in the farm or, contrariwise, did they try to do you any harm? If they tried to do you harm, in what way? How was it with Germans in the village at that time? Did the original German inhabitants of the house help you on the farm? How many people, who, and with what? Were there any Germans allocated to work? When, for how long, how many people?" Usually interviewees describe a situation where some rooms were still "German," and there were common spaces such as the kitchen and the bathroom:

"The Germans used one room and a kitchen. The informant used a second room; they shared a bathroom; they tolerated each other well. There was no farm" (Czech woman, Staré Město); "the Germans used to live in the attic (there was not a room built there yet); there they had two beds, a wardrobe, a table, a bedside table, a laver; they cooked together in the kitchen, they tolerated each other well, and worked only around the house; they were old, unable to move a lot (there was no farm)" (Czech woman, Staré Město); "they lived in a rent-charged space (*vyměnek*); they cooked and ate together with the informant's family; they tolerated each other pretty well." (Czech man with German wife, Staré Město)

There are two factors that should be noted here. The separation of these two worlds, a familiar "Czech" one and a "ghostly" German one, according to the settlers, is good for mutual living—the two groups "tolerate" each other well. The second factor is the space occupied by Germans: they usually live in "unpleasant" places: attics, distant rooms, or rent-charged spaces—in exile or, as I dare say, in spaces often occupied by ghosts: darker, more distant, and not very well-known or seen as habitable. They are also bound to them ("work only around the house"); they haunt them like ghosts until they are no longer there.

How they are described? In response to question 35 of "Data about informant," concerning directly mutual contacts: "If there were Germans on the property, what kind of contacts did the settlers maintain with them? Men—women—children?", the interviewees answered, that the Germans were "very obedient and 'startled'; they hadn't done anything to anyone" (Czech woman, Osoblaha); "the old German man did not do any harm" (Czech woman, Branná). They seem to be ghosts that can haunt, but they do this only by being present, not by choice. They are scary but also scared, "strange" but harmless. Seen in places but playing more a role of old ghosts that everyone is used to rather than unfriendly creatures with actual power.

But there is one more active group of "German ghosts" that haunt the landscape: they are Germans who decided to come back after they were expelled and "visit" spaces that used to be familiar to them. Already the same term "to visit" is close to the term "visitation," used when it comes to describing of the manifestation of

a ghost. In the "Data about informant" questionnaire, there is one direct question (number 39) about these returns: "Do the Germans visit their former home? Regularly, sometimes, on some occasions? Do you maintain any relations with them?" One interviewee told researchers that "they come, but they never enter the yard; they just take photographs of the house from the outside" (Czech Volhyn woman, Osoblaha).

These returns have a lot in common with the "visitations" of ghosts. The Germans are not able to come inside; they only take photographs from some distance. They are in some space set apart, as they were when they used to live with the settlers. It is repeated by more interviewees: "They come and take photos, mainly of these less maintained buildings" (Czech woman, Staré Město); "Often enough, they are taking photographs, asking about their old house" (expatriate from Romania, woman, Branná). Their returns are seen as something ordinary: "Sometimes [they visit] (out of curiosity, how it looks here)" (German woman, Branná); "Sometimes (never here directly). Sometimes they come to see the village" (expatriate from Romania, woman, Branná). The interviewees note when the visitation does not end at the threshold of the house: "The previous owner visited a few times to see his former house, one time he was even inside" (Czech couple, Staré Město). It corresponds with the idea that ghosts are more something alive that appeared to be dead than something dead that appears to be alive (Holloway and Kneale 2008, 302).

Exorcisms

The important part of a "haunted landscape" is the possibility to "un-haunt" it, to make it more familiar, "to exorcise" it, so to speak. Ghost stories, as it was shown, have some concrete structure and most of them, at least most of the traditional ones, end in the ghosts being exorcised, the mystery being explained. Although it is sometimes hard to treat questionnaires as narrations as such, they undoubtedly lead us from one point to another, making the stories told by interviewees more coherent and structured. Therefore, it is possible to say that these stories start with a haunting (settlers coming to ruined villages with "strange," "ghostly" inhabitants) and should end with a successful exorcism and the ghost being expelled to the realm where they came from to begin with.

It is possible to say that such a scenario was planned by the researchers. It is observable in some questions, like number 46 of "Data about informant": "In what did you invest the financial resources that you gained by farm growth?—repairing farm buildings, buying tools, machines, equipment for the house, securing quality seed. Make notes on progress also after collectivization through to buying a motorcycle or auto." The emphasis is set on progress, but, as we already know, the presence of ghosts is often contrary to progress as such.

So, what kind of actions undertaken by the settlers could be seen as exorcising the “ghostly” German space? It is interesting that holy pictures and crosses were often among the things that they brought with them:

“Yes, she does not single them out—pictures, crosses, embroidery pictures, she no longer has these objects” (Czech Volhyn woman, Osoblaha); “the mother of the informant brought some decorative objects with her from Slovakia—different pictures, a cross—today she has nothing.” (Slovak woman, Osoblaha)

It should be noted that they often played their role (making an “unfamiliar” space more “familiar”) and disappeared from the narration (“she no longer has these objects,” “today she has nothing”). When the danger passed, they were no longer needed. Some interviewees were more laconic and said only that they brought “a cross” (Czech man, Osoblaha; Czech woman, Branná). Some were able to indicate the precise location where they put it: “A cross, it hangs above the door” (Czech man, Staré Město). The cross is hung above the door: it keeps the house safe. Dark forces are not able to enter a home that is kept safe by this sign.

What was done with “haunted” German paintwork could be considered exorcism too. Interviewees recalled the following:

“Shortly after they came, they painted rooms anew—light colors, white ceilings” (Czech man, Osoblaha); “new paintwork, mainly because of cleanness” (Czech man, Staré Město); “it was painted over with lighter colors” (Czech woman, Branná); “the husband, after the house was allocated to him, even before the informant arrived, painted over the whole house.” (Czech woman, Staré Město)

The choice of colors is meaningful: the new settlers painted over the rooms in light colors, mostly in white. What is dark should now be light. What is mysterious should be changed into something understandable. The white paint sort of elucidates, illuminates, the rooms and explains their new meaning. The world becomes understandable, ergo exorcised.

Conclusions

I would argue that, as in traditional ghost stories, the “haunted landscapes” of the borderlands became “familiar” in the process of “exorcism.” But because the resettlement process was not completely successful, whole villages in the borderlands were changed into places with summer houses (*chalupy*), places where people do not live but only go to rest. Some exorcisms have therefore not been successful: those villages and towns are still places that are haunted by visitors from the past. That is one of the reasons why we need “spectral landscape” as a category of analysis. As it

is brilliantly put by del Pilar Blanco and Peeren about Judith Richardson's findings, "these ghosts are an integral part of the transformations of the regions and the varied concerns that each generation brings to its environment. They demonstrate the ways in which societies look to the past—even or especially when this past is muddled—to understand the present, and to claim their own position within a given territory" (del Pilar Blanco and Peeren 2013, 484). Therefore, it seems to be of use especially in the case of post-expulsion landscapes.

I would argue that "haunted landscape" as such is a good symbolic landmark to be used in the case of the Czech borderlands and other territories that were subjected to forced migrations after World War II in Central-Eastern Europe. Similarly, as David MacWilliams came up with the term "ghost estate" in 2006 (O'Callaghan, Boyle, and Kitchins 2014, 122) as a symbolic landmark of post-economic-crisis Ireland, as related to the term applied to the previous crisis of the 19th century: "famine village." Are there any good comparisons in the region that I have chosen? There are some *topoi* in Czech culture which may be seen as a counterpart to "famine village" and bear marks of "haunting" and "ghostliness." For example, descriptions of empty Czech towns during the Thirty Years' War that were emptied to avoid the Swedish invasion. The most known come from Znojmo, where inhabitants hid in the large cellars that were built under the town—the Swedish troops that came to Znojmo saw only houses that looked like someone had just disappeared from there and were too afraid to invade these "ghost towns," which ultimately evaded the ravages of war.⁵

The idea of "haunted landscape" can be used in a different context to explain some phenomena encountered in the borderlands. If "ghostliness in part served to articulate and contain anxieties about strange places and people" (Richardson 2003, 493), then it can be seen as a perfect tool to describe landscapes where new settlers have replaced old ones. Richardson describes the Hudson Valley, where new waves of inhabitants saw the old inhabitants and their traces in the landscape and were forced to confront them. In this sense, how the English described the Dutch and the Dutch described Native Americans is like how Czechs described Germans. New settlers become more and more conscious of the invisible forces of "otherness" (Trafton 2013, 11), which is important to understanding their particular experience of such sites. It also shows that the processes of demolition could be understood as exorcising space, an attempt to cleanse something "foreign." Demolition is then a way of "cleaning out" the space before it could be properly rebuilt. It is a sign inspiring fear as well as hope,— more than just proof of destructive human forces.

5 I would like to thank Lucie Antošíková for pointing me in this direction.

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Urban landscape as biographical experience: Pre-war Lublin in the oral testimonies of its inhabitants

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Abstract

For several hundred years, Lublin has developed as a multiethnic city. As a result of World War II and the destruction of the local Jewish community, its urban structure and its cultural landscape were significantly altered. The image of pre-war Lublin emerging from archival documents, pictures, newspaper articles, and individual memories is multilayered. Studies of the oral testimonies of local inhabitants reveal the deeply sensory and cultural components of spatial experiences characteristic of the cultural landscape of pre-war Lublin. This aspect will be presented as a reference point to conduct analyses concerning cultural and social aspects of the perception of Lublin's urban landscape.

Key words:

Lublin, Jewish district, cultural landscape, cultural stereotypes, urban space

Urban landscape as biographical experience

For several hundred years, Lublin was a city of many nations and many religions, among which Jews and Judaism played a significant role. The majority of the local Jewish community, in 1939 estimated to include 43 thousand people (i.e., ca. 35% of Lublin's population), perished during World War II. Apart from the drastic change in the population, during the German occupation and in the first decade

after the war, the spatial structure and the cultural landscape of Lublin underwent a radical transformation. Using Polish and Jewish labor, the Germans demolished the Jewish districts of Podzamcze and Wieniawa and destroyed numerous objects of symbolic value to Jews. In 1954, the area of the former Jewish district of Podzamcze was completely rebuilt. The new urban plan that replaced it did not aim to reconstruct demolished buildings or preserve the original lines of communication; instead, it completely obscured the spatial structure of the former “Jewish town.” Nowadays, the memory of the old district is preserved only in a few modest remembrances founded at the end of the 1980s, several memorial tablets installed a little later, and occasional artistic installations and performances (Kubiszyn 2017). The 1980s also witnessed the beginning of systematic studies of the history of the Lublin Jews. They include both archival research conducted by historians, which aims to recover the past of the local Jewish community, and studies of various aspects of its social and cultural life (see Radzik 1995; Hawryluk and Linkowski 1996; Zieliński 1998; Kuwałek and Wysok 2001; Radzik 2007; Chmielewski 2015; Libionka 2017).

Studies of the cultural landscape of the Polish-Jewish Lublin that use pre-war photographs, press materials, archives, literary texts, and contemporary-induced documents (e.g., oral interviews) reveal the overlapping of the sensory and cultural aspects of the experience of inhabiting a space shared by Poles and Jews, as was the case of pre-war Lublin. Recorded interviews clearly demonstrate how the individual memories and experiences of former Lubliners are intertwined with socially constructed and culturally conditioned ways of assessing and describing urban space. In the testimonies of the witnesses of the past, the overlapping of the sensory and the social may be noticed in the ways they describe particular urban spaces (districts, streets, or buildings) and in their saturation with recalled images, sounds, and smells of pre-war Lublin.

Studies of various aspects of urban space recalled in the testimonies of former inhabitants belong, on the one hand, to the broad area of memory studies, and, on the other, to the long-established tradition of urban sociology and anthropology, as well as human geography and new cultural geography (Leociak 2017, 9). The intersection of space and memory studies generates a cognitively productive area which may host reflection on the construction of images of the city based on studies of various types of sources interpreted from the historical and cultural perspective.

The analysis of images of pre-war Lublin focus on fragments of interviews with ethnically Polish inhabitants of pre-war Lublin that refer to the streets, buildings, and courtyards of the old Lublin’s center. These testimonies will then be compared with press articles from the 1920s and 1930s and documents of the Sanitary Committee of the Public Health Department of the city of Lublin. The analyses aim to show how, by referring to the recalled images, sounds, and smells connected with particular

places and objects, the interviewees characterize the space of the pre-war city. Both the analyzed phenomena and the diverse source material suggest the approach typical of cultural anthropology rather than that of traditional history based on written archives. Thus, the approach adopted in this study focuses not only on the facts recorded in the documents but also—or primarily—on the way they are presented, and treats oral history interviews not so much as a source of knowledge of the past but as a material which reveals the structures of thinking, understanding, and perception of urban space and its culturally constructed sense and meaning (cf. Stomma 2002, 9). Therefore, the analyses of the ways the interviewees define certain city spaces as “Polish” (i.e., well-known, familiar, and safe) or “Jewish” (i.e. other or different) will refer to the framework of anthropology and ethnography, in which the “us vs. them” opposition is treated as a vital aspect of the process of constructing the image of both the world and one’s identity (Robotycki 1998; Stomma 2002; Said 1978).

“Beyond the Cracow Gate there is another Lublin, only worse.” And “another world...”

Testimonies referring to pre-war Lublin clearly show the city center as an ambivalent, “divided” space, in which the narrators either directly or indirectly point to symbolic borders separating the part of the city described by them as “Christian” (“Catholic”) / “Polish” from the “Jewish” one. The former comprises the so-called “New Town,” that is, the part of the center located to the west of the Cracow Gate (Krakowskie Przedmieście and Narutowicza Streets, together with adjacent streets) and the area stretching to the south (i.e., Królewska and Zamojska streets). Although inhabited by both ethnic Poles and rich Jewish entrepreneurs, traders, and assimilated intelligentsia, these spaces are described by interviewees as “better” and more elegant parts of the city:

The shops there [i.e., on Krakowskie Przedmieście Street] were mostly Polish, rather elegant, too. If any of them were owned by Jews— they were Polonized Jews, so absolutely, there were no bilingual signboards—there was no question of that on Krakowskie Przedmieście [Street]. (Margulowa, 1998b)

Most of the Polish (Christian) narrators define this space as their “own”—centrally situated, close, well-cared for, clean, sweet smelling, and “more civilized”:

Krakowskie [Przedmieście], Zamojska, Narutowicza streets—well, they were already civilized. There was nobility living there, traders mostly, but Poles. Here after all the shops were Polish. ... There were Jews on Krakowskie [Przedmieście] but they were civilized. (Masłow 1998)

The speakers often emphasize the higher status and material wealth of the inhabitants of this part of the city center and their “elitist” character:

Here on Krakowskie [Przedmieście] one met well-to-do people. Children played with various toys, I remember, small carts, with dolls. This was the place of Lublin elites. (Pakora, 2000)

The “Jewish” part of the city center, located to the east of the Cracow Gate and further to the east, beyond the Grodzka Gate, and to the north, along Nowa and Lubartowska streets, is presented in the interviews as a “foreign land,” characterized as remote and culturally separate, unknown, mysterious, and even horrifying. It was thought of as a space in which one may get lost and run into trouble—dominated by ugliness and chaos (cf. Stomma 2002, 32-36, 163, 198, 217).

Numerous interviews contrast the “Jewish” Old Town and Podzamcze with the “clean” and “ordered” New Town:

Krakowskie Przedmieście, the New Town—well, one could see there was order there, and a higher standard of buildings; the Old Town was poor, shabby, and dirty. There was no sewage system there; the waste ran in open sewers, so it was a sorry sight and a contrast to the New Town. (Skwarek 1998)

The interviews usually present the Old Town as neglected, poor, and fear inspiring, although simultaneously intriguing. Numerous narrators remember it as a land of Jewish craftsmen (bakers, tailors, and shoemakers) and traders of bagels and makagigi, but also as a district of “cheap girls,” a dangerous place where one could get into a fight or do shady business. The Podzamcze area located to the east of the Grodzka Gate and inhabited mostly by the poorer and less assimilated Jewish population is mostly depicted as closed, remote, little known, or even forbidden:

Grodzka Street was sort of transitional. It was inhabited by Poles, some Jews too. But beyond the Grodzka Gate—it was absolutely the Jewish district.... I cannot say much about it as one hardly ever went there; one felt like in a foreign country there. (Margulowa 1998a)

The interviews present the “Jewish” part of the city center as a “foreign land” using several key criteria that refer to the look of streets and buildings, to the sounds characteristic of this space and to its smells (Kubiszyn 2017, 321-331). The descriptions of the Old Town, primarily of the Podzamcze area, are dominated by passages referring to the chaotic urban planning, the noises, the overwhelming buzz of a foreign language (Yiddish), and the sounds of trade (traders’ calls) and transportation. Describing the Old Town and the Podzamcze area, the interviewees also frequently

mention various unpleasant smells dominating this part of Lublin. The latter observations find support in archival materials. The Sanitary Committee's documents confirm the lack of a sewerage system and running water supply, damp and dilapidated buildings, waste disposal problems, and the pollution of the Czechówka River running through Podzamcze. On the other hand, however, archival materials clearly show that the infrastructural challenges of the Old Town and the Podzamcze area were not essentially different from other parts of Lublin inhabited by poorer people. Stephanie Weismann points out that the stench produced by makeshift latrines and garbage heaps, by horse manure covering the streets, and waste-filled open sewers formed a permanent element of the urban landscape of the whole of pre-war Lublin rather than just of its "Jewish" part (Weismann 2017).

The depictions of the Old Town, Podzamcze, and Lubartowska Street recalled by the former inhabitants of Lublin include numerous elements typical of socially constructed images of spaces inhabited by ethnical and cultural "others," as discussed for instance in Ludwik Stomma's anthropological analyses. One may clearly notice mechanisms of the mythologization of urban space operating here. They are manifested, on the one hand, in the idealization of the parts of the city perceived as one's "own" (i.e., Krakowskie Przedmieście, Narutowicza, or Królewska Streets). On the other hand, they can be seen in the "negative idealization" or caricaturing of the Jewish space, which operates by means of deformation, by extending statements referring to a particular case to a whole group of phenomena, and by elevating stereotypical opinions to the level of general and universally operating rules (cf. Stomma 2002, 15, 22-23, 57).

It seems that the "familiar/foreign" dichotomy informing the perception of pre-war Lublin was of fundamental importance to the inhabitants of the city. The legal basis for the separation of the "Christian" and "Jewish" parts of the city was connected with the privileges granted to Christian traders in the 16th and 17th century. They disappeared in 1862, cancelled by the reforms of Aleksander Wielopolski, which brought about, among other things, the equality of the Jewish population. Yet, as late as in the 1930s, the symbolic borders were still a firm element of the local tradition. Their existence may be confirmed by various 19th and 20th-century archival materials, including press articles, memoirs, and literary texts in which the Podzamcze Jewish district and the Old Town, which since the mid-19th century on had been gradually inhabited by Jewish people, are presented as a "separate," "remote," or "unknown" world, frequently described with the concepts of otherness, poverty, and dirt (Kubiszyn 2017; Kubiszyn 2015, 6-35; Kuwałek 1996, 49).

The following excerpt from an article published in the journal *Ziemia Lubelska* (land of Lublin) in July 1929 may serve as an illustration of this tendency:

If one by chance happened to get lost along Krawiecka Street and ran into the maze of narrow, winding back streets, one first of all put oneself in danger of breathing a mercilessly

foul stench, of having a pail of slop poured over one's feet, or of facing other pleasantries of the kind. The pavements there are narrow and crooked, swollen, and next to them run wide reeking gutters, serving as open sewers in this district. What one can see there on old, damp, and musty walls, ... what one feels in the air, it takes one's breath away.¹

The quoted fragment refers to the poorest part of Podzamcze and shows how this district is typically described in journals and literary texts. The description given by the author of the article seems to distort the image of the Podzamcze, while certain statements, although accurate about some parts of the district, are extended to it as a whole. The authors of the text suggest that the biggest problem of the place is the poor hygiene of its inhabitants—which seems to be, partially at least, a highly stereotypical view. Some texts clearly show how this process of extension operates also at the level of language: the narration often uses a “communal” perspective and shows the point of view of an imaginary “we” which is contrasted with an equally imaginary communal “they” (cf. Kosowska 2010, 14-15). Narrators frequently use either impersonal constructions or clauses with a plural subject; statements tend to suggest the existence of some universal, generally accepted ways of assessing the urban space (e.g., “the Old Town was generally avoided,” “one hardly ever went there,” “you did not go there, as Poles felt awkward there,” “better not to go there alone,” etc.).

Archival material suggests that the reasons for the sanitary problems of the Podzamcze district were in reality more complex, only partly connected with the difficult material situation and sanitary customs of its inhabitants, and to some extent provoked by culturally determined ways of using and organizing urban space (Kubiszyn 2015, 29-30; Dylewski 2003, 110 and on) and the fact that this part of the city was systematically neglected by the authorities. The crucial factor, however, was the sheer topographical location of the district: it lay in a depression, thus gathering all the waste that flowed from the higher situated Old Town and the Castle Hill. The following complaint, lodged by one of the owners of a building located on Krawiecka Street, may provide a broader perspective on the sanitary problems of the area:

The building I co-own is located on Krawiecka Street, next to the walls of the Lublin prison. Although this street, like all the others, is under the care of the magistrate, its sanitary condition does not comply with the existing sanitary norms, nor can it ever do so: for reasons unknown to me, either because of the prison's cesspits or because of the negligence of the prison's authorities, the street is systematically disordered so much so that its inhabitants are exposed to the danger of illness as sewage and slop, including

¹ “Brudy, brudy i brudy. Z wędrówek po Lublinie” [Filth, filth, and filth. Walks around Lublin], *Ziemia Lubelska*, no. 199, July 24th, 1929: 3.

human waste, are poured out straight from the prison's walls, thus ruining all our attempts to comply with sanitary regulations.²

Although this complaint may offer a glimpse of the attitude of the very inhabitants of the Podzamcze district with respect to its sanitary conditions, the stereotypical negative opinions connected with this part of the city were very strong and dominated in press articles and literary texts.

Describing the Podzamcze district, many authors point to the shabby look of its buildings, muddy pavements, and unpleasant smells, employing the classificatory function of smell and other categories referring to dirt as a way to stigmatize “others” (Weismann 2017). Passages which use descriptions of dirt, noise, and foul smells as synonyms for the backwardness of the Podzamcze district can be found, for instance, in the book by Seweryn Sierpiński published in 1839, in Stanisław Krzesiński's memoirs published in 1877, in an article published in *Gazeta Lubelska* (The Lublin paper) describing the cholera epidemic which broke out in 1892 and killed a considerable part of the district's inhabitants, or in the text by Alfred Döblin published in 1925 in his reportage volume *Journey to Poland* (cf. Kuwałek 2003, 11-12). Similar views are expressed in the propaganda article describing the demolishing of the historical part of the Podzamcze district during the German occupation published in one of the July 1942 issues of *Nowy Głos Lubelski* (The New voice of Lublin)—a “reptile paper” distributed in the Lublin district. The text, entitled “Porządkowanie byłej dzielnicy żydowskiej w Lublinie” (Cleaning the former Jewish district in Lublin) and expressing opinions entirely in keeping with Nazi anti-Semitic propaganda, describes the situation of the Podzamcze district after the deportation of most of its inhabitants to the Nazi extermination camp in Bełżec and the removal of those that remained to the remnant of the ghetto in Majdan Tatarski. The article describes the fully underway operation of exploding and pulling down the buildings of the former ghetto. Following stereotypes, the author depicts Podzamcze as an “embodiment of dirt and all kinds of pest” and as a “seat of typhoid fever”, thus justifying the need to demolish most of the buildings in the area. He suggests that some of the buildings, because of their better technical condition and historical value, may—after proper disinfection and renovation—be settled by “Aryan tenants”, in so doing alleviating Lublin's “housing needs.” The text clearly connects the Podzamcze area with dirt and chaos which demands “ordering.” “Obnoxious Jewish shanties,” writes the author, are to be replaced at last with “lawns and flowerbeds” in order to make the “cleaned” area look like a Western-European place.³

2 Skarga z 1931 roku [Complaint, 1931], Archiwum Państwowe w Lublinie [State Archive in Lublin] (APL), Akta miasta Lublina 1918–1939, Wydział Spraw Społecznych, Oddział Zdrowia, Referat Dozoru Sanitarnego, sig. 2557.

3 “Porządkowanie byłej dzielnicy żydowskiej w Lublinie” [Putting Order to the Former Jewish Neighbourhood in Lublin], *Nowy Głos Lubelski*, no. 156, July 8th, 1942: 3.

The analyzed oral testimonies referring to the interwar period draw a distinctive line separating the Old Town and Podzamcze area on the one hand and Krakowskie Przedmieście Street on the other, which is clearly treated by many of the interviewees as a representative element of “their” part of the city. Not only is this space connected with “order” but also with pleasant smells—many of the interviewees recall the smells of fruit sold in soda shops, along with those of exotic spices and of freshly ground coffee coming from the coffee houses owned by Rutkowski and Semadeni:

Krakowskie Przedmieście seemed a very elegant street to me and indeed, it had a good look; it was sweet and clean. Lublin was a very clean city, in the center. The shops there—they were colonial shops; they ground coffee there and there was the smell of coffee all around. (Hartwig 1999)

[On Krakowskie Przedmieście Street there were] numerous small shops—soda shops well-supplied with fruit. All kinds of fruit you could only dream of; I don’t know if one could get them today. It looked beautiful, as the shop windows were open both in summer and in winter. When one walked down Krakowskie [Przedmieście], one was saturated with the smell of fruit. (Matysiak 1999)

In many interviews, the Old Town and Podzamcze areas are contrasted with the nearby Krakowskie Przedmieście Street and as a result, they are described as looking “poor,” “grey,” “dirty,” “poorly lit,” “ugly,” “shabby,” “dangerous,” and home to those in the margins of society.” These areas are also defined in terms of specific sounds that could be heard there—the wails of beggars, the shouts of playing children, and the hum of conversations in a foreign, and thus perceived as alien, language (Yiddish). Many of the narrators draw attention to the commercial character of these spaces and the great number of various workshops; they recall the sounds of transportation (e.g., the rumble of carts on cobblestones) and the calls of traders and craftsmen trying to attract customers.

Testimonies usually describe the smells of the Old Town and Podzamcze as “unpleasant,” “specific,” and “exceptional”, clearly different from the smells of Krakowskie Przedmieście Street and, so it seems, constituting an important part of the district’s atmosphere. The interviewees recall the odors of stewed and fried dishes, the stench of waste running down the streets, and the reek of various kinds of refuse gathering in open gutters:

I remember the smells of the Old Town; Oh God, the stench was everywhere because they poured out everything, filth, feces, and it all ran down... It was a peculiar smell: onion, herring, their fried and stewed food—they did not eat like us, their food was different... What a smell... Nowadays you won’t meet it, won’t smell it. It’s hard to find words for it; it was so peculiar. (Drobek 1998)

Well, I was really sorry for them back then, because there was just filth and stench there, so to speak, there was no sewer system, so it's a sort of olfactory memory. Grodzka Street... one went down it, and it kept getting worse, dirtier; the further one went the filthier and smellier the street got, as the waste running down it polluted everything... Just filth, some running on the surface, soapsuds—there was a lot of that kind of stuff, home-produced, and it all reeked, I still remember it today. (Sulak 1998)

The smells of pre-war Lublin seem particularly interesting as they shed light on the sensory and cultural aspects of the perception of the city space. Although smell is a biologically conditioned natural phenomenon, its interpretation, that is, the ways in which people react to particular smells, is socially determined and has its cultural connotations. Thus, smell may serve an important classificatory function and be used as an element distinguishing “others”; it may function as a factor contributing to the formation of social hierarchy based on ethnic, religious, or financial criteria (Weismann 2017).

Both oral testimonies and journalistic and literary texts often define the space inhabited by poor Jewish people with the category of smell. Unpleasant smells are unambiguously perceived as a symptom of “backwardness,” running against the project of converting Lublin into a modern European city (cf. Weismann 2017). This stigmatization may be analyzed with the help of Stomma’s concept of “caricaturing” spaces inhabited by “others” (cf. Stomma 2002, 15, 22-23, 57). In the case of pre-war Lublin, the tendency to ascribe filth and stench to the “Jewish” part of the city (the Old Town and Podzamcze) and nice smells and order to the “non-Jewish” part (Krakowskie Przedmieście and Narutowicza Streets) may be regarded as a cultural convention. In the analyzed interviews, the socially constructed image of the city, shaped by the concepts of “familiarity” and “otherness,” seems to overlap with the narrators’ immediate sensory experience recalled from childhood.

Despite the development of trade and industry, many educational institutions, and a flourishing cultural life, interwar Lublin remained a poor peripheral city in the newly independent Poland. Its authorities wished to transform it into a modern city but, faced with financial shortages, were unable to light it properly, create a public transportation system, revitalize its center, or solve its sanitary problems. The rapid growth of its population, the difficulties with its sewer system, and the disposal of municipal waste, along with the pollution of rivers gathering unfiltered waste coming from tanneries, mills, and yeast and sugar plants—all contributed to the grave sanitary condition of the whole of Lublin, resulting in unpleasant smells. Yet few of the narrators pay attention to these problems or refer to the broader historical and social context:

Poland was so dirty and Lublin was so dirty, it's hard to imagine. Back streets were dirt roads, or with some stones only; lower there were gutters. Over the gutter there was

a garbage heap, a sort of wooden box... so when you threw a pail with waste into it, the liquids leaked into the gutter and ran down it... But if you are brought up like that, you don't feel the stench. (Pydo 2012)

This description finds its confirmation in the documents of the Sanitary Committee, press articles, and numerous letters of complaint directed to city authorities by the inhabitants complaining about filth, unpleasant smells in all parts of the city, and non-compliance with sanitary regulations:

There are courtyards where the stench is so bad one cannot help but walk there only with a handkerchief against one's nose. The stench comes from reprehensibly neglected toilets and garbage heaps, in which uncovered garbage rots and putrefies for weeks, right under the windows of desperate tenants.⁴

These kinds of problems, however, were not unique to the Jewish district or Lubarowska Street, also in large part inhabited by a Jewish population. On the contrary, as the reports of the Sanitary Committee show, they were present in various districts and parts of Lublin. Apart from the smells of dirty toilets, half rotten rarely emptied garbage cans, and reeking sewers, the olfactory landscape of the city was also shaped by other unpleasant odors coming from butcher shops, smokehouses, and tanneries, as well as by the stench of horse manure emanating from horse cab stops.

Oral testimonies present unpleasant smells not only as related to problems with hygiene, running water, the sewer system, or city cleaning; more importantly, they connect them to poverty and backwardness, which in turn are mostly attributed to the groups of people perceived as "other." The Old Town and Podzamcze area, neglected and possessing no sewer system but also ethnically and culturally alien, did not fit the image of Lublin as a modern, dynamically developing "Polish" and "Catholic" city proud of its elegant center.

Testimonies recalling the olfactory landscape of Krakowskie Przedmieście Street, the representative street of cafes, sweet shops, and restaurants inhabited by educated and wealthy elites, depict it as the space dominated by the smells of apples, lemons, oranges, candies, and chocolate, as well as exotic spices, flowers, and freshly ground coffee. Yet, as both the inter-war press materials and the documents of the Sanitary Committee demonstrate, in the space of this elegant street one could also encounter other, less pleasant smells. In the interwar period, only a small part of the buildings forming this "city salon" were connected to sewer mains, and as a result their inhabitants experienced exactly the same problems as those populating less wealthy districts. Although the analyzed interviews nostalgically recall

⁴ „O czyste i świeże powietrze w mieście. Higiena na podwórkach” [Let's have clean and healthy air in the city: Courtyard Hygiene], *Ziemia Lubelska*, no. 89, March 30th, 1928: 2.

the pleasant smells of this part of the city center, the documents of the Sanitary Committee and press articles from the 1920s and 1930s clearly mention the less pleasant odors of rotting garbage, dirty toilets, and horse manure emanating from the neglected courtyard of seemingly elegant buildings:

Passing Kapucyńska Street we turn into Krakowskie Przedmieście. The view does not change (prostitutes), but the early (too early) visit paid by municipal sanitation provides a diversion. At half past eleven, in front of building number 30, there are sanitation carts. The stench is unbearable. Numerous passers-by, who at this time of the evening come out of cinema theatres, cover their noses and run forward. But the stench spreads over the whole of Krakowskie Przedmieście with the speed of poisonous gases... It would seem that the center should be in all respects the pride of the city, its representative space... Lublin should deserve to be included among the ten greatest cities of Poland.⁵

In an interventionist article published in 1930, *Ziemia lubelska* again informs us about the “scandalous hygienic conditions” of parts of Krakowskie Przedmieście:

Buildings no. 11, 13, and 15 on Krakowskie Przedmieście are the epicenter of all disease. Although they seem relatively clean, because of the lack of sewer system and dirty toilets they reek so much that people literally “go green.” Just passing the gate of number 13, one speeds up without thinking so as not to fall down—the fetor at the gate is so strong it may cause nausea. What can the unfortunate tenants of these reeking buildings do? They keep quiet and smell the odors. Perhaps the Health Department could kindly ask the owners of the buildings to install a sewer system in them? Things cannot continue like this; the tenants cry for help.⁶

Horse manure covering Krakowskie Przedmieście Street was another source of unpleasant smells:

There is a cabstand at the corner of Krakowskie Przedmieście and Wieniawska Streets. Presently, the carriages group there in the dozens. As the stand is never cleaned, one can imagine the odors emanating from this pile of filth and dung over the whole street.⁷

Likewise, numerous letters of complaint addressed to city authorities report the difficult sanitary and hygienic situation of the buildings in the city center:

5 “Wędrówki po Lublinie VII. ‘Prawdziwa’ Wędrówka [Walks around Lublin. A “real” walk]. *Ziemia Lubelska*, no. 92, April 3rd, 1927: 3.

6 „Skandaliczne warunki higieniczne” [Scandalous hygienic conditions], *Ziemia Lubelska*, no. 92, June 11th, 1930: 3.

7 „Przenieść ten postój gdzie indziej” [Move the stand], *Ziemia Lubelska*, no.109, April 24th, 1931: 4.

I report that the owner of the house has not repaired the toilet. For the past six months, the toilet has been half-collapsed and soil-covered, and the tenants—together with the owner himself—have to satisfy their needs (of a physiological nature) as they can. The porter of the house has not managed to clean the courtyard of human waste.⁸

Dolna Panny Marii Street, inhabited mainly by Poles, was located in the close vicinity of Krakowskie Przedmieście Street. Many of the preserved letters of complaint directed to the Sanitary Committee report illegal animal breeding taking place there. A tenant of building no. 24 complains about “unpleasant smells coming from the pigsty” and “importunate flies” which prevent her from opening the windows and using her own garden, located next to the plot of land of a neighbor who breeds pigs and cows.⁹ Such documents, on the one hand, clearly confirm the provincial character of pre-war Lublin; on the other hand, they simultaneously suggest that filth and stench were a permanent element of many streets—including those located in the “Polish” part of the former center.

Individual experience versus cultural aspects of the urban landscape

Oral testimonies are materials anchored in a particular historical context, whose origin is connected with a particular space and time. They transmit overt ideas that include the naming and characterization of space and objects, accounts of events, and descriptions of characters and their actions, as well as references to the narrators’ thoughts and opinions, both past and present. Apart from this, however, they also carry covert ideas, that is, elements unconsciously transmitted by the narrators reflecting their deeper convictions and attitudes. The process of uncovering and interpreting the ideas presented in testimonies (both overt and covert) involves the careful reading of the testimony and then relating it to a broader historical, social, and cultural context available through various archival and iconographic materials, press articles, or literary texts.

Contemporary reflection on oral testimonies draws from methods of reading that aim to reach the covert layer of the accounts of the past and to locate linguistically constructed ideas. It postulates analyzing recollections not so much in relation to historical facts or chronology but focusing on how the narrators present their own experience—or, rather, their own nostalgic ideas of the past. Such analyses may serve as a starting point for studies of mentalities and cultural memory and lead to reflection on the sensory and emotional, rather than purely intellectual,

8 Donos z 21. sierpnia 1931 r. [Denunciation, August 21st, 1931], Archiwum Państwowe w Lublinie (APL), Akta miasta Lublina 1918–1939, Wydział Spraw Społecznych, Oddział Zdrowia, Referat Dozoru Sanitarnego, sig. 2557.

9 Archiwum Państwowe w Lublinie (APL), Akta miasta Lublina 1918–1939, Wydział Spraw Społecznych, Oddział Zdrowia, Referat Dozoru Sanitarnego, sig. 2562.

perception of the world. This approach may help analyze social and cultural factors influencing the conceptualization of problems by community members and hence to identify values, convictions, and attitudes typical of that community (Stolarz 2012, 112).

The testimonies of the inhabitants of pre-war Lublin that refer to the “Polish” and “Jewish” parts of the city center include many descriptions of places and objects. The space of the city is recalled either as a separate part of the narrators’ stories (e.g., presented as an answer to the interviewer’s question) or appears in the context of other stories, for example, those concerned with historical events constituting the background of personal experience. The way of describing, interpreting, and assessing personal recollections concerning urban space, including sensory experience, is conditioned by numerous factors. Direct personal experience of the city overlaps with the socially and culturally formed perception of space and historical context, both of which to a large extent shape individual memories (cf. Danziger 2008, 257; Hamilton 2010, 219-323, Smith 2007).

The image of interwar Lublin that emerges out of the oral testimonies is often inconsistent with and partially different from the image that may be (re)constructed from archival documents. The subjective, emotional topography of the pre-war city is informed by images, tastes, and smells remembered from childhood which the narrators connect with the feeling of safety, interest, and fascination or fear, danger, and disgust. The testimonies show urban space in the context of interpersonal relations and everyday experience, in so doing exposing convictions, attitudes, opinions, prejudices, and stereotypes at both the individual and communal level. Oral history materials in which the narrators refer to the “Polish” and “Jewish” parts of Lublin’s center reveal the processes of mythologizing the space inhabited by the “others”/“aliens” and, more generally, the processes of mythologizing the past.

The recollections of the ethnic diversity of pre-war Lublin are clearly reflected in the spatial categories used by the narrators. Their ways of perceiving and describing the worlds on both sides of the imaginary border seem to be shaped by a number of factors, including those connected with the idealization of one’s own world and the caricaturing of “the world beyond the border” (cf. Stomma 2002, 182). Referring to the part of the city perceived as “their owns”, the narrators describe it as a beautiful, clean, aromatic, safe, and familiar world and contrast it with the ugly, dirty, smelly, unpredictable, wild, and unknown world of the “others.” Only in some rare instances is this “alien” space described positively—which may suggest the openness of some of the narrators and their interest in the culturally “other,” different, and unfamiliar.

Despite the requirement—in keeping with the oral history program—that the narrators should refer exclusively to their personal experiences and memory, their testimonies include popular views and opinions, as well as stereotypical notions which seem to provide them with knowledge of the world and convictions held as

true and objective. The image of Lublin's center perceived as an element of the narrators' "own" world and contrasted with its "negative," that is, the world of the "others" (Stomma 2002, 33), may be treated as an element of a wider process of community building connected with identity formation and modelling their perception of reality (cf. Robotycki 1998, 26).

The sensory aspects of the perception of urban space constitute an integral part of almost every oral testimony referring to pre-war Lublin. To the narrators, they seem no less important than visual memories and play an important role in the processes of remembering and narrative construction of the image of the city (cf. Hamilton 2010), revealing the social perception of images, sounds, and smells and the meaning and sense attributed to them (cf. Low 2005, 412). The analyses of the smells that the narrators connect with particular parts of Lublin's center in comparison with other types of archival material confirm the stereotypical—at least to some extent—character of the notions connected with Krakowskie Przedmieście Street, the Old Town, and Podzamcze. They also reveal the cultural context of the processes of forming the concepts of "better" and "worse" parts of the city defined so according to ethnic criteria expressed by smells and sounds. In the analyzed oral testimonies, pleasant and unpleasant smells are attributed by the narrators to "Polish" and "Jewish" parts of the city respectively, and this connection seems, at least partially, conventional, that is, having little to do with the olfactory landscape that may be reconstructed from archival documents. The idyllic recollection of the clean, elegant, and fragrant Krakowskie Przedmieście Street and the simultaneous attribution to the "Jewish" parts the smells described as "unpleasant" and connected with filth and disorder may be regarded as a convention connected with the culturally determined process of the perception of the "others" and the spaces inhabited by them. Filth and unpleasant smells are often recalled not only and not so much as a personal sensory experience but as an expression of antipathy towards the "others" (cf. Classen 1992; Stomma 2002, 9, 32-36, 163, 198, 217). The topography of the pre-war Lublin recalled by the narrators is strongly emotional and seems to reflect culturally constructed notions of the interwar city in the process of modernization. In a thus constructed image, there is no room for dirty toilets in the courtyards of the elegant Krakowskie Przedmieście Street; rarely do they try, too, to rationally—rather than "ethnically"—explain the unpleasant smells and disorder in the "Jewish" parts of the city.

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II. Tourism and museums



Experience of the cultural route in the space of the tourist landscape

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Abstract

Cultural routes present the values or elements of cultural heritage. They have been permanently inscribed in the landscape of Poland and Europe, thanks to their potential, in the context of historical memory, protection of tangible and intangible heritage, education, and tourism. They are tools for popularizing and bringing out the ethos and identity of the inhabitants. In the context of the development of cultural tourism and the introduction of new trails to the tourist landscape, it is worth considering the role of the experiences acquired by travelers through overcoming the subsequent stages of the cultural route. Participation in activities prepared by trail organizers plays an important role in enabling visitors and natives to learn about the heritage of a given area or to take root in the traditions of a region or nation. The analysis is based on research concerning the tourist landscape, cultural routes, and the author's own experiences.

Key words:

cultural routes, the tourist landscape, perception, space

Introduction

One of the themes emerging in the analyses produced by representatives across the social and cultural sciences such as cultural anthropology, cultural science, and sociology, is the question of experiencing cultural diversity and cultural heritage. On the other hand, studies concerning landscape and tourism draw attention to the role of experiencing, feeling, and perception, in shaping the image of the natural, cultural, and tourist landscape. The aim of this article is to present considerations regarding the potential of experiencing cultural routes—registered and officially functioning in cultural tourism, education, and literature—in the context of the cultural (including tourist) landscapes they belong to. History and

culture recorded in space as well as natural conditions and infrastructure build narrative. It directly affects the tourists' perception of the surroundings and their feelings. The created narrative can in turn become an element influencing the subjective experience that affects how the landscape is perceived. Of particular importance in the context of landscape creation is a contextualization of space that respects the authenticity of the places visited and reflects their identity.

Due to the specificity of the issue, covering the study of cultural routes in terms of the role of experience in the space of a landscape, the research relies on methods characteristic of various research disciplines. It involved analyzing scientific and popular publications related to cultural heritage, cultural routes, landscapes, and tourism, including to establish a research methodology. Materials that promote cultural routes (mainly the Osycpek Trail) were also researched. Observations were also carried out on selected cultural trails regarding the visitors' experience of the trail.

Cultural and tourist landscape

The direction in geography, initiated by Alexander von Humboldt, devoted to the landscape as identified with natural values, has evolved over the years. Nowadays, the effects of material and immaterial human activity, and therefore its real content, affecting many factors, including the attractiveness of the area, are equally important in the context of shaping the landscape. The specificity of the landscape, and consequently its typology, is determined by the degree of human interference in the natural environment, the use and the purpose of space, and the occurrence of various kinds of objects.

One such type is the cultural landscape, which was created as a result of the development of civilization and the anthropogenic transformation of the natural landscape. This landscape can be defined as a heterogeneous synthesis, including natural elements and the cultural products of subsequent generations. It is subject to constant changes due to the growing needs and possibilities of man. It is influenced by economic, historical, technological, and social factors, whose impact is variable over time and depends on the potential of the area. They form a specific structure characteristic for a given space. As Urszula Myga-Piątek writes, "the cultural landscape is a peculiar heritage of individual regions, as it documents the activity in the geographical space of societies from many historical epochs" (2012, 13). For this reason, the landscape is often identified with the region's physiognomy. A term that might better reflect perspectives relevant to the development of tourism is "landscape image". These terms are not the same, because the image is created and built on the basis of characteristic, also physiognomic, elements of a given area. Its aim is to attract potential recipients. "In times of globalization, [image]

leads to shaping the landscape of a specific region as a recognized and sought-after brand” (Myga-Piątek 2012, 25).

The landscape is at the same time a public good, conducive to cultural, economic, and tourist activities, owing to various resources. They constitute kinds of qualities that affect the type of landscape and its dominant functions, whether aesthetic, cultural, cognitive, utilitarian, travel, or recreational. It should be emphasized that the author equates a landscape with a distinctive space, characteristic in its structure, whose distinctive element is its material and immaterial heritage, which is the value of the region. For this reason, not only objects, spatial development, terrain, etc., but also traditions, language and symbolic values should be counted among the significant elements of the landscape (Myga-Piątek 2012, 24-25). The cultural landscape requires taking continuous action to protect and maintain it (Nitkiewicz-Jankowska, and Jankowski 2010, 188), because it “has an impaired ability to self-regulate” (Włodarczyk 2009, 90).

A specific variation of the cultural landscape is the tourist landscape, which should be the result of actions taken in accordance with the principles of sustainable development, aimed at using tourism potential: “all activities leading to the use of its resources and advantages should take into account the preservation of the harmony between natural, cultural, and socio-economic activities” (Skowronek, Józwiak, and Tucki 2013, 64).

From this perspective, it is important to preserve the balance and authenticity of the landscape when using heritage for tourism purposes. This balance is important because of changes in the symbolic and functional sphere that should preserve the value of the landscape’s heritage. They affect the image of space and how it is received by visitors (also in the context of space interpretation). At the same time, an important element of the tourist landscape is the infrastructure, which allows the organization of space, allowing for the service of tourist traffic. These include accommodation facilities, catering facilities, and transport infrastructure (Myga-Piątek 2012, 151). The described development should be skillfully integrated into the landscape, though it often differs physically from the area. Creating a tourist space without maintaining balance can bring negative effects and lead to the development of a landscape subjected to unification and uniformization processes. They often lead to the over-exploitation as well as degradation of the natural and cultural environment. The consequence may sometimes be the standardization of the landscape, and, therefore, the loss of its uniqueness (Myga-Piątek 2012, 25). In this context, commercialization of space is also important. It often has negative effects on elements or places of material cultural heritage, changing a landscape structure. It affects the authenticity of the experienced landscape, characterized by the accumulation of attractions, which are not often strictly related to the specificity of the region.

Among the important feature of the tourist landscape, I want to emphasize several significant issues. The cultural landscape can become a tourist landscape mainly

due to its potential, attractiveness of the area in terms of the characteristic form of space, including the complementarity of the elements in it that attract the attention of visitors. It is also necessary to have people traveling in a given area, thanks to whom tourist traffic may develop. An immaterial element of the landscape is the image of it, which consists of the expectations, associations, and feelings of visitors (Skowronek, Jóźwik, and Tucki 2013, 72). For this reason, their perception of the landscape is influenced by experiences associated with the encounter of the previously formed image with the real landscape. Therefore, all of the elements, both natural and cultural, shaping the structure and image of space are closely related to the landscape creation process for tourism purposes. The emphasis on certain cultural, historical elements and designation of space, as well as the connotation of places, can allow visitors “to facilitate the unambiguous recognition of the origin of a place, which increases its attractiveness for tourism” (Nitkiewicz-Jankowska and, Jankowski 2010, 189). The accumulation of elements that are interesting for whatever reason for the traveler, which include monuments, thematically related objects, places of historical, cultural, and other significance, affect the valorization of the landscape and its perception. In this context, the cultural route may play a significant role, particularly from the perspective of a person entering a new, culturally distinct area.

Cultural routes in contemporary terminology

Contemporary researchers more and more often pay attention to the significant role of cultural routes—local, regional, and national—centered on a leading theme in the field of spiritual or material culture, broadly understood. They represent a form of spatial thematization, which facilitates the reception of cultural heritage. Thanks to such trails, travelers perceive them as cultivated and current. The professional literature contains a number of definitions and classifications of cultural routes. Routes connects points in space, creating new narratives around them, influencing the way their landscapes are perceived.

The growing importance of cultural routes in the world can be seen in the formation the International Scientific Committee on Cultural Routes (CIIC) of the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), which is an institution affiliated with UNESCO. In 2008, in Canada, the Committee created the world-wide definition of cultural routes:

Any route of communication, be it land, water, or some other type, which is physically delimited and is also characterized by having its own specific dynamic and historic functionality to serve a specific and well determined purpose, which must fulfill the following conditions: a) It must arise from and reflect interactive movements of people as well as multi-dimensional, continuous, and reciprocal exchanges of goods, ideas, knowledge

and values between peoples, countries, regions or continents over significant periods of time; b.) It must have thereby promoted a cross-fertilization of the affected cultures in space and time, as reflected both in their tangible and intangible heritage; c) It must have integrated into a dynamic system the historic relations and cultural properties associated with its existence. (CIIC 2008, 3)

The definition is complemented by other aspects that must characterize cultural routes: the context that builds around space, the content of material and immaterial heritage, the intercultural dimension of the whole, the dynamic nature of functioning and geographical location, and determining natural and cultural content (CIIC 2008, 3; Gawel 2011, 47-48).

A cultural route can be defined as a thematic route, in which the most important aspect is cultural interaction, allowing for gaining new experiences thanks to the feeling of uniqueness and authenticity associated with its cultural heritage. People on the trail have the opportunity to broaden their knowledge, to get acquainted with the history and identity of the area. It should be emphasized that in this article, I am deliberately using the term “cultural route”, not the “tourist and cultural route” (*szlak turystyczno-kulturowy*) proposed by Armin Mikos von Rohrscheidt. He introduces this term in order to “define a group of routes exploiting cultural threads that function outside those officially recognized by the Council of Europe as tourist routes of cultural significance” (Mikos von Rohrscheidt 2009, 385). His idea, however, puts the emphasis on the tourist aspect of routes, and it also points to the occurrence of numerous “attractions of a cultural character” (Mikos von Rohrscheidt 2009, 9). This indicates the selected categorization of heritage elements located on the trail. The aim of this text is to reflect on routes from the perspective of cultural research.

The definition of the cultural route proposed by Łukasz Gawel (2011, 76) refers directly to heritage, stressing that it is not possible to separate the material and immaterial: “through the presentation of material heritage, the route should enable one to learn and promote immaterial heritage, treating both of these areas as an inseparable whole”. A given cultural trail affects the local development of the regions in which it is located and their communities. It strengthens the sense of cultural belonging, and identity, through interaction with material and immaterial heritage. The nomenclature allows for different ways of dividing up routes, including tourist and cultural or tourist routes that can also be referred to as cultural routes. They depend on the following:

1. territorial range, including urban, local, regional, supra-regional, national, international, etc.;
2. context, including historical, e.g., biographical, military, archaeological, or technical and industrial, ethnographic, architectural, sightseeing, etc.;

3. mode of the trip, among others, hiking, car, water, bicycle, horse routes, etc. (Gawel 2011, 64, 75).

Each type of trail has a different effect on the type of experience acquired and influences how the landscape is perceived. In this article, the research material is based on cultural routes registered and officially operating in cultural tourism.

Route experience and landscape perception

The concept of experience is included in praxeological science and is related to the category of “action.” Yi-Fu Tuan writes that it is a combination of feelings and thoughts (Tuan 1987, 19). People gain experience every day; they acquire knowledge and broaden the horizons of their thinking. As Andrzej Stasiak emphasizes, “until recently, experience was considered a natural, somewhat involuntary, side effect of traveling, not an essential, primary goal” (Stasiak 2016, 195). Contemporary researchers say that the process of cumulating desired experiences plays the most important role in making travel decisions, being the motivation to travel. Experience has a distinctive function. As Agnieszka Niezgoda writes:

The processes of globalization and the related development of communication, with widespread access to the internet, make it easier to search for offers and bookings on your own. As a result, tourists manage their time more independently; they more often decide to organize holidays individually. Tourists want to use their time “effectively”. This means that during their trip they want to feel and experience as much as possible. People strive to maximize experiences per unit of time. (Niezgoda 2013, 44-45)

The desire to have new, unique experiences resulting from being in a different environment, climate, and visiting interesting places for their natural or cultural values, mobilizes people to participate in various events—festivals, shows, concerts, feasts—involving and engaging those who take part. Thanks to this, travelers have the opportunity to see a given culture, to have direct contact with it. Experiences are also usually related to social dimension; they connect with getting to know new people, inhabitants of particular regions, coming from local cultural circles. Travelers want to discover and experience—to a greater or lesser extent— different cultures, including, for example, their way of living, working, customs, traditions, forms of spending free time, preparing meals, etc., in relation to the values and practices cultivated by their own cultural communities. Bilateral comparisons and intercultural communication are the sources of the emergence and development of cultural tourism.

Cultural routes play a special role in the experience of the natural, cultural, and tourist landscape. Taking a trip through cultural routes makes it possible to satisfy various needs, which depend on the place of stay, wealth, habits, desires, etc. The trail somehow changes the way the landscape is understood into systemic. It

provides new meanings, conceptualizes previously separate places, manifestations of heritage, which are treated as components of a larger whole thanks to the route. As Myga-Piatek wrote of cultural landscapes, we may say that the cultural route documents and connects the activities of societies from many historical eras in geographical space, constituting a path saturated with the heritage of individual regions (Myga-Piątek 2012, 13).

This type of route creates new opportunities for both travelers and tourists. The distinction between these two terms is deliberately used to emphasize the different nature of their motivations and travel destinations. As Krzysztof Podemski (2005, 9) writes in *Socjologia podróży* (Sociology of travel), “the traveler chooses for himself—although usually in accordance with socio-cultural norms, schemes, patterns, or stereotypes—the travel route and the objects, events, or environments with which some form of contact is the goal of leaving ‘home.’” The term is also more adequate due to the active attitude of the traveler, the effort he puts into the expedition; he wants to encounter something new; he is a seeker. On the other hand, the tourist expects experiences prepared for him in some way, and his attitude is more passive. It is associated with the expectation that attractions will fill up his time (Podemski 2005, 21). This approach to travel is superficial: there is no place for reflection on the cultural heritage of the region.

Regardless of the type of route, the traveler or tourist gets to know the points indicated in that space, which, referring to the work of Marc Augé, can be called “places” (Augé 2008). It should be emphasized that space usually refers to an area whose boundaries may be uncertain, and their specific indication will not always be possible. In the “semiotic trend of research, cultural landscapes have many features in common with the social space and its world of meanings” (Plit 2014, 19). The area of a route is influenced by the places that are included in it. They build a narrative on the trail, contextualize it, and create identity. Lucile Grésillon wrote that “places are spaces defined on the map. They have their name and differentiate themselves from others through their materiality and identity” (Grésillon 2010, 21). Places allow one to interpret the space of the trail, which, thanks to it, ceases to be anonymous, obtaining further meanings. Although a cultural route, just like any road, is inseparable from its geographical context, attention should be paid to the process of its “becoming” in the cultural aspect. Every place that fits into its narrative: “is a humanized space. In the process of humanization, the community gives it not only a close relationship with the stories of individual people, but sometimes it also gives them their own lives” (Wolski 2014, 79). For the same reason, a place along a trail can be described as significant, historical, and symbolic. Associations connect with it—differently for each recipient—and connotations make it become a distinctive element of a space (Augé 2008, 128, 130).

Cultural routes brings added value. Referring to the landscape, the key aspect is the ability to connect places and objects through a trail in such a way, as to give

the route the right meaning, create the right context. During one's journey on it, the space connecting successive places takes on a new meaning. As Gawęł writes, the route is "a greater cultural value than the sum of all its components; they gain in importance precisely through mutual interactions" (Gawęł 2011, 48). Therefore, it is treated as a whole—not only as a collection or a series of places, but also the surrounding space. In the same context, but with regard to understanding the landscape, Florian Plit, writes:

in almost all landscape definitions, the emphasis is on the synthetic approach. Numerous examples of this can be found in the cited works of K. Ostaszewska (2002), A. Richling, J. Solon (2011), U. Myga-Piątek (2012), F. Plit (2011) and many other authors. Landscape is a "complex whole," "everything we see," "synthesis of nature and culture," "but a heterogeneous whole." Almost everyone, even those who write about the collection of elements (e.g., D. L. Armand, 1980), pays attention to their mutual connections. Many—if not the majority of—researchers, crossing the boundaries of sensory perception, consider these relations an important part of the landscape. The next step is taken by M. Degórski (2005: 15), who described the landscape as an "objectified visualization of the processes and phenomena occurring in the megasystem of the geographical environment". (Plit 2014, 21)

People moving from place to place in the landscape space experience differences resulting from various forms of transportation (walking, car trail), road conditions, tourism infrastructure, and access to information. They discover other ways of traveling and hear different, often incomprehensible dialects, while searching for the next destinations of their expedition. On many trails, travelers can choose different routes and ways of moving—for instance, on foot, by car, by carriage or sleigh with harnessed horses, or by train. It is possible to go beyond the beaten path. Each visitor will accordingly have different experiences, meet other people, and maybe make acquaintances. Places far away from each other on the trail encourage the visitor to get to know their surroundings. A cultural route inscribed in "a varied landscape with clear links between elements is a more diverse and, at the same time, flexible offer for tourists. This offer ... prompts a deeper, more reflective knowledge" (Kulczyk 2014, 13). The dynamics of "being on the journey" makes it possible to encounter the uniqueness of the landscape in which the trail is set. "The cultural experience offered by the cultural route is associated with the abandonment of a static image of the world" (Kamińska 2013, 320).

There is a clear need to broaden research on the role of the experiences people have while moving through cultural routes, not in the context of the individual places or objects that create the landscape, but above all as a whole, taking into account the process of moving from one place to another. Visitors have the opportunity to develop their knowledge not only because of deliberately made choices or destinations, but also accidentally visited places along the route.

Cultural routes create greater opportunities for recipients to experience the landscape and to pay attention to its natural and cultural values, which are “values in themselves. It is about such landscape characteristics as exoticism, wildness, culture, typological separateness, uniqueness, diversity, contrast, typicality, picturesqueness, etc.” (Andrejczuk 2010, 20). Experiences collected on the cultural route are associated with sensory cognition, often engaging all the senses. The tourist experiences the landscape surrounding him, interpreting received “incentives” in accordance with his own knowledge, experience, needs, and motives (Rogowski 2016, 23). A lot of the incentives on the route make his perception of the landscape more comprehensive and active.

Many tourists visually perceive the uniqueness of the landscape and discover unknown places or monuments while hiking or driving. They stop and visit randomly encountered objects related to the culture of a given region, becoming acquainted with local handicraft, regional costumes, products, flavors and aromas of traditional dishes, etc. All these elements give the recipients the opportunity to experience its *genius loci*—the difficult to articulate and ephemeral specificity of the place. Traveling along a cultural trail engages a traveler’s hearing, because he can listen to the sounds of nature, for example, to the sound of water, singing birds, but also listen to the sounds of music based on scales, performed on regional instruments. The recipient has the opportunity to see and take part in traditional celebrations, festivities, or even to try to learn new things—from crafts, production of traditional or regional products, to folk dance and song. “Landscape incentives are accepted and interpreted in the complex process of perception and become one of the methods of subjective valuation of space, including in terms aesthetics, ethics, emotion, symbolism, and semantics” (Rogowski 2016, 24). The issue of the tourist landscape is connected with the problem of its authenticity and originality, which is particularly important in the context of the potential of cultural routes. As Paweł Zajas writes, “this is where the problem is born, which is associated with the search for the ‘real’ reality of the regions visited by tourists, while the tourism industry provides them only with performances, staging of reality specially prepared for their use” (Zajas 2008, 216). The commercialization of tourism space often has a negative impact on the elements of material and immaterial cultural heritage that are part of the landscape associated with that space. It weakens its authenticity, striving to accumulate attractions which are not characteristic of the region. It should be noted that “social reality is essentially an ideological creation” (Zajas 2008, 228). In turn, Łukasz Iwasiński emphasizes that “tourists want, above all, to experience authenticity—they look for deep, valuable, and unique sensations in it that allow themselves to be distinguished (Iwasiński 2015, 30). Joseph Heath and Andrew Potter note that the feature of authenticity is not a lack of commodification, but manual execution, natural materials, or traditional destinations of products (Heath and Potter, 2010, 331-332). In many cases,

the production of regional products, hand-made, from natural ingredients is cultivated on cultural routes. A good example is the Oscypek Trail established in 2011. In huts from April to October, the shepherds make cheese: *oscypek*, *redykołka*, and *bryndza podhalańska*, all entered by the European Commission into the Register of Protected Designations of Origin¹.

While the routes proposed by travel agencies often have reality arranged, distorted for maximized profits, cultural routes still seem to be spaces that maintain the principles of sustainable development, even though they are inscribed in the tourist landscape and often have a developed infrastructure. Their role is not to stag the space, but to build narrative around historical and cultural places. It should be emphasized that this narrative cannot be an artificial, adulterated, created form, a kind of “visual cliché” (Zajas 2008, 218), but a reflection of the identity of the space. I am aware of the fact that this is a kind of ideal model that can only apply when all conditions are met. Building a coherent presentation cannot affect the authenticity of the route and landscape; it should be non-invasive and create a coherent, desirable image in the minds of recipients. Its purpose should be the contextualization of heritage, which carries with it an educational value. The tale created on the route, and through it inscribed in a given environment, influences how the landscape is perceived, enriches it, and supports cultural interactions within it. Consequently, it leads to the interpretation of cultural heritage, thanks to its inclusion in a specific context. The narrative contributes to the organization and, interpretation of the space and presents it in accordance with the central theme of the corresponding cultural heritage. In this way, it imposes the context of the landscape in which the cultural route is inscribed. It makes the space attractive with respect to the given aspect.

In the context of the analyzed issues, it is important to reflect on how the route is presented relative to the landscape. Actions undertaken for this purpose should be skillfully conducted in pursuit of engaging, activating recipients. The presentation's aim is to create an alternative ways of perceiving and experiencing the landscape. It should not lock recipients into a closed discourse. The proposed concept is to use the narrative created through the route as an effective “tool” to support the traveler in reading and understanding the significance of the region's heritage, experiencing the essence of the surrounding landscape, and thus in finding himself in a new space for him. People try to understand themselves through landscape and personal topography (Macfarlane 2018, 36).

Cultural routes should play a significant role in respect of the specificity of their cultural landscapes, preventing standardization, unification processes, and uniformity, so that the tourism infrastructure characterizing the tourist landscape does not adversely affect other aspects important from the perspective of

¹ See <http://www.szlakoscypkowy.pl/szlak-oscypkowy>.

protecting natural and cultural values. Narration on the trail should, however, be built not only on the basis of cultural heritage, or the history of the region, but also on significant stories about the contemporary people living there, residents, events, and cultivated traditions.

Conclusion

Cultural routes have influenced the emergence of a new quality in tourism oriented towards getting to know and experiencing cultural landscapes and heritage. The routes enable tourists to consciously search for authentic cultural heritage, aimed at a specific destination—a place on the trail—as well as to accidentally discover heritage, associated with traveling from place to place and being “here and now.” Each visitor receives the trail in a unique and different way; therefore, his experience is subjective. There are many factors influencing that subjectivity—demographic, sociological, and ideological—related to the individual’s system of values. One’s cultural affiliation and personal knowledge about a given area and the culture of the region are also important. During the journey from point to point, the traveler or the tourist has time to reflect on the experiences he has gathered, the impressions of his encounters with a different culture, through interaction with the heritage and inhabitants of the region. A strong commitment to discovering the landscape through the trail will consequently lead to a greater sense of satisfaction with participating in the culture of the region. In this way, an image of the cultural trail and the entire landscape is created in the minds of the recipients. The traveler has the opportunity to learn about local problems and to pay attention to otherwise unnoticed manifestations of heritage and culture. Cultural tourism conducted on the trail influences the subjective aspects of human life and, at the same time, builds the reputation of the area for tourism. As Rogowski wrote (2016, 23), it is possible to show that the greater diversity of landscape engages more senses. The consequence is a greater intensity of sensations, which results in increased satisfaction (2016, 23). The multi-sensory perception of heritage and the experience of the cultural route in the landscape space guarantee the creation of an interesting and unique destination, characterized by the activities carried out to preserve the authenticity of the landscape in the name of sustainable development principles. The narration created on the trail gives new meaning to the landscape and intensifies the interaction between it and the viewer. Its perfect form has no negative impact on its uniqueness. This narrative is to become a tool for a better understanding of space, which is not a limitation for the cognitive processes of the recipient. It should encourage the recipient to deepen their reflection upon and interpretation of cultural heritage.

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Extracting limestone: How to interpret the city through ammonites and belemnites

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Abstract

The paper analyzes the presence of the remains of ammonites and belemnites in the stones used to build the elevations of houses in modern Polish cities. The process of aestheticizing buildings is the reason for fossilized cephalopods being moved from the natural environment into urban space. I consider whether the use of such materials leads merely to making the buildings look more attractive or if this process provides an opportunity to interpret these buildings in an alternative way, which goes beyond aesthetic categories and is related to the fact that the fossils have been moved from the natural world into the cultural sphere. The limestone elements of architecture also allow one to look at the city as a unique museum of cultural and natural history.

Key words:

aestheticization, natural history, stone, city, museum

1. Introduction

The ground floor of an apartment building at ul. Dolna 11 in Warsaw is intended for shops and services. As of 2018, it houses a furniture store “Boutique Pierrot,” a beauty salon “Euforia,” and a dental clinic “Dolna Dent.” The building, completed in 2005, is covered up to the first floor (and so also around the display windows of the premises) with limestone slabs containing ammonites that are a few centimeters across and slightly smaller belemnites. On each slab there are a few cephalopods, which are presented cross-sectioned along the shell so as to expose their inner structure. The building at ul. Dolna 11 is not an isolated case. Many apartment buildings intended for wealthy residents of big cities have their façades, floors, or stairways incorporate of various types of limestone slabs.

The use of Upper Jurassic limestone (the one that usually contains fossils) in urban architecture is in no way a new practice. The geologist Jacek Rajchel, analyzing the buildings of Cracow, notes the following:

In the Romanesque period it [the limestone] was used most of all for the production of small brick-shaped blocks known as *petit appareil*, then in the Gothic period for the production of much bigger rectangular blocks—*grand appareil*. ... It was used for building portals, casings, columns, balustrades, posts, and flooring. Unrefined limestone blocks were used to build the defensive walls of Cracow and the Wawel and to pave streets and squares, including the main market square. (Rajchel 2007, 148)

Hence, it can be said that limestone had (and still has) an important influence on the appearance of European cities.¹ To this day, several hundred different types of slabs cut from rock of calcareous origin (many of them containing ammonites and belemnites) circulate on the market, which might indicate the continuous popularity of this material among investors.

It is through the prism of these slabs and their fossils that I would like to examine the modern city. I will endeavor to determine whether the effect achieved with the use of these particular finishing materials merely makes the buildings look more attractive or if it also creates an opportunity to interpret the buildings in an alternative way, exceeding the category of beauty. In limestone blocks containing ammonites and belemnites, we look for interpretative possibilities, which can be created by elements of the natural world transferred to the world of culture. Since cephalopods belong to the animal kingdom, these opportunities seem to be related most of all to the scientific understanding of wildlife. Thus, I will try to reflect upon this perspective by analyzing the façade of a building as though it were a laboratory of sorts. What is more, by putting examples of limestone architectural elements of buildings in more metaphoric terms, I am searching for an opportunity, emerging under the gaze of an observant passer-by, to interpret the city as a museum of sorts. A museum that is different in the sense that it was created spontaneously and calls for special conditions of reception. Despite the barriers, I claim that this museum is democratized and free of any true constraints—a museum that exceeds the institution and evokes the history of prehistoric cephalopods.

2. The elevation

All three service outlets located on the ground floor of the building at ul. Dolna 11 are currently occupied by companies providing luxury services. These outlets are fashionably furnished and fitted with the newest equipment (according to the type

¹ In a different book, Rajchel (2009, 314) indicates that limestone was a basic material used for building the structural elements and decorative features of architecture in Rome.

of services provided). The aesthetics of their interior and exterior was probably already taken care of at the stage of drafting the architectural design of the building—after all, the way they look influences the price of the apartments in the building. The image of modern cities, created by architects building after building, led the philosopher Wolfgang Welsch to say that aestheticization is a common trend in urban planning.

Should one interpret the use of limestone blocks containing fossils in the finishing of modern buildings precisely in this way—as aestheticization? It seems that yes, one should, even if the architects' choice to use this material for elevations is likely also motivated by other factors, for instance by its practical qualities (wear resistance, endurance, etc.). Obviously, it is also a beautiful material, whose fine ammonite shells with their pleasant spiral shapes do not seem to be without significance for the decision to use this particular material.² The fact that animal remains are built into the façades of houses (which probably would not be so willingly done if they were not prehistoric cephalopods but ordinary roof cats³) seems to give way to the impression of aesthetic satisfaction evoked by the textures and shapes of the extinct cephalopods. The limestone slab is perceived as aesthetic and the ammonite adds to its appeal, but can these animals really be considered beautiful? And if so, who is to judge?

The concept of animal aesthetics—referring to the discoveries of Charles Darwin, the father of the theory of evolution—has been studied by Welsch (2005), mentioned above. Darwin, as the philosopher recalls, when conducting observations of animal behavior (especially that of butterflies), reasoned that animals have a type of aesthetic sense, on the basis of which they are able to make an aesthetic assessment. This theory was not received enthusiastically by the scientific community of biologists, although, as Welsh points out, Darwin continued to defend it for as long as he could (he even referred back to it in his last lecture before his passing). The controversy around the animal aesthetic sense hypothesis probably follows from the fact that aesthetic assessments made by animals translate directly into sexual selection—namely, the choice of partner. If this choice is preceded by an aesthetic judgment, then in light of the survival of the species (which appears to be the primary goal of animals pairing off) it is clear that the aesthetic assessment must translate into an assessment of the partner's physical fitness—when choosing a partner, the female should pick the strongest male in order to ensure the survival of the species. Seeing that she chooses the most attractive of them, it means that he is also the strongest. If this process is actually carried out in the manner described above,

² Spiral shapes (e.g., a meander) were appreciated and used to decorate ceramic objects since ancient Greece, cf. Press (1987).

³ It is probably worth mentioning another practice in which elements straight from the cemetery—though not remains but gravestones—were used as decorations. I am thinking here of a decorative pergola in “Leśnika” park in Warsaw, which was built from matzevahs. For more on this topic, see Baksik (2013).

then the animal aesthetic assessment is not a measure of beauty but a measure of strength. Thus, evolutionarily developed peacock feathers are not beautiful; their purpose is not to delight but simply to attest to the male's health and strength. It was precisely against this reduction of beauty to fitness that Darwin, followed by Welsch, stood against. They both argued that animals can register beauty simply to admire it, not merely as a factor of fitness assessment.

Regardless of whether animals assess beauty for its own sake or in order to measure a partner's fitness, the very capacity for passing such judgment seems to be indisputable for both Darwin and Welsch. However, that does not mean that this is true for all animals. Darwin noted that the sense of taste (the ability to notice and valorize beauty, which is under discussion here) is being formed in the course of evolution. According to Darwin, ammonites, belemnites, and other animals of the Upper Jurassic period, as animals evolutionarily underdeveloped, do not possess this sense. The shape of their body does not play any role in the process of sexual selection; it does not represent their fitness nor beauty. The appearance of these animals does not constitute a response to any drive; the aesthetic assessment does not apply to them. Welsch notes that:

For Darwin, not every kind of beauty is a product of aesthetic correlation and coevolution. Two incipient types of beauty emerged in evolution long before an aesthetic sense developed. The first one is found in "low animals" like corals, sea-anemones, or some jelly-fish that "are ornamented with the most brilliant tints, or are shaded and striped in an elegant manner.." Darwin explains this pre-aesthetic type of beauty as "the direct result either of the chemical nature or the minute structure of their tissues.." Such beauty just happened to arise as a physiological effect, without the implication of any aesthetic function. Only after the development of an aesthetic sense could such pre-aesthetic beauty be esteemed as beautiful. Originally it was not an aesthetic matter at all. (Welsch 2004)

If Darwin was right, the beauty of ammonites emerged only about 190 thousand years ago, along with the appearance of the first man on Earth (*homo sapiens*), who could admire them. It was a man who (using his aesthetic assessment) valorized the ammonite as beautiful. This type of assessment had not existed before. Thus, for sixty-five million eight hundred and ten thousand years the ammonite was a representative of beauty beyond aesthetics, of beauty in a form preceding the concept itself. Hence, it is interesting that limestone, a material containing these particular animals, serves as a tool for the aestheticization of our homes. Do the remains of these animals represent a different dimension of beauty (which was created without a purpose and could not have been appreciated by anyone else except us)? And maybe now, when we (as humans) have at our disposal not only aesthetic judgment but also scientific knowledge, the beauty of the ammonite can play more

than just one role? These questions are worth asking, treating them as a starting point for extended research concerning the presence of animal remains in cities, research that is certainly worth conducting.

Referring to these issues, I propose two possible interpretations of ammonites and belemnites embedded in the elevations of buildings—namely, as objects in a unique laboratory and as exhibits in an alternative museum. I believe that these two ways of interpreting these exceptional elements of aestheticization of cities bring forward the potential hidden in cephalopods visible in elevations. In my opinion, this potential can be expressed both in scientific knowledge and in evoking anew the history of these prehistoric animals.

3. Laboratory

The Polish Geological Institute is less than two kilometers from ul. Dolna 11, at ul. Rakowiecka 4 in Warsaw. On its fence, there is a large format picture of an ammonite on display. This picture does not perform an aesthetic function; it presents a scientific object, the description of which is a result of the work done by scientists employed at the institute. The poster format brings pedestrians closer to what happens behind the closed doors of the research center every day.

This short distance between the ammonites as objects of research, located in the building on ul. Rakowiecka, and those embedded in the elevation of the apartment building on ul. Dolna, which are perhaps admired by the residents of Sielce, seems to draw a metaphorical line between the often negatively perceived aestheticized city, as a space that offers mainly commercial entertainment,⁴ and the temple of science, a place dedicated to the production of knowledge about the world, a serious research center, perceived as an institutional machine for producing the truth. However, can you only learn something about these animals on ul. Rakowiecka, as a member of a small group of scientists with access to prehistoric cephalopods? Does the laboratory, in which phenomena of the physical world are studied, have to be located in a separate, closed space? A study carried out by Scott P. Hippensteel, a geologist from the US, seems to be an interesting example of defying the belief that knowledge should be produced “behind closed doors,” not in public places, as he decided to treat the shopping mall and the airport as the areas of his research.

Hippensteel, working at the University of South Carolina, conducted studies in a series of articles on the taxonomy of ammonites and belemnites that consisted of verifying floor tiles used in the SouthPark Mall and at the Orlando International Airport. First, he identified tiles containing fossils, then he narrowed down the scope of the study to those tiles with fossils of more than one animal (which allowed for an analysis of their origin and history, for example when it comes to the processes

⁴ I am referring here to the concept of urban anesthetics, in which aestheticization of public space leads to the production of a beautiful pretense. See Zeidler-Janiszewska (1999).

of dead ammonites and belemnites drifting through currents) (Hippensteel 2015). Hippensteel, in order to conduct his research, decided to transform the shopping mall and the airport into “field laboratories”⁵. The father of microbiology and the founder of the first non-institutional laboratory—Louis Pasteur, whose actions were reflected upon by philosopher Bruno Latour (1983)—did something similar. Hippensteel, like Pasteur, decided to go beyond the bounds of the research institute and to move his laboratory to a place where he could come into contact with his object of study. The obvious difference is that, unlike the anthrax studied by Pasteur, the ammonites analyzed by Hippensteel do not endemically occur where he conducted his research. Ammonites and belemnites probably found their way to the floors of the shopping mall and the airport—as Hippensteel established—from Italy. And they reached the Italian Peninsula from Germany, or to be more precise, from Upper Bavaria. Pasteur could observe anthrax in its “natural environment” (the possibility of conducting that observation became the primary reason for the establishment of the first field laboratory), whereas Hippensteel, having no access to a quarry in Germany, had to limit his research to what was transported from there.⁶ The thousands of kilometers separating ammonites *in situ* from those available to Hippensteel have a significant impact on both the methodology of the study (in order to conduct the analysis the scientist had to find tiles with at least two animals) and its possible conclusions. Despite those limitations, Hippensteel’s study was successful and resulted in several publications in geological journals.

What enabled Hippensteel’s work was the process of aestheticization, thanks to which limestone slabs were transported thousands of kilometers from the place where they were cut from the rock. Without moving the material in order to decorate the shopping mall and the airport, the scientist would not have had such (Bavarian)

5 We do not need to see Hippensteel’s work at the airport and in the mall as setting up a field laboratory, instead we can perceive it as a field work similar to what is done at geological positions. It seems, however, that a broader view of the scientist’s activities, i.e. perceiving it as establishing a laboratory-satellite, may also be justified. During his stay in selected places, Hippensteel performs a series of translations, for example, selecting for further analysis only those tiles that contain the most interesting arrangement of ammonite skeletons in terms of possible conclusions. The material narrowing process helps him to draw conclusions of a much broader scope. Bruno Latour in his classic text „Give me a laboratory and I will move the world” indicates the processes of reducing and enlarging as those that take place in the laboratory. For this reason, I believe that Hippensteel’s actions at the airport can be considered as establishing a field laboratory. Of course, these premises may prove to be insufficient. In addition to reducing and enlarging, Latour also points to such processes taking place in the laboratory as establishing a network of political relations with other research stakeholders, or conducting experiments with numerous setbacks and subsequent attempts. Unfortunately, it is not clear from the materials to which I have access whether the management of the airport and shopping center knew about the researcher’s study and whether any relationship was established. One can only guess that without a conversation between the scientist and the managers of these institutions, the study would not have been possible. Limited access to information, however, does not allow me to state it with certainty, and thus clearly state that Hippensteel actually founded something like a field laboratory. For this reason, I use this term in quotation marks in this article.

6 It might be worth noting that although Pasteur studied anthrax in its natural environment, it was neither the first nor the only focus of the infection. In this sense, he also dealt with a depleted sample of the bacteria (its other mutations could have occurred elsewhere, etc.).

specimens of ammonites and belemnites at his disposal, and perhaps (without applying for additional grants for research trips) would never even have come across these particular specimens of prehistoric animals. Therefore, the knowledge that he acquired on the basis of his research could have never been produced. In this case, the processes of the aestheticization of the city (with the use of limestone slabs) had a positive effect on the possibility of learning about cephalopods.

As I wrote earlier, Hippensteel's study was limited (though not that much, as the airport floor was over 200,000 m²), which certainly affected the final results. However, it is not the case that studying a limited number of specimens taken out of their "natural environment," especially when it comes to geological research, is novel to the scientists working in this field. Józef Siemiradzki, a distinguished Polish geologist and traveler, in the introduction to the study of taxonomy of cephalopods found in the Polish mountains, published in 1891, writes as follows:

Over the last few years, I myself have been gathering Upper Jurassic fauna material; apart from that, Dr. Zaręczny gave me his own collection to study, and Dr. Rostafiński entrusted me with the rich collection of the Physiographic Commission. As a result, I have ample material—it includes more than 130 forms of cephalopods, and several thousand specimens from other sections of the animal world. ... However, this list of cephalopods is not yet exhaustive; I know of the existence of some undefined forms, for the description of which I do not have enough data, for instance in the collection of prof. Roemer in Wrocław, there is an interesting ammonite he styled as *Amm. czenstochoviensis* which is, as far as I can tell after seeing the original specimen, an unknown form of *Quenstedticeras* or *Cadoceras*. In this collection there is an ammonite from the *virgulata* group, unknown to me from other collections, that comes from the area of Częstochowa. Finally, there are several unlabeled specimens in the studied collections, which do not belong to any of the labeled forms. There is also a rich collection of Hohenegger in Munich, not at all developed, which may contain something new belonging to this fauna. The same applies to Michalski's collection at the Saint Petersburg Akademia Górnicza [Mining Academy], the collection of prof. Bieniasza, the Viennese collections, and finally the inaccessible though ample collections of Muzeum Dzieduszyckich [the Dzieduszycki Museum] in Lviv. (Siemiradzki 1891, 1-2)

Hence, Siemiradzki's research was based on private collections, sometimes constructed not by scientists but by amateur collectors. One could infer that new specimens, including unlabeled ammonites and belemnites, were added to these collections often quite spontaneously; the choice of these particular specimens might not have been dictated by the intention of broadening scientific knowledge on cephalopods, but rather by a desire to own amazing exhibits.

Twenty years after the publication of the words quoted above, Siemiradzki managed to access the collection of the Dzieduszycki Museum in Lviv. He examined the

collection that was made available to him and then published the taxonomy of the studied animals in his *Geologia ziem polskich (The Geology of Polish Lands)*. In the foreword to the first volume he wrote the following: “Some chapters were written based almost exclusively on the materials owned by this Museum” (Siemiradzki 1903). Hence, there is no doubt here that collections created without scientific purposes in mind can become the basis for the production of scientific knowledge.

The circumstances of Siemiradzki’s and Hippensteel’s research are similar in the sense that both scientists worked with objects that had not been selected by them beforehand—they had no influence on the collections that were at their disposal, and they were probably unaware of the circumstances surrounding the gathering of the material. At the same time, what should be stressed is that both studies differed significantly. The Polish geologist struggled mainly with institutions making the specimens inaccessible to scientists, with the “musealization” of objects of research and their being treated almost like works of art. The American scientist, on the other hand, did not have any problems with reaching the selected specimens (although it is probably worth reflecting on whether the ammonites used as the airport floor, through exposure in a public space, had not become practically invisible, similarly inaccessible, just like those under lock and key). In both cases, studying cephalopods required some scientific courage and passion. Going beyond a research center, Siemiradzki examined a non-scientific museum collection, while Hippensteel produced scientific knowledge based on decorative elements of buildings. In this way, they both reached specimens that were unknown to them up to that point.

When reflecting upon the “field laboratories” established by Hippensteel, it can be noted that they shifted the role of a limestone slab from being a decorative element, subject to aesthetic judgment, towards being a scientific object, a valorized taxonomical description of specimens. In this way, these “laboratories” have redefined the role of limestone slabs in cities. According to this new approach, the limestone elevation ceases to be merely an element in creating the aesthetic appearance of a modern city. A non-aesthetic ammonite, embedded in it, remains an animal that can be described and examined. Thanks to treating the elevation as a geological “field laboratory” or at least a geological site the ammonite escapes aesthetic judgment, and it transforms the limestone slab, indicating a different potential. The use of this material ceases to be solely an act of urban aestheticization and becomes an opportunity to learn about nature. An opportunity that arose spontaneously, without a predetermined aim, but also an opportunity that is available due to the process of aestheticization. Thus, the city becomes a sprawling geological site, a place that offers specimens that might otherwise be unavailable to scientists in their institutes.⁷

⁷ It is worth adding that perceiving a city as a geological laboratory also allows us to exceed the metaphor of a city as a laboratory for social studies. For more information on this second approach, see Rewers (2014).

4. Museum

Open access to specimens, especially those located in crowded places, such as airports, shopping malls, and those visible on the elevations of buildings in urban spaces (returning again to ul. Dolna 11), creates opportunities not only for a scientist searching for research material, but also for someone who just happens to be walking by and notices them. Placing fossils in open spaces democratizes access to them. They are now practically at one's fingertips for anyone who wants to see them. From this perspective, for a few observant passers-by, one could say for modern *flâneurs*, the city and its decorative elements can be interpreted as a kind of exhibition.

I reach for the figure of an urban saunterer, a *flâneur*, because they represent a particular attitude. In the approach presented by the philosopher Walter Benjamin, it coincides with the attitude of a child discovering the world, who through natural curiosity is able to notice that which remains hidden from others. Beata Frydryczak, a cultural theorist, writes as follows:

The child's goal ... is not "keeping new things new, but renewing that which is old." That renewal is to absorb that which has been found. Those things, "purified," devoid of their original meaning and functions, hold only a subjective meaning however newly assigned. Children do not merely look at them with their probing and refreshing gaze, noticing something new in objects, but also use them in a creative way. ... This creative attitude makes it possible to restore the objects to their proper place in the order of the world. (Frydryczak 2002, 199)

This child-like attitude, characteristic of those who love walking around the city, allows them to notice and reconceptualize the decorative limestone slabs encountered on buildings. However, it is no longer just aesthetic fascination or pure scientific cognition. *Flâneurs*, when admiring an encountered object, combine those two perspectives; they "restore objects to their proper place in the order of the world" by restoring ammonites and belemnites to their rightful place in history, evoking it anew. Is it then possible to say that an elevation stone, in which a *flâneur* is able to notice specimens of fossilized ammonites and belemnites, can turn a city into a museum?

When we think of a city as a museum, the metaphor most often takes the shape of a historical museum or an art museum (depending on what measure we apply to the objects located there). An obvious example of such a city is Rome, which can certainly be seen as an art museum. This interpretation becomes especially clear when we take into account the art, publicly available in Rome, that comes from Egypt, the Black Sea, and the southern regions of Italy, which were plundered by the Romans between the 4th and the 1st century BC (Bergman 1995, 87). The Roman

art collection can be admired in the public space of the Italian capital at almost every turn. However, Rome is not the only example of a city-museum.

A different Italian city, Florence, can serve as another example (this time an example that exceeds what we might now call a colonial heritage). As early as 1862, the Polish librarian Michał Wiszniewski reported: “Through the blissful times of the Medici, Florence became so rich in fine arts that they were almost pouring out into the streets, and the entire city was transformed into a magnificent museum” (Quoted in Wrześniak 2013, 300). Hence, great Italian cities certainly had (and still have) the potential to be perceived as museums. One can look similarly at Cracow, already mentioned in this paper, which can be seen not only through the prism of an art museum, but also a kind of a geological museum.

Majer-Durman, in the introduction to an article in which she maps out a tourist route around Cracow following different varieties of limestones used as architectural elements of buildings,⁸ writes the following: “When starting an adventure with culture and monuments, it is worth visiting places where Upper Jurassic limestone is found and used in architecture, as it is one of the most commonly exploited natural stones in the Cracow area” (Majer-Durman 2012, 19). The author, justifying this unusual route for visiting Cracow, conducted a survey among the residents of the city asking them about their knowledge of the materials used for its construction and their willingness to participate in city tours with a geologist. The survey revealed that unveiling the geological dimension of the structural elements and elevations of the grandest buildings in the city (including the Collegium Maius, decorated with ammonites) meets the interest and the demand of the residents of Cracow.

When it comes to the possibilities for contact between the audience and the limestone in Cracow, it seems, however, that the route proposed by Majer-Durman could be extended. Limestone is not (and was not) used only as an element of Cracow’s architectural exteriors, but also as an element of interior design and as a medium for works of art. Rajchel, tracking a specific type of limestone in Cracow, namely travertine, writes as follows:

Travertine from the Silesian-Cracow monocline was used mainly in sacral-sepulchral art. At the beginning of the 20th century, rough, untreated, and sometimes large lumps of this travertine were used for making tombstones, especially in the older part of the Rakowicki cemetery. A good example of this practice is a tombstone depicting a crying woman under a cross, located about 50 m to the right of the main entrance. (Rajchel 2009, 316)

⁸ The route proposed by Majer-Durman is 12 km long and passes through the Zakrzówek quarry, the Liban quarry, the Pod św. Benedyktem quarry, the Szkoła Twardowskiego quarry, past limestone pavement around the church of St. Giles, the buttresses of the Franciscan Fathers Church, Collegium Maius—the buttresses and the elevation (containing ammonites), the columns in the chapel of St. John Cantius in the collegiate church of St. Anna, and the walls of St. Florian’s Gate.

Further, in the same text, the geologist also notes:

Daino Reale [a type of Italian travertine] is the best preserved stone in terms of stromatolite and oncoid structures of all the architecturally used travertines in Cracow. ... This travertine contains ... shells of snails, visible in the longitudinal and cross sections. The shells of these mollusks are best preserved in the counter top of the reception desk and in the fireplace frame of the Maltański Hotel at ul. Straszewskiego 14, in the table tops of the Copernicus restaurant at ul. Kanoniczna 16, as well as in the elements of the fountain in Galeria Kazimierz [a shopping mall] at ul. Podgórska 34. (Ibidem, 317)

Thus, the concept of the curated tour around the city, as if it were a geological museum, finds justification in the abundance of specimens, which can be seen on buildings and artifacts in Cracow's urban space. The city therefore offers equal, open access to collections, and their spontaneous selection affords finding truly unique specimens.

The sociologist Marek Krajewski sees in such democratized and spontaneously created museums an opportunity—a contribution to a significant change, which traditional museums could undergo in order to better fulfill their role, adapting to the modern realities of life in highly developed societies.

The basic measure leading to this goal, the prototypes of which have already been created and tested, is the democratization of access to museums for the public and recognizing them as active creators rather than passive recipients. The implementation of this task requires noticing creativity where, at first glance, it isn't found—in the everyday practices of individuals trying to adapt to reality. For the ever changing and unstable context of our daily lives requires not only courage, but also imagination, both necessary not only to survive, but also to defend our individuality. (Krajewski 2007, 59)

For Krajewski, the ideal objects in new museums would be “wonderfully” decorated balconies or urban flowerbeds made of recycled tires or pallets—anything that results from the creative work of individuals in a city. When considering the objects suggested by the sociologist and comparing them to limestone elevation slabs, it is not difficult to see that they are objects and places created through grass roots initiatives, undertaken by people who are much less specialized than experienced architects, who are in turn the ones prompting the use of the elevation materials discussed here. They are also much less expensive than covering an apartment building with Upper Jurassic limestone. However, can we not interpret this process (due to the problems listed above) as the “everyday practice of individuals trying to adapt to reality”? Well, perhaps this practice, related to creating an impression of exclusiveness, is slightly less “everyday” than those listed by Krajewski; however, in a way it still seems habitual, automatic, and obvious (especially in the process

of aestheticization of big cities). Is the concept of a democratized museum not precisely about seeing the positive potential in the unconscious processes of culture? Is it not a watchful eye that is able to find value (aesthetic value, related to scientific cognition) in something boring, monotonous, and ordinary, that has the power to transform reality? Adopting such a perspective in the process of aestheticizing the city allows one to notice the potential for creating a new museum—a museum that is open, but requires the visitors to be creative in seeing, a museum located in a city that offers to familiarize one with nature.

5. Conclusions

In this paper I have tried to take a closer look at the limestone slabs decorating urban buildings and at the remains of the ammonites and belemnites contained in them. The process of aestheticizing buildings is the reason for fossilized cephalopods being moved from the natural environment into urban space; however, that does not mean that Upper Jurassic limestone, which contains these animals, cannot perform functions going beyond this process. The limestone slabs discussed here do not perform a solely decorative function; when analyzed from different perspectives, they can reveal further possibilities of interpretation.

Going beyond the perspective of modern humanities, a perspective that is based on the evaluation of the processes of city aestheticization from a social point of view, we can find their positive potential. The city does not have to be merely the subject of studies conducted by historians or sociologists; it can also be an arena for the production and transfer of geological knowledge. The process of transferring the elements of nature into cities can ultimately be extremely significant for the natural sciences. Such initiatives may contribute to the identification of new species, and they may also become a pretext for restoring the memory of long-extinct animals.

Nature and culture intertwine in cities in many ways. Thanks to reflection on this intertwining, the city can become a space that is understood beyond the assessment of social processes, a space that is used as a laboratory or a museum; it can also reveal further possibilities of interpretation, for geology is not the only science for which the elements of the city may display positive potential. The search for that potential remains an open project.

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Musealized landscapes and petrified landscapes

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Abstract:

The text aims to reflect upon the notion of landscape in the context of exhibitions; more precisely, it aims to do so in relation to the musealization of archaeological heritage and presentation of archaeology. The last 30 years of museum transformations, referred to as "the age of museums," and the digital shift in museology have had a significant impact on building archaeological narratives in museums and beyond. Immersive and telematic landscapes, currently being constructed in museums, allow for sensorial engagement, broadened perceptive possibilities, and more intense interest in archaeology with the use of complex and convincing visions of the past. Hence, the musealized landscape presented in this paper is to go beyond the traditional criticism of multimedia in museums; it is an attempt to appreciate the cognitive opportunities provided by modern archaeological exhibitions.

Key words:

landscape, musealization, archaeological museum, archaeological heritage

Introduction

"The age of museums" refers to a revolution of sorts and a museum boom that started in the 1990s (Popczyk 2013, 13; MacLeod, Hourston-Hanks, and Hale 2012, XIX). It manifests itself in the significant specialization and variety of museums, their extensive educational and cultural offer, as well as the visible bloom of museum architecture (Chołdzyński 2011; Kalitko 2006; Sirefman 1999; Newhouse 1998). The "museum going trend" (Clair 2007) results primarily from political and economic factors conducive to the protection and development of interest in heritage, as well as from intensified tourism, aestheticization of cities, and theatricalization of new exhibition facilities and their surroundings (Popczyk 2013, 13). The museum "coup," as we ought to refer to these deep transformations of the institution over the last 30 years, is the result of critical reflection upon the role of museums that took place

at the end of the 1980s (Vergo 1989). Since then, traditional exhibitions, associated with dusty showcases, oriented towards visual perception, often intelligible only for experts familiar with their esoteric language, began to function in parallel to the new museum format. Museums and exhibitions opened in the course of the last 20 years are no longer anachronistic mixtures, but rather inviting places of dialogue, contact with culture, and immersion in the past and future. Grand openings of new museums have surely been inspired by the ideas of “The New Museology” (Vergo 1989; Piotrowski 2011), which promote a model of an engaging and participatory exhibition, which oftentimes succeeds by broadening sensory experience during the visit. Engaging audition, touch, smell, or kinesthesia in perception guarantees better memorization, whereby it positively influences the realization of educational goals set by museums. What is more, by renouncing the domination of visual materials, reserved for educated recipients, and incorporating non-visual experiences into the content of exhibitions, new museums turn into institutions that are inclusive, participatory, and as such also democratic (Ziębińska-Witek 2014, 220).

When focusing on new museums and exhibitions, we cannot forget about the role of the digital shift in museology—namely, the introduction of multimedia and modern technologies. A wide range of tools—augmented reality, simulations, full-scale reconstructions and visualizations, and interactive and multimedia exhibits—allows for a full range of sensory experience (Ziębińska-Witek 2015). New technologies dominate most of all in historical and archaeological museums, where the perceptive capacities of the visitors are insufficient for projecting the “invisible and unfathomable” (Květina, Unger, and Vavrečka 2015). Digital supplements of material evidence allow one to experience the past, oftentimes by means of complex reconstruction of objects and characters as well as places and landscapes of the past. Full-scale or digital visualizations of cities, settlements, battlefields, and natural environments can be found in many Polish and foreign museums. Exhibited landscapes are reconstructed so as to cognitively engage as many senses as possible, creating so-called *sensescapes* (Classen and Howes 2006, 216-19).

In this paper I will analyze musealized landscape based on examples of translations of archaeological heritage into exhibits governed by the rules of museum collections. By musealized landscape I mean full-scale reconstructions, which cognitively engage non-visual faculties and facilitate a reevaluation of thinking about past places, spaces, or habitats. By indicating the role and tasks of modern museums, which guarantee unique experiences, offer sensations, thoughts, and satisfaction impossible to find anywhere else, I would like to stress the positive aspect of reconstructing the past, the possibility of the immersive “going back in time” to a different era and a different place (Kotler and Kotler 1998, 3-5). Hence, I would like to argue against the belief that landscape reconstructed on a museum scale is *de facto* a static image—a fake, almost prosthetic form of the past, a still life

(Buchli 2002, 13), an incomplete version of the original that lacks the auratic atmosphere of the past centuries (Ouzman 2006, 274).

Unfamiliar landscape—Catalonian mines

Archaeological visualizations created with the use of new technologies such as augmented reality, holographic dioramas, and simulations are currently the leading ways of representing the past in museums, interpretation centers, and archaeological sites. Through visual and attractive depictions of ancient times, new media guarantees access to common cultural heritage, which for a significant part of society seems to be otherwise invisible (Květina 2015). Thereby, modern technologies serving the popularization of archaeology fulfil the postulated democratization of our heritage (Ziębińska-Witek 2014, 17). Traditional methods of presenting archaeology, usually related to displaying the objects of material culture in showcases, are being replaced by new, often impressive and aesthetic forms of representation that engage the audience and provide an immersive experience of the past. They are made possible thanks to telematics—namely, the capacity to technically produce sensory experiences as a result of interacting with multimedia exhibits (Pawleta and Zapłata 2011, 352). Attractive and engaging ways of presenting archaeology in museums operating with new technologies also has significant value in theoretical terms; it encourages the redefinition of past landscapes, objects, and lives. Danuta Minta-Tworzowska notes that crossing the line between virtual reality and the real world changes the sense of archaeology and conjures prehistoric worlds (Minta-Tworzowska 2011, 326). These reconstructed landscapes of the past consist of fragmentary archaeological remains supported by technological improvements.

The role of simulation and virtual reconstructions in the popularization of archaeology should not be understated, especially in regards to those elements of the past that are unreachable and that often seem to be unbelievable or inconceivable. Thus, the most ancient of times are also the most difficult to comprehend—the vision of the stone age, with its lack of written records, seems incomplete, often intelligible only to a researcher of material culture, and not so to an ordinary recipient. The lack of written records renders the task of reconstructing the past especially challenging. That is why simulations, visualizations, and multimedia representations of the past that facilitate attractive and comprehensible presentations of that specialized knowledge prevail in conveying those esoteric visions of the Paleolithic, Mesolithic, or Neolithic.

The exhibition in Parc Arqueològic Mines de Gavà, located near Barcelona, is a great example of a prehistoric landscape reconstructed and then opened to the public. The exhibition in the Catalonian interpretation center concerns the Neolithic mines found there, once used to extract variscite. To this day the rocky massif overlooks the city, and because of that, spreading the history of the local

landscape falls within the purview of the institution. A visit to the interpretation center begins with an exhibit that presents vegetation typical for the coastal area in the Neolithic. Then, the visitor enters a dark room where, with the use of multimedia screens, they can participate in “time travel.” A simulated explosion and metaphorical return to the stone age creates the impression of diving into the past. Next, the visitor goes into an open, hall-like space containing reconstructions of parts of the mine, which present various aspects related to its operation. There is a multimedia diorama located in the natural environment section—a special exhibit that provides information on the prehistoric landscape. People and animals appear on a static background, which presents vegetation typical for Catalonia. The voice accompanying the diorama talks about the type of landscape, animal species, and human exploitation of the environment. The diorama plays an educational role—it illustrates how the local environment has changed. Numerous comparisons to the modern environment allow the visitor to situate themselves relative to that bygone world.

Archaeological landscape in its musealized form—the multimedia diorama concerning the Neolithic environment along with reconstructed gords, towns, settlements, and caves—not only educates, by bringing cultural heritage closer to society, but it also encourages further reflection upon the role of museums relative to the cultural and environmental reality of the past. In this context, the motivations for creating the interpretation center in Gavà are also important—the willingness to preserve and secure this particular archaeological site and its natural landscape against the elements and intensive tourism, which could spoil this precious rarity.¹ The small-scale replica of part of the mine, enriched by attractive educational materials, makes this endangered and difficult to imagine landscape available.

Immersive landscape—a walk down the streets of medieval Cracow

Another approach to archaeological landscape is presented in museums with narration based on material evidence, written sources, and multimedia aids. Rather than playing a compensative role, new technologies are meant to complement the impression of being totally immersed in the past. This complex way of experiencing

¹ A case of violation and *de facto* destruction took place in Lascaux cave, which constitutes an emblematic example of an archaeological site from the stone age. The Paleolithic cave from the time of Magdalenian culture (17,000–15,000 BC) was accidentally discovered in 1940. It was almost completely covered in images presenting animals; because of its exceptional archaeological and artistic value, it was added to the UNESCO World Heritage List. The cave was closed to the public in 1963 due to destruction caused by water vapor and carbon dioxide. 20 years later an identical copy was opened just next to the cave; recently it has been enhanced with photogrammetric prints, which accurately recreate the interiors of the precious original. Access to Lascaux II, the ideal copy of the Aquitanian cave, is limited to 2500 visitors a day, which, according to Steven Ouzman, speaks for the great success of the reconstruction and indicates that it has become a monument of equal status to the original, see Ouzman (2006, 271–77).

the past is realized at a permanent exhibition in Cracow's Rynek Underground. Since opening, the exhibition has been very popular among foreign tourists as well as residents of Cracow (Stefanik and Kamel 2013, 13). The main exhibit concerns the center of Cracow in the Middle Ages.

The visit to the underground museum—located in the heart of this historic city, under Sukiennice (the Cracow Cloth Hall)—begins by entering a dark hall through a multimedia curtain. Just like in the Catalonian interpretation center, the visit commences with a rite of passage (Duncan 1995), with time travel. In a narrow corridor that leads to the main display area, there are two videos that convey the bustling atmosphere of the Cracow market—a loud woman encourages buying her products, we can hear hoofbeats and carriages passing by. From the corridor the visitor enters the actual exhibition—an area arranged with the use of archaeological material evidence and multimedia. The whole room is submerged in darkness; the chants of monks, sounds of the bells of the St. Mary's Basilica, and noise from the market come through the speakers. The visitor walks on the original medieval paving, on which stand showcases with relicts and virtual aids. There are also noteworthy large-scale reconstructions and spatial arrangements. Cracow workshops and stalls are positioned along paved alleys to ensure a comprehensive experience of a walk around the medieval city. The visitor has an opportunity to get a glimpse of each of the stalls, which renders the experience more realistic. The exhibition also includes a multimedia diorama, which presents some market square buildings burning down; the visitor can stand on the original paving and observe the fire consuming the wooden architecture while listening to the sounds of falling timber. Altogether, the experience of the medieval landscape is influenced by the following components: original material evidence, full-scale arrangements, and realistic sound effects conveying the bustle of the city.

This attractive format, being far from traditional archaeological exhibitions that present showcases with fragmental relicts and unintelligible descriptions, results from a complex approach to the subject. The cultural landscape of medieval Cracow, otherwise inaccessible to modern tourists and residents, becomes tangible, while the interactive, sensorially engaging, and kinesthetic character of the exhibition communicates the atmosphere of the Middle Ages in the former capital of Poland. The experience of the past in the Cracow museum is therefore built with the use of the same epistemic tools that we employ when learning about natural or urban landscape. One's position, listening to the sounds, watching—all of that forms a complete experience of the natural landscape as well as landscapes long past, recreated and musealized.

Museum landscapes

The above examples of musealization of archaeological landscapes differ between each other in terms of time frame, location, and presentation. The Catalonian mines, despite their strong presence in the local landscape, are closed to visitors because they could threaten this precious archaeological site. In the case of the center in Gavà, the musealization of the landscape—the relocation of a significant part of cultural heritage, which is present and at the same time unavailable—has a compensatory character. A very different manner of dealing with a bygone landscape was adopted by Rynek Underground in Cracow; it exhibits all that is gone, that is unperceivable in the modern urban tissue, and that constitutes a vital element of the historical identity of the city. Hence, musealization serves to reconstruct that which is inaccessible, made so by the passage of time. Regardless of the glaring differences between these briefly described forms of musealization, they all reconstruct inaccessible cultural heritage and, at the same time, indicate how broadly the museum landscape can be understood.

The great number and variety of museum landscapes—presenting the natural environments of people, urban tissues, the interiors of settlements, and gords—semantically opens the very notion of landscape. What makes this process of semantic acquisition even more dynamic are the relocated elements of heritage that enter modern landscapes and transform them into places of memory (Minta-Tworzowska 2013). Taking into account the active, sometimes even autopoietic character of musealized landscapes, it is difficult to consider them static, fake, or auraless representations of the past—shortcomings that they are often accused of having. Victor Buchli, in regards to the process of musealization of archaeological heritage, stresses that the sensory experience of artifacts and interaction with the museum exhibits become flattened (Buchli 2002, 13). According to Buchli, archaeological exhibitions are nothing more than still lifes, devoid of the possibility of experiencing the past through sensory involvement (Buchli 2002, 13). Buchli accuses museums of destructive conduct that leads to stripping exhibits of their meaningful materiality coming from, among others, their archaeological context. His opinion is deeply rooted in the belief that museums provide a secondary, and therefore artificial, context to the exhibits and that a neutral method of presentation leads to perceiving the artifacts as static and bereft of meaning (Saumarez-Smith 1989, 6; cf. Ouzman 2006, 274).

Buchli's conviction concerning the petrification of archaeological objects that takes place in museums seems to be outdated in regards to many modern exhibitions. Engaging and immersive exhibitions, like those described above in Gavà and Cracow, incorporate measures that dynamize the meanings of the past, while the originals and the copies of the artifacts authenticate the experience. Yannis Hamilakis, the author of *Archaeology and the Senses: Human Experience, Memory,*

and *Affect*, notes that material evidence from the past attests to the passage of time and completes the recreated landscapes of memory (Hamilakis 2013, 198). It is usually blended into the exhibition, inconspicuous and uninteresting when contrasted with multimedia exhibits, but its presence, visible signs of the passage of time, and Benjamin's "aura" provide a degree of authenticity to the experience of bygone places. Thus, objects included in complex reconstructions not only prove the accuracy of the vision of the past presented in a museum, but also gain new meanings given to them by curators and visitors. The sensory cognition that accompanies museum landscapes is one of the factors that make visitors subjectify their impressions of the past. Hence, I do not perceive musealization of landscape as petrification, "still life"; on the contrary, the elements that once formed the cultural landscape, now inaccessible and "dead," are dynamized in museums, animated and revived, and thanks to the sensory engagement of the visitors they acquire new meanings. Like Forte, we could even think of musealization as a process that structures and orders the experience of the past. The Italian archaeologist sees in landscape simulation a type of frame for experiencing what is illustrated by a transparent scheme, in which, thanks to the recipient, museum landscape becomes a creative medium with meaning- and culture-forming potential (Forte 2007, 401).

Ideal replicas of cities, gords, and necropolises presented in museums are accused of being illusive and deceptive (Ouzman 2006, 274) by suggesting that the museum vision of the past is always incomplete, crippled, and inferior. At the same time, we forget that the recreated landscapes, regardless of the measures taken in the process of their reconstruction, present that which is completely inaccessible. The possibility of presenting complex structures, surroundings, and environments is of great significance in education. Individual archaeological objects, actuated within multimedia structures, are rendered intelligible, and the vision of the past is made slightly more coherent. Musealized landscapes cannot be considered ideal visions of the past, but rather "shadows" of the past. And just as shadows, they are only a contour, a vague form of the past, but at the same time an active, animated, and engaging one. Neil and Philip Kotler, quoted at the beginning, note that the task of modern museums is to provide visitors with unique experiences—modern exhibition forms, which are immersive and autopoietic, completely realize this task by not only cultivating the memory of bygone landscapes, but also by participating in their subjective redefinition, and enabling unforgettable interactions and experiences.

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III. Film and photography



Photogenic qualities of aquatic landscapes in the works of Roman Polański

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Abstract

In his debut feature film, *Knife in the Water* (1961), and then in the subsequent films *Cul-de-sac* (1966), *Pirates* (1986), *Frantic* (1988), *Bitter Moon* (1992), *Death and the Maiden* (1994), and *The Ghost Writer* (2010), Roman Polański uses the element of water in a significant way. It is particularly interesting when water is visible and constitutes a crucial element of the films' narrative—woven from water images and aquatic landscapes. So, how do aquatic landscapes function in Polański's films? I believe that he develops his individual film style in which the element of water—its being filmed—both emphasizes the protagonists' motivation, often conditions it, and is also a very important detail which shapes images and, therefore, affects the aesthetics of those images. Does a specific kind of aesthetics created by aquatic landscapes—which are characterized by a particular form of photogeneity—exist? Polański certainly does not use common visual *clichés*. The beauty of his aquatic landscapes is of a different type. They are interesting, original, non-intrusive, yet noticeable—even if they do not dominate the whole image. The text follows the director's visual strategies which prove the photogenic potential of his films. I argue that this photogeneity—stemming from, *inter alia*, aquatic landscapes—determines the attractiveness of Polański's films.

Key words:

aquatic landscapes, film, Roman Polański, photogeneity

Roman Polański's films are full of aquatic motifs. They are visible in both his first short student film, *Two Men and a Wardrobe* (*Dwaj ludzie z szafą*, 1958), and later in the rest of his artistic output wherever the theme of water reappears. In his debut feature film, *Knife in the Water* (*Nóż w wodzie*, 1961), and then in the subsequent films *Cul-de-sac* (1966), *Pirates* (1986), *Frantic* (1988), *Bitter Moon* (1992), *Death and*

the Maiden (1994), and *The Ghost Writer* (2010), Roman Polański uses the presence of water in a significant way. At first glance, the director seems to have a special attitude (not necessarily a sentimental one) toward this element. Water appears in many of his films—and not always in the same manner. Sometimes it can be almost transparent. However, much more often, it appears in a very fundamental and ubiquitous way, becoming an element which determines both the story and the protagonists' behavior. Regardless of the way it features in the films, whether it is “only” a motif, “an ornament,” or a broad wave flowing into the space of the frame, water gives meanings to the images. In this study, I am particularly interested in the cases where water is visible and constitutes a significant element of the narrative, which is woven from water images and aquatic landscapes. So, how do aquatic landscapes function in Polański's films? I believe that he has developed his individual cinematic style in which the element of water—its being filmed—both emphasizes the protagonists' motivation, often conditions it, and also constitutes a very important detail shaping images and, therefore, affects the aesthetics of those images. So, is there a specific kind of aesthetics created by Polański's aquatic landscapes? The aesthetic approach in this case is associated with a cultural understanding of “film landscape.” This type of thinking is represented by Ilona Copik (2017, 50):

If, in the context of film landscape, I mention a kind of sense commitment, it refers not so much to a form of participation in the cinema as a cultural institution or in the diegesis, to participation based on ‘involving’ the viewer in the diegetic space, but to ‘entering the image,’ meaning recognition of problems addressed in the film in connection with the landscape, identification-projection of problems, and—as a result of these steps—generating feelings, emotions, and activities triggering the need to involve oneself in reality.

The above reasoning clearly unveils not only the intention to approach film landscape from an aesthetic perspective (although it is already clearly exposed), but also (or particularly) to put the emphasis on the consequences that film landscape has on recipients.

Photogeneity can be understood as a variation of film poetics, or it can lead to a characteristic type of reflection upon the specificity of film as art. This type of reflection is derived from the first decades of the 20th century and is characteristic of the theorists and creators of the *avant-garde* in the 1920s and 30s. On the one, hand they wished to solve the mystery of the new cinematic medium: its potential rooted in the power of motion and stillness; on the other hand, however, they wanted to create reality in a new way by means of this medium. Slowed shots, almost motionless frames with slowly flowing or almost standing water or—on the contrary—presentation of the power of water constitute the essence of a kind

of photogeneity particular to film, the essence of cinema itself. This uniqueness of film as a medium was already noted in film theory in the 1930s—which recognized, in the specificity of movement and its skillful usage, the essential feature of film art characterized by photogeneity. I presume that this photogeneity stemming from, *inter alia*, aquatic landscapes determines the visual attractiveness of Polański's films.

Previous research on the visual nature of Polański's works has usually been conducted from the perspective of creating space and exposing its typical features: closed/open space or the symbolism of significant places. That research has also included studies of landscape—in this case the problems of symbolism and meanings of landscapes presented by Polański have usually been discussed. Mariola Dopartowa (2003) explored some aspects of space and symbolism in her *Labirynt Polańskiego* (Polański's labyrinth) by emphasizing the theme of fire, blood, and water while interpreting infernal landscapes. "In films, photos destroy space and cutting destroys time" (Dopartowa 2003, 35)—Polański's words incite reflection on reality in his films, on the status of reality, which we normally accept as spectators with the naive childlike belief that it is not subjected to creation. Although he offers a kind of reality that—according to Dopartowa—seems simple, it "actually contains a Baroque richness of small details characteristic of the director's view of reality" (Dopartowa 2003, 34). Having that in mind is crucial for the shots of landscape, which play a role going far beyond decorum or background in his films. These landscapes are defined by Andre Gardies (1999, 148) as expressive, narrative, and connotational and which also introduce a discursive quality (e.g., the so-called inner landscape). In my opinion, however, in order to define the function of Polański's landscapes, it would be most appropriate to use the notion of a "landscape-catalyst", as having an impact on other elements of diegesis and characters in particular. What distinguishes it from other types of landscapes—also leading to changes in diegesis—is its active nature: "It is a component of diegesis evoking the production of another element or transforming another component of the same diegesis Landscape-catalyst is such a component because of its being perceived by the protagonist; it is a factor of this transformation" (Gardies 1999, 149). I think that Polański can be listed among the artists (Bergman, Fellini, Herzog, Godard, Gus van Sant, Kiarostami) who treat landscape as a crucial element of their artistic output, therefore the development of a certain artistic *continuum* forming a type of ideal map, a geography of style, can be traced. Such an imagined geography allows for a journey—not only for the characters in the film, who are usually in motion in Polański's films—but also for the viewers. Because the viewers survey various topographies through similarity of corresponding landscape images (the notion is used by Maurizia Natali [1996] to define film landscapes because landscape in film is never aesthetically clean or semiotically homogeneous, it constitutes a configuration founded by phantom similarities), they also syncretize landscape in visual

continuity in Polański's films (from *Knife in the Water* to *Pirates* and *The Ghost Writer*, through *Cul-de-sac* and *Death and the Maiden*). Therefore, recognizing the landscape dominant, the fact that the landscape is constructed, that it is a kind of performance within the film, they participate in the discursive strategy proposed to them by the director. It is also characteristic that Polański cleverly avoids creating "postcards"; he does not treat film images as postcards, even when he locates the plot in very conventional landscapes which can be *clichés*, for example, in Paris, Los Angeles, or on the ocean. It is actually difficult to claim with complete confidence that the landscapes seen through Roman Polański's lens are pretty—in the sense of being pleasant to the eye, enchanting in a way they could be if they were presented by someone else, as Polański, after all, does not use common illustrative *clichés*. The beauty of his aquatic landscapes is of a different type. They are interesting, original, non-intrusive, yet noticeable—even if they do not dominate the whole image. And here the subject of photogeneity comes into focus.

Viewers stubbornly want to see reality in Polański's film images. The presented landscape may unfortunately support this tendency among viewers. However, the landscape turns out to be more abstract (that is, constructed) than it seems. Fragmented, tailored to the needs of characters trapped in difficult relationships or memories, of protagonists about to make serious choices, shaped in order to act inside the film—the landscape transforms characters by affecting both the plot and the actions performed by characters who are trapped on a yacht, a ship, or an island, who are survivor-like characters. The weather usually did not fall in line with Polański's plans concerning seasons of the year and expected weather conditions (the warmest winter in *The Ghost Writer* resulting in unwanted sunny views or freezing cold weather in *Cul-de-sac*, or a storm which damaged the ship in *Pirates*). Therefore, it was necessary to create landscapes in a fragmented manner, sometimes using studio or digital techniques.

In culture, water usually has the power to purify and renew, to transform in order to become someone better, someone in a new incarnation. While discussing the meaning of water in Polański's films, I will briefly (because motifs of water in terms of landscape and aesthetics are not significant here) refer to a concise conclusion drawn by Dopartowa who states that "Polański uses the motif of water in order to construct a reversed world . . . , when it appears on the screen it announces a misfortune or signals that what the viewers see has a hidden dark side" (Dopartowa 2003, 73). While focusing on the struggles of film characters accompanied by water, one may claim that the presence of this element certainly has an impact on the characters' behavior and even on their lives. Not only via metaphorical expression in important but discrete components of the constructed world (non-landscapes), but in very clear spaces which are determined by water reservoirs. After a very difficult cruise in horrible weather, in pouring rain, and in the atmosphere of a thriller, the protagonists of *Knife in the Water* reveal the dark side of their personality.

A completely new, and thus unpredictable, disposition emerges in the extreme conditions of an aquatic landscape of horror. At the same time, however, it turns out that the experience of the, in a way, fatal cruise does not have repercussions later—as if the *status quo* is restored, the weather changes, the environment changes (no longer on the water), and they, as if nothing happened, return to their lives before the storm. Apparently, nothing changed, even though the suspension of action in the final scene of the film is unambiguous in terms of the future of each protagonist and their relationship. It is clearly summarized in the final scene depicted in a photogenic shot in which a car is standing at a crossroad in pouring rain. The car seemingly imprisons the protagonists, who perhaps want to understand what happened and start their lives together once again. The violation of a relationship between two people through a third person's intrusion and an inability to leave due to weather conditions, to being on the water or in the middle of water flowing around the characters, is a common state of affairs in Polański's films, for instance in *Cul-de-sac*, *Pirates*, *Death and the Maiden* or *The Ghost Writer*. Tadeusz Lubelski, while reaffirming the perfectionism of Polański's directing, noticeable as early as in *Knife in the Water*, makes an observation about the two games the artist plays with the audience: an intratextual game based on rivalry between genres or change of characters' status and an extratextual one. In the latter, a significant role is played by the confinement of space to a yacht; the sense of encirclement is strengthened by the downpour, storm, and water flowing into the protagonists' lives and making them both unveil their complexes or fears and doubt their own position. Lubelski believes that such a directing of confinement is essentially a demonstration of one's own artistry: "in Kawalerowicz's and Polański's films, the necessity of performing the whole intrigue in the limited space of a train or yacht enforces a kind of proficient virtuosity, especially in the field of cinematography and cutting" (Lubelski 2000, 181). He stresses the fact that the realization of the debut full-length feature film was "a gamble" for the young artist wanting to make films abroad. This type of specific self-constraint is also visible in Polański's mature work, becoming at the same time a trademark of his output. His films lack epic stories, even his works not confined to dramas featuring three characters (such as adaptations of theater plays) are not spectacular in their nature. Polański's characters struggle alone against the elements, diseases, relationship breakdowns, and interpersonal difficulties. Moreover, the author's undoubted commitment to aquatic landscapes, returning to the possibilities provided by locating a film's action in severely scenic and significant bodies of water, make his films take on universal characteristics and a unique kind of photogeneity.

After all, photogeneity in the most original approach is based on the analysis of films—the concept and its definition are derived from this kind of commitment among artists. Already in the 1920s, *avant-garde* artists noticed and used the fact that film and photography, owing to new techniques, produce an extraordinary

effect in comparison to a natural effect. On the one hand, photogeneity is an ability to use the properties of a photo-chemical image—the photosensitivity of certain substances. On the other hand, it also identifies a poetic or aesthetic quality characteristic of certain people or objects that are revealed through an image by strengthening that quality. Therefore, one of the originators of the concept and, at the same time, a filmmaker—Jean Epstein—was mainly fond of natural landscapes dominated by images of water, rough sea, or raging waves crashing on a shore. Such images were present in his most spectacular film, *Storm-Tamer (Le Tempestaire, 1947)*, in which the director presents an exemplification of the phenomenon of photogeneity in film, suggesting that the most beautiful results are achieved by filming meteorological phenomena such as rain, storms, or the fury of the sea. The theoretical trend represented by Epstein is defined as poetic by Jacques Aumont (2002, 78). Aumont finds features of film photogeneity in texts authored by Epstein, like *Bonjour le cinéma (Good Morning, Cinema, 1921)*. Initially, he noticed it in the master shot, a shot which is so characteristic of films and is referred to as “the soul of cinema.” However, it is not a sufficient condition for photogeneity because Epstein claimed that the essence of photogeneity is lability, ephemerality, transience. It is associated with speed, so it is fast and fugitive; “photogeneity is characterized by movement and simultaneous change in space and time” (Aumont 2002, 78). Epstein paid a lot of attention to the uniqueness of film time because he thought that cinema gives a new, so far unknown, definition of time. Both the continuous and the discontinuous is completely changed by the phenomenon of cinematography, which—due to subjectivity and arbitrariness—processes these two phenomena; according to Epstein, cinema is a machine producing time (Aumont 2002, 29).

Louis Merzeau (2003), while reinterpreting the phenomenon of photogeneity from the contemporary point of view in his work *De la photogénie (On photogeneity)*, stresses the importance of the unusual properties of the image which condition the appearance of the photogenic effect. He believes that the desired effect is achieved only through the relation between nature and technology, and “thus photogeneity is a matter of illusion and projection” (Merzeau 2003, 201). The art of techniques—play of light, blackout, angles of view, perspective, shots, optical special effects—create photogeneity. It is rather a matter of movement than a completely stable image; it refers to the mobile aspects of the world; it is located in something imperfect, unstable, in an attempt to change an existing status without achieving it. Faces or objects are not photogenic in themselves, but their variations, avatars, and technical processing (there is also numerical photogeneity) by means of a film camera can be. An object does not necessarily have to be beautiful to be photogenic—on the contrary, it may be ugly and photogenic nonetheless. If film images are too sublime, too beautiful, they turn into *clichés* which are used all over the world as the simplest form of identification of film *milieu*. Polański’s aquatic landscapes are far from aesthetical *clichés*: his landscapes make spectators think,

they confront both characters and viewers with boundary, often life-threatening, situations.

Eric Thouvenel's (2010) *Les images de l'eau dans le cinéma français des années 20* (*Images of water in the French cinema of the 1920s*) is very interesting and visionary in the context of reflection upon photogeneity. The author emphasizes that photogeneity as well as—which is worth stressing in Polański's output—the aesthetical dimension of film landscape seen as something far more than a setting (which was obvious for Delluc, L'Herbier and, Flaherty) were born along with images of water in film. Images of aquatic landscapes then became a medium of artistic strategies in films. He notes four procedures in Epstein's works (Thouvenel 2010, 206) which—due to the shots of water and photogenic quality of the landscapes—enable one to understand time and to define cinematic space. The most important measure is slowing down movement by means of waves and making the film time unreal, for example through a blurred image. I would like to pay particular attention to this aspect because of the association of the image of water, of aquatic landscapes, with time: slowing down passing time due to the film images of water. At the same time, it promotes the need to focus on what is here and now in the film, on relations which are at the center of interest of filmmakers such as Polański. Photogeneity is the concept which at first determines certain traits. It points to the beauty of the film image resulting from the impact of technology on nature, whether it be a face or a landscape. The author also highlights the relation between shots of water and the film rhythm; each film is characterized by a kind of liquidity. Therefore, as Thouvenel suggests while slightly generalizing conclusions from his analysis of French *avant-garde* films, it is “a change defined by spatiality, it stresses changes but its structure is always similar ... because each shot is a composition of a certain amount of various photograms, fixed images which create an illusion of movement during a projection” (Thouvenel 2010, 221). In the context of aesthetic and artistic revaluations, this quite obvious conclusion leads to privileging water as an element of the film landscape, due to its nature revealing or strengthening analogies to the very essence of cinema.

Dominique Avron notes that water in its various forms (also as a jellylike substance) appears in all the films Polański made, but it does not possess the dimension of a life-giving power; it is rather linked to murders—it leads to them or constitutes an imitation of death (Avron 1987, 43). Polański's landscape is omnipresent—it is a landscape of apartments, as well as of urban or natural landscapes. If water is part of the landscape, it has a significant meaning and is interesting from an aesthetical perspective which implies perception of images, the sensory presence of a distant and framed world in motion. Our understanding of a film landscape often oscillates between a window and a frame, at the same time, when going beyond this opposition, the landscape becomes an ambivalent subject (Tröhler 2019). There is no natural landscape in film; there cannot be one because cinema itself is a trick—it

is something artificial, created. It is something determined by an artificial frame, yet, at the same time, it suggests the limitlessness of the world beyond the frame. This condition is met by aquatic landscapes in Polański's films mentioned above, where—despite the extraordinary precision of the frame composition, the focus on characters' activities usually present in the frame—owing to the camera work, it seems that there is something more beyond the visible, something vast. Such is the landscape which suggests an important space in which something takes place and which is not shown directly on the screen. Wide shots in which the aquatic landscape dominates—a yacht somewhere in the distance, a man trapped in a car in vast space flooded by high tide, a house being swept by the wind and drenched with heavy rain on an island where one can get lost, and finally the most *cliché* of landscapes—the shots of the sea in *Pirates* where the director juggles iconographic stereotypes of genre cinema, taking up a game with the viewers. Roman Polański perfectly constructs frames by operating the camera in such a way as to capture the actors' mobility, their movements within a frame. He goes beyond the frame yet at the same time applies Carl Dreyer's golden rule (Avron 1987, 75), which claims that the eye gets attached to objects in motion, and it is passive in relation to the still ones. As a result, the viewer's eye follows travelings and other movements within the film image with pleasure. The camera work in Polański's films is at the service not only of the characters but also the construction of landscapes, which are open for the characters. I do not want to use the common formulation that space or landscape is a character on par with human characters; in Polański's films, the landscape simply is and plays an important role both from the point of view of dramatic narrative and aesthetics. Attachment to water as a motif, theme, emotional trigger, or landscape in Polański's works interestingly corresponds with the usage of long shots and travelings which further strengthen the impression of pervasive liquidity and the lability of the world. Moreover, the characters of the discussed films (even "trapped," immobilized) do not remain still for too long. If they talk, they are usually shot from the back, a bit from the side, or a fragment of their back and three quarters of their face is shown (e.g., dialogues on the "Christine," a yacht whose size almost necessitates such shots), which introduces changes of perspectives—a continuous movement within the frame, often powered by the movement of water, waves, surface vibrations, and pouring rain. It seems that Polański's characters are on a continuous journey. However, according to Avron, since his first films, the director has had a particular predilection for maintaining the unity of place and action. Of course, it is not always done in the same way; however, one may get the impression that the characters are "still," in that something comes to them and changes the circumstances of their lives. They are on "an immobile journey" (Avron 1987, 53). Changes occur around them, and they spin around in circles and return to the starting point (*Two Men and a Wardrobe*, *Knife in the Water*, *Frantic*, *Dance of the Vampires*). Photogenic aquatic landscapes strengthen

the sense of change, duration, and the passage of time—due to their paradoxical nature of flow trapped in the film frame. According to James Greenberg, an almost theatrical and artificial frame is seething with emotions owing to proper use of lights, camera movements, and music. Shots are composed as if they were paintings, and the scene where a young character is hanging overboard the yacht and running on the surface of water to the rhythm of jazz music constitutes the quintessence of cinematic movement (Greenberg 2013, 6). The concentration of characters (usually three of them) in a small space is emphasized by the vastness of the landscape in which they are placed and with which they cope. The more open space surrounds the characters, the more the vastness and openness of aquatic landscapes (somewhat paradoxically) strengthens the sense of encirclement and confinement. And the characters being placed on a yacht, a cruise ship, a sinking wreck of a pirate ship, or on an island surrounded by raging water means they cannot get to the open space. It is as if water and a severe landscape featuring dark blue firmament, pouring rain and wind, or swimming sharks trigger the worst in the characters, who are driven to murder, to think about it, or are otherwise entangled in killing somebody through their profession as a gangster (*Cul-de-sac*) or a pirate, an unexplained death (*The Ghost Writer*), settling of scores from the past (*Death and the Maiden*), or lovers' tragic finale during a New Year's cruise (*Bitter Moon*) as well as competing for an eponymous knife—both a cool gadget and a terrifying object.

Not all of the landscapes in Polański's films are photogenic, and they do not appear in all of his films. However, we often deal with such landscapes thanks to single scenes or shots in which the images of still water, barely moving (which makes it even more disturbing) or penetrating the land (*Death and the Maiden*, *Cul-de-sac*, *The Ghost Writer*) are juxtaposed with the images of severe weather conditions: violent wind, heavy rain, or a storm. Photogenic landscapes are also achieved through the use of appropriate shooting techniques: shots from just above the surface of the water (*Knife in the Water*), creating dark dangerous landscapes, often diluting the image with rainfall, mist above the water, or relying on a mirror effect produced with actual mirrors (*Two Men and a Wardrobe*, *Cul-de-sac*) or by means of reflective surfaces such as wet asphalt. Aquatic landscapes, the water enhanced by their photogeneity, make the situations happening in such circumstances distract from reality, and the stories become universal in their meaning. Avron emphasizes the fact that, due to his aquatic landscapes, Polański evokes an atmosphere of growing "spleen and degeneration" (Avron 1987, 123) among his characters. The movement of water, the photogeneity of landscapes, the long shots and camera travels penetrating the space, and the characters trapped in it extend the time of narration/reception. One of the better examples of a premeditated, slow development of the course of events in the landscapes of the North Sea, which clearly determine characters and moods, is *The Ghost Writer*. The director even plays with the audience,

trying the viewers' expectations for a thriller. There are seemingly minor items: a view out a window on a roaring sea, a figure of a gardener who sweeps an outdoor terrace despite the windy weather, characters' slow walks by the sea, or the ghost writer wandering around an empty house are cumulated at a specific time, and the tension continues to grow. There are no partial discharges of emotions. This, of course, is achieved by the director himself and the cinematographer, Paul Edelman, who creates an almost monochromatic color palette. Greenberg notes that the ocean, the dark sand on the beach, and the footpath around the villa are of the same color, a leaden shade of grey. This color corresponds with the dark, low sky, and it seems that the characters are in confined space, even when they are outside the house (Greenberg 2013, 7). This sense is strengthened by placing the film's action in coastal landscapes, determining the relationships between the characters who are stuck with each other in open wide spaces which amazingly limit their activities. Focusing on the presented situations and the precision of the constructed frames, they clearly have the characteristics of "active framing" (Aumont 2008, 116) that escapes confinement within a mobile picture frame which, at the same time, makes the viewer reflect on it and provides time for this reflection. "Photogeneity not only makes us dwell on the image, it even obliges us to look at the image as a place of stoppage," as Louis Merzeau (2003, 206) writes about the nature of photogeneity.

There is one more aspect in Polański's output which is often highlighted by the experts—the presence of mirrors, reflective surfaces which multiply images and characters, and each character seems to be a reflection of another character. Aquatic landscapes actively contribute to this illusion of the mirror due to the nature of water, as Eric Thouvenel (2010) contends by claiming that water should be privileged as a material of filmed reality because of its optical qualities—its sensitivity to changes in light. At the same time, it reveals itself as a light/dark, transparent/opaque, dark/white matter. In the case of Polański's films, all of the listed functions of water seem to apply: water which acts as a mirror coupled with a set of practices involving reflection, creating illusions, and the effect of absorption—characteristic of the director's output. It functions as a screen where, by using a prism, one can see a complex play of light, and it even functions as a metaphorical tomb, where water conveys moving between worlds. The former functions contribute to creating photogeneity and evoke the effect of the photogeneity of an image, yet it is almost a rule that when images of the sea dominate the screen, the characters lose their lives (*Cul-de-sac*, *The Ghost Writer*, *Bitter Moon*) or come into contact with death (*Two Men and a Wardrobe*, *Knife in the Water*, *Pirates*, *Death and the Maiden*). A completely separate aspect is the photogeneity of a face, which is said to be the landscape of the soul. Polański's cinema is a cinema of relationships, of the observation of human characters, hence why close-ups of characters' faces are so crucial—the effect is strengthened by a vast aquatic landscape. On

the one hand, there is the vast landscape of the sea or lake which enhances the impression of isolation, chaos, fear, and the threat posed by the elements; on the other hand, there are close-ups of characters' faces depicting all of their emotions stemming from the situation they find themselves in.

Roman Polański's cinema is—certainly not only due to the photogeneity of its landscapes but also because of its universal stories—“an intelligent and subjective machine,” as the precursor of cinematic photogeneity, Jean Epstein, wished. Polański's consistency when he tends to locate the action of films in aquatic landscapes, or at least when he uses motifs relating to water, creates a type of iconography unique to the artist. His attachment to water makes it an important element even in the cases where water is not exhibited as part of the landscape. For instance, in *Frantic*, in the scenes of the protagonist's wife being kidnapped, the director shows an empty hotel room from the perspective of the protagonist taking a shower. The viewers cannot see what happened to the woman, instead—through the water pouring from the shower—they see a fragment of the bathroom, the room, and the shower cabin door. The shot is as if taken from Hitchcock's films; the tension rises because the viewers are perfectly aware of the fact that they cannot see something important. Suspense in Polański's films is also created by means of aquatic landscapes and seems to be a standard measure. His characters are people in the process of travelling (often in an immobile way) and for both them and the viewers the landscape becomes a trigger for memories that explode in the middle of the water and force them to confront something. However, the characters are often left without an answer, as if it were postponed in endless suspense.

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Beneath the surface: On the significance of the underground and underwater landscapes in selected documentaries by Werner Herzog

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Abstract

Werner Herzog's films grow out of landscapes. The frames opening his works very often present landscapes whose role goes beyond illustrative or informative functions. Analyzing films such as *Encounters at the End of the World*, *Cave of Forgotten Dreams*, and *Into the Inferno*, the text reconstructs the meanings inscribed in Herzog's underground and underwater landscapes. The journey beneath the surface of spaces dominated by nature usually constitutes an equivalent of the journey into culture in the director's works. In a sense, they are films laced with reflection about experiencing landscapes. What is more, Herzog undertakes his reflections in the realm of documentary cinema, which is firmly entangled with the category of truth. Entering a landscape is therefore a way of reaching truth for the director—however, not objective but “poetic” and “ecstatic” truth, which, according to the creator, has a much more significant quality than mundane facts.

Key words:

Documentaries, Werner Herzog, film, landscapes

Werner Herzog's films grow out of landscapes. This is evidenced not only by many analyses and interpretations of his works, but also by the words of the author who made his relationship with landscape one of the elements of his own biographical legend. The director tells stories about, for example, how he precisely imagined landscapes in which he was supposed to shoot *Aguirre, Wrath of God* (*Aguirre, der Zorn*

Gottes, 1972) although he had never been to Peru before; and then, when he arrived there, he discovered that everything looked exactly the way he had expected: “It was as if the landscapes had no choice: they had to fit to my imagination and submit themselves to my ideas of what they should look like” (Cronin 2002, 81). He is also keen to present the landscape as one of the distinguishing features of his original concept of cinema. For example, when comparing himself to Ingmar Bergman, he observes that the starting point for his films was the human face whereas for himself it is “a landscape, whether it be a real place or an imaginary or hallucinatory one from a dream” (Cronin 2002, 83).

As Matthew Gandy concludes, “for Herzog, landscape is itself a cinematic protagonist” (Gandy 2012, 540). It is difficult to disagree with him given the fact that most of Herzog’s films—including the most famous ones: *Aguirre ...*, *The Enigma of Kaspar Hauser* (*Jeder für sich und Gott gegen alle*, 1974) or *Fitzcarraldo* (1982)—begin with shots of landscapes, and some of the works—such as *Fata Morgana* (1971) or *Lessons of Darkness* (*Lektionen in Finsternis*, 1992)—are almost entirely built of landscape shots. A classification once proposed by Emmanuel Carrère seems relevant to a certain extent—he wrote about a “landscape” trend in Herzog’s output in the context of, *inter alia*, *Fata Morgana*, and juxtaposed it with a “humanistic” trend including films such as *Stroszek* (1977), focusing on the relationships between an individual and society (Carrère 1979, 57). However, the boundaries between the categories are not strict: after all, even in *Stroszek* the empty landscapes of the Midwestern United States fulfil a major role going beyond an illustrative or informative function—the director himself is reluctant to treat film landscapes as mere backgrounds of action (Cronin 2002, 81) and claims that landscapes are the souls of his films, while characters and plot often “come afterwards” (Cronin 2002, 83).

A lot has been written about the importance of landscape in the director’s flagship feature films, such as *Nosferatu the Vampyre* (*Nosferatu: Phantom der Nacht*, 1979) (Wojnicka 1991, 129-143). Nonetheless, the role of landscape in Herzog’s documentary films seems to me more intriguing, as they are involved in the discussion the director carries out according to the idea of documentalism and qualities stereotypically assigned to it, such as the pursuit of objectivity and truth. Although it is true that entering the landscape is a way of approaching the truth in Herzog’s documentaries—it is a special type of truth defined by the director as a “poetic” or “ecstatic” truth which, in his opinion, is much more significant than mundane facts. There is a close relationship between the way in which Herzog perceives landscape and his well-known aversion to *cinéma vérité*—a trend he venomously criticizes and consistently repeats that he would like to dig its grave. In the same way, he does not accept reducing documentalism to presenting facts on the screen; he also opposes understanding landscape as “just a representation of a desert or a forest” (Prager 2007, 11). “A true landscape ... shows an inner state of mind,” he claims

and explains that “it is the human soul that is visible through the landscapes” presented in his films (Ibidem, 11). The origins of such an understanding of landscape are usually traced back to Romanticism. Despite the fact that the director himself, with his characteristic contrariness, often rejected the possibility of this identification, arguing that he was named a German romanticist in “Playboy” magazine (Bachmann 1977, 4), the leading experts in Herzog’s output—such as Brad Prager or Laurie Ruth Johnson—have no doubts that the output is romantic *par excellence*; although—as Joanna Sarbiewska rightly observes—this diagnosis is not sufficient to conclusively determine the specificity of the works (Sarbiewska 2014, 10).¹

At this point, I would like to turn to the meanings inscribed in Herzog’s underground and underwater landscapes. They are relatively rare in the films by the director: most of them can be found in *Encounters at the End of the World* (2007) shot in the Antarctic and in *Cave of Forgotten Dreams* (2010) which presents the prehistoric Chauvet Cave; earlier they had also occasionally appeared in *The Wild Blue Yonder* (2005) and in *La Soufrière (La Soufrière — Warten auf eine unausweichliche Katastrophe, 1977)* shot while waiting for a volcano to erupt, and then they significantly returned in *Into the Inferno* (2016) which was also devoted to volcanoes. As Gandy aptly notes, Herzog has a clear tendency to portray space from a bird’s eye view: shots of a jungle, a desert, or mountain peaks recorded from the deck of a helicopter give the impression of looking at the landscape from the position of an omniscient and all-knowing subject (Gandy 2012, 531). Taking this into account, it seems even more interesting to me to investigate how landscapes whose recording does not allow for such an almost divine point of view—spaces which not only restrict mobility and exploration, but also constrain the view—function in Herzog’s works.

I share Sarbiewska’s view that Herzog is actually a director who believes in reality, and the aesthetics of his films can be related to the category of realism, even though in his documentaries the director significantly interferes with the world presented on the screen. For example, he does not hide that he convinced the deaf and blind protagonist of *Land of Silence and Darkness (Land des Schweigens und Dunkelheit, 1971)* to give a poignant monologue about a ski jump which, in fact, she had never seen. In *Bells from the Deep (Glocken aus der Tiefe — Glaube und Aberglaube in Rußland, 1993)*, the pilgrim attentively crawling on a frozen lake in order to see a city sunken at its bottom was not actually a soulful wanderer but a local alcoholic hired for the purpose of the shot, whereas the quote assigned to Pascal at the beginning of *Lessons of Darkness* was fabricated by Herzog himself, who openly announces that he was often willingly and confidently going as far as to the edge of untruth to expose a more intense form of truth (Pflaum 1979, 59-86). After all, fabrication, imagination, and stylization—categories accentuated in the

1 For more on the subject of the romantic sources of Herzog’s output, see Kempna-Pieniążek (2013, 43-147).

only artistic manifesto of the director so far, *Minnesota Declaration* (1999)—are set against trivial facts as appropriate tools for insight into the essence of things. In short, Herzog believes in reality but he does not believe that the truth about it is contained in the superficial phenomena of the physical world. Herzog's realism is, as Sarbiewska writes, metaphysical realism, realism of substance or deep realism directed towards "disclosure of hidden source layers of being by means of mechanical recording" (Sarbiewska 2014, 17-18). Sarbiewska notes the relation of this attitude to André Bazin's concepts and concludes that the realism of Herzog's "landscape" films "is disclosed mainly in comprehensive, essential, totalitarian shots of reality, usage of staging in depth, and elimination of fragments and randomness, 'stream of life'" (Ibidem, 118). Yet, immediately afterwards, the author adds that "some of the director's films, however, are—in terms of aesthetics—close to realism of the Kracauer type: while extracting areas invisible to the 'naked eye' from material reality, Herzog's camera often focuses on a particular fragment of the physical world and records its autonomous existence" (Ibidem, 118).

Landscapes in Herzog's documentaries are subject to the Bazin-Kracauer concept of realism—on the one hand, they present themselves as essential and total in their own way, on the other hand, they are explored in search of what is invisible to the naked eye. In this context, underwater and underground landscapes are an extreme variant of Herzog's approach to landscape, a specific test of his concept. As such, the landscapes are subjected to the rigor of deep metaphysical realism. This happens even when they are images borrowed in a way—not recorded by Herzog or his full-time cinematographer Peter Zeitlinger but, for example, by Henry Kaiser working as one of the divers in Antarctica or seen through the cameras of the volcanologists observing the activity of Mount Erebus. Herzog does not assign himself the authorship of these photos, however—faithful to the principle saying that landscape can be directed—arranges their presence in his films in accordance with the idea that they should represent something more than just the bottom of the Ross Sea or the interior of a volcano. These landscapes are burdened with hidden symbolism in the spirit of "extraction of inner, spiritual truth from the in-depth study of nature" deriving from Romanticism (Ibidem, 73-74). Although, as Sarbiewska writes, "the truth of being is for Herzog the truth of 'the inexpressible,'" it constitutes itself "in the visible reality," and the film camera is to unveil it (Ibidem, 23).

Hence in *Encounters at the End of the World* the underwater shots of the depths of the Ross Sea are accompanied not only by the director's reflections about the place of man in the universe, but also by Orthodox church music which creates an atmosphere of metaphysical mystery or even a religious concentration. A similar musical counterpoint appears in *Into the Inferno* when the camera eye looks into the crater interior filled with pulsing lava. The mystery of nature and the romantic sublime, however, are only one side of these landscapes; the other is their radical

strangeness. It is said, with some justification, that Herzog's landscapes have elements of lunar landscapes. Johnson notes that the underwater depths depicted in *Encounters at the End of the World* are as unfriendly and devoid of any landmarks as the surface of Antarctica stretching out over them (Johnson 2016, 83); on the other hand, Gandy writes about landscapes of the science fiction type and equates the director's perspective to that of an alien from another world (Gandy 2012, 531). In the essayistic *The Wild Blue Yonder*—having the significant subtitle *A science fiction fantasy* and being a reflection upon life on Earth from the point of view of an alien—the underwater scenery “plays” the role of the protagonist's native planet located somewhere in the Andromeda Galaxy, and the figures of divers captured in the frame are presented as astronauts. Similarly, in *Encounters at the End of the World* Herzog—for many acting as the narrator of his documentaries—uses analogous comparisons: he sees the divers swimming under the ice as astronauts examining an alien world and forces one of his interlocutors to reflect upon the horrors of underwater life, in which, as we hear, microscopic organisms function in a world resembling the one of monster movies. Moreover, the director recalls here an almost direct quote from his *Minnesota Declaration*, in which we can read the following: “Life in the oceans must be sheer hell. A vast, merciless hell of permanent and immediate danger” (Herzog 1999).

Herzog's contemplation of nature never involves the idea of returning to mother nature. The beauty of the underwater shots or spectacular shows taking place in the interiors of craters do not alter the main message of *Encounters at the End of the World* and *Into the Inferno*, in which the director speaks about the inevitable end of humanity. Herzog does not idealize nature, he rather declares that “nature . . . has only the meaning we give it” (Johnson 2016, 84). However, as Johnson notes, the director's films also include the belief that “the images we produce of nature are generated in real encounters with an objective reality whose truth we can only approximate, via the continued creation of images” (Ibidem, 84).

The rigor of deep realism requires striving for precision in constructing. The desire to explore the sphere invisible to the naked eye—mentioned by Sarbiewska—is manifested in the motif of technology in the works discussed here. “For me there is no personal excitement to [entering the crater]. There's curiosity,” Herzog says in *Into the Inferno*, “yes, I would love to see it from close-up.” Possibilities offered by media come to the aid of this desire. In *Encounters at the End of the World*, the director informs the viewers which images were recorded by volcanologists' or divers' modern equipment, and in *Cave of Forgotten Dreams* he comments on the difficult working conditions in the cave with its being under strict protection and shows the effort of recording a part of the rock paintings inaccessible to the public. Because Herzog is a creator believing not only in reality but also in—as he admits—celluloid, he believes in the ability of the camera to see things which elude human perception.

Cave of Forgotten Dreams was distributed as a 3D film. One might wonder why the director chose technology which is now associated with Hollywood blockbusters. In the light of the difficult conditions on the film set—the crew consisting of just four people who were only allowed to move along a strictly designated two-foot-wide sidewalk—the decision to do so seems almost ridiculous. Or is it something more than just Herzog’s irony? According to the director, the Chauvet Cave is not only an area of archaeological research but also an art gallery. With the exception of fragments taking place outside the cave, Herzog’s film resembles visiting an exhibition presenting prehistoric artists’ achievements. At the end of the film, the director compiles the cave paintings in a long sequence which enables contemplation. Moreover, less than fifteen minutes into the film, the director calls the Chauvet Cave a proto-cinema in which the ancestors of today’s humans watched their paintings in the glow of torches not only on flat walls but also on rock formations enabling them to indicate the three-dimensionality of the presented animals, which were often painted with extra limbs, probably to signal that they were on the move. Despite appearances, in *Cave of Forgotten Dreams*, 3D is not merely used to impress the viewers by showing them that they can access interiors of the cave otherwise not open to visitors and that they are taking part in a prehistoric “film screening.” Johnson is convinced that this technology is not presented here as a form in any way greater than Paleolithic painting. It should rather be seen as its extension, reflecting what three-dimensional cave paintings have already achieved (Johnson 2016, 28). This is one of the bridges which Herzog tries to build over the abyss of time separating us from the ancient Chauvet Cave users—it is a form of stating that we, just like them, strive to depict reality in the way we perceive it, that is, in three spatial dimensions and one temporal dimension.

In fact, in Herzog’s films looking into the depths—under water or under the Earth’s surface—is associated with the concept of time. In short, the director is much more interested in the temporality of the spaces than their geography. The hidden symbolism of the underwater and underground landscapes refers mainly to the problem of passing, whereas penetration and contemplation of these landscapes is the equivalent of a journey through time—mainly to the past but also to a potential future. In the films, the long life of nature is juxtaposed with the ephemerality of not just individual existence but also of the whole human species. The form of the film is subject to reflection on the following issue: underwater shots are long and not much happens in them, scenes showing the interior of the Chauvet Cave are also stretched in time; in both cases the camera is not static, however, it tries to imitate a careful, contemplative look. The goal of the above is to be at least a little bit closer to capturing “the eternal time functioning beyond daily, present, specific reality, the non-fabular time liberated from the course of events, situated as if in the recorded universal being” (Sarbiewska 2014, 20). Sarbiewska calls this type of time—quoting Jan Białostocki—the time of pure being, filled

with the “continuous existence of objects or people that do not do anything, that do not move” (Ibidem, 20). We actually know that Kaiser’s shots present divers exploring the bottom of the Ross Sea in search of, *inter alia*, previously unknown species of micro-organisms, and that people exploring the Chauvet Cave are scientists who intensively work on understanding and protecting traces of prehistoric culture. Both the former and the latter are granted a considerable amount of screen time with Herzog frequently interviewing them. Despite this, when captured on the background of the landscape, like characters from Caspar David Friedrich’s paintings, they seem to plunge into stillness, as in one of the scenes in *Cave of Forgotten Dreams* where all of the people in the cave are asked to stop and listen to the sounds of the cave and to the beating of their hearts.

The dynamics of seeing and not-seeing functioning in these landscapes seems crucial. In *Cave of Forgotten Dreams*, Herzog and his crew (and consequently the viewer) are informed that they will not be able to see everything because not all of the cave is accessible. Johnson (2016, 21) compares this situation to one of the threads from *The White Diamond* (2004) in which Herzog’s crew tries to place the camera in a sacred grotto of the indigenous peoples of Guyana, a spot hidden behind a waterfall. Ultimately—out of respect for the people who believe that the place should not be disclosed—the director decides not to show it on the screen. Although the fact that the Chauvet Cave in *Cave of Forgotten Dreams* cannot be presented wholly resulted from different factors, Johnson believes that the effect is basically the same: knowing about the incomplete landscape presented on the screen stimulates imagination, makes us reflect on what is inaccessible to the eye (Ibidem, 21). One might be tempted to add that perhaps new internal landscapes are born in this way.

Herzog is interested not only in the landscape itself or in how it can be read, but also in the ways in which it can be experienced. In *Encounters at the End of the World*, the director speaks about the divers’ impressions of swimming under the surface of the ice as an experience resembling entering a cathedral and—although he previously called them astronauts—he now compares them to priests preparing for mass. Herzog directly discusses the relationship of man with the landscape in *Cave of Forgotten Dreams*, noticing sensitivity to the environment which evokes the ideas of Romanticism in the Chauvet Cave paintings. The director sees the cave paintings not as representations of elements of the physical world but as inner landscapes familiar to him, images of long forgotten dreams. While combining this fact with another hypothesis posed in the film—that in such places the modern human soul was born—one can come to the conclusion that, according to the director, the ability to transform views into landscapes lies at the heart of humanity. Although Johnson believes that the context in which Herzog uses the term “landscape” here is ironic (Ibidem, 26), it still serves as another bridge built over the chasm of time separating us from our prehistoric ancestors.

There is something puzzling in Herzog's relationship with underground and underwater spaces. It seems as though the director almost suffocates in them, is afraid of them, or dislikes them a little; therefore, he tries to expand them and tame them in different ways, for example through the use of 3D technology, listening to the myths associated with lands hidden in the interiors of volcanoes, or imagining a microscale of underwater life as a landscape in a science fiction style. He usually leaves such places rather quickly—both in *Cave of Forgotten Dreams* and *Encounters at the End of the World* he juxtaposes claustrophobic, overwhelming underwater and underground shots with his favorite bird's eye view shots, indicating that the latter is much closer to him than the perspective of a fish or a mole. Nevertheless, these spaces are very important in his documentaries. They are spheres where time flows differently than on the surface, and that is reflected in the strange landscape. It is the birthplace of life and of modern man. It is a reservoir of knowledge about the past and a cradle of forgotten dreams. At the same time, however, their cosmic landscapes symbolize the horror of the radical strangeness of nature indifferent to human actions. Ultimately, these landscapes are in a way pre-apocalyptic. While staring into the blue depths of the Ross Sea and stepping up to the edge of a volcano, Herzog asks about the end of mankind. Will it come from the inside of the Earth, from depths full of hot lava lying beneath our feet? And what will be left? Only the underground tunnels built by researchers under the surface of Antarctica? The title *Encounters at the End of the World* seems to be deliberately ambiguous: it can be interpreted both in spatial terms (Antarctica as the proverbial end of the world) and temporal terms (the time of the encounters may be the time of the end of the world) (Ibidem, 83).

In the context of this film, Johnson writes about Herzog's characteristic dialectics of surface and depth: in the juxtaposition of underwater shots with fragments presenting the ice desert of Antarctica, the author sees a psychoanalytic-like belief that "surfaces ... reveal a great deal about depths ..., but not directly" (Ibidem, 81). Traces of the same dialectics can be spotted in *Cave of Forgotten Dreams* where the depth of the Chauvet Cave and the landscape stretching above it with the well-marked Pont d'Arc correspond with each other, mutually illuminating their meanings. However, the opposition of surface and depth may also be related to Herzog's understanding of image and landscape: what can be seen at first glance is just the beginning; the truth is hidden below. And though it is highly probable that the truth can never be reached, through the effort of going beneath the surface, perhaps it can be approximated—even if just barely.

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KULTUROWE
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KRAJOBRAZOWE

ISSN 2657-327X

Rok wędrującego życia [A Year of a Wandering Life], 2017—2019*

Sławomir Brzoska



Photo. 1

Salar de Uyuni, Bolivia.

* S. Brzoska, *Rok wędrującego życia*, Uniwersytet Artystyczny, Poznań 2017-2019; see B. Frydryczak's review of Brzoska's book in the present volume.



Photo. 2
The Thar Desert, India.

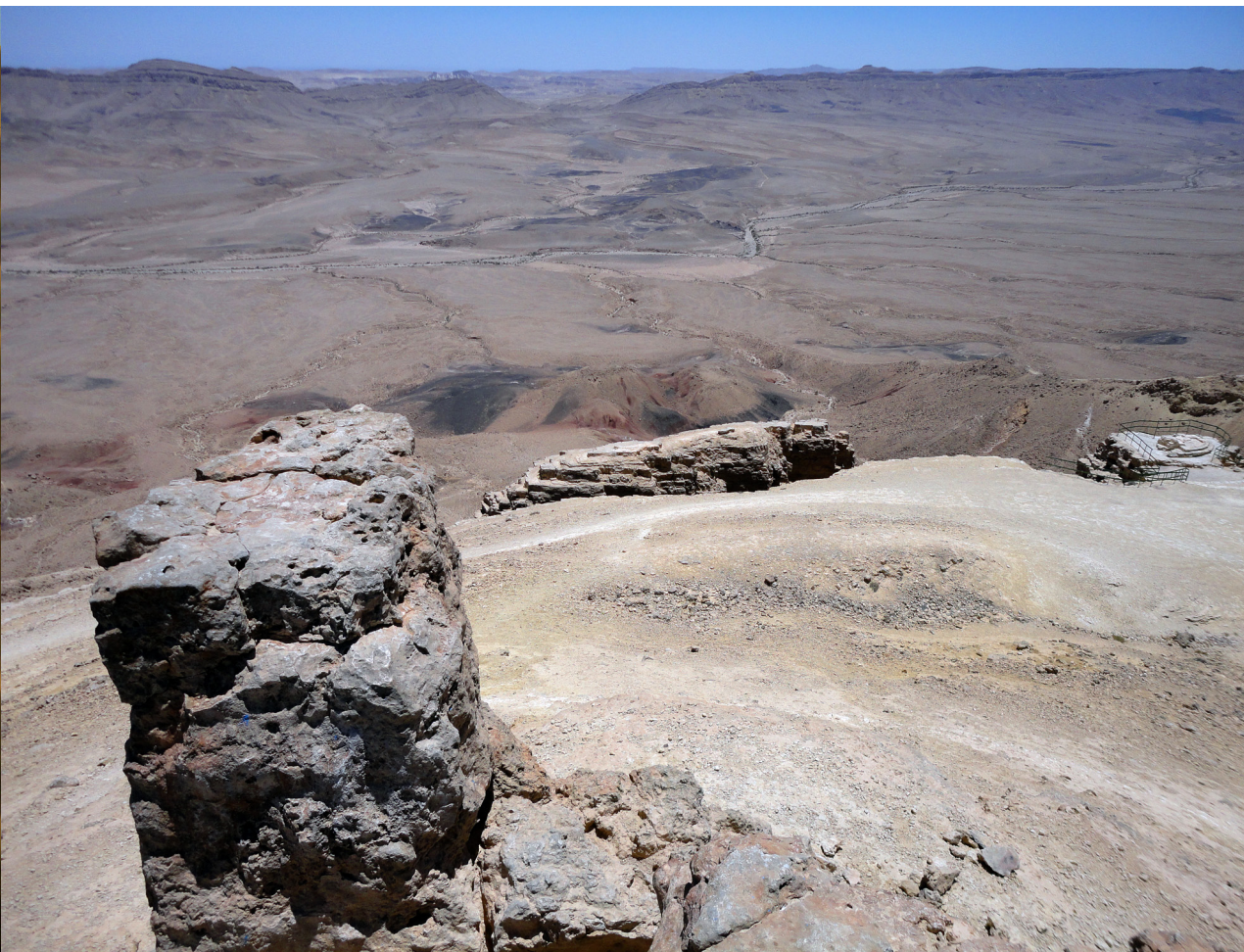


Photo. 3
Negev, Israel.



Photo. 4
A Road, Mauritania.



Photo. 5

Teizent Oasis, Mauritania.



Photo. 6
West Papua.



Photo. 7
Syria.



Photo. 8

A Sketch During the Journey. The Atacama Desert, Chile.



Photo. 9

A Sketch During the Journey. Mount Everest.



Photo. 8
Tibet.

IV. Book review



Sławomir Brzoska, [*A Year of a Wandering Life*], 2 vols., Uniwersytet Artystyczny, Poznań 2017-2019

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The two-volume, richly illustrated monograph by Sławomir Brzoska is a report from a journey around the world that the artist made in 2007—2008. At the same time, the two-volume work is a form of presentation of the artistic endeavor. “Sketches on a Journey” undertaken during the trip, which fits on the borderline of art and life. The artist describes his journey along the highways and byways of South America, Australia, Asia, the Middle East, through cities, secluded spots, and landscapes, although it should be put differently: through people, cultures, experiences, events, and impressions in a situation full of openness to what awaits us on the way, as if we—the readers—were witnessing a performance, with the book becoming its frame. It is difficult to refer to the monograph itself, leaving aside the artistic endeavors which were one of the dimensions of this journey and which contribute important photographic material to both volumes.

Taking into account the description of the course of the journey, the monograph can be classified in a literary genre between reportage and travelogue. In fact, it can be assumed that this is the interpretation which comes to mind first. And this is how it can be read, since it describes all the hardships of the year-long journey undertaken by the author. But that belief would be misleading. It is impossible to think of this monograph as just a report of a trip, even the most spontaneous one which surrenders to the importance of the moment and place. The uniqueness of this narrative lies in the fact that, by combining the many possibilities of its interpretation, it actually shows how the journey takes on the characteristics of what is performative and becomes a wandering: between places, people, experiences, reflections, and observations, transforming itself into what Henryk Bereza aptly calls a form of “life-writing”: rich in meanings, sometimes deeply moving, never

indifferent or objective, because it results from experience rather than observation.

A Year of a Wandering Life is a chronicle of a journey that becomes a wandering, existential metaphor—sometimes metaphysical, leading through light and darkness. This is yet another facet of this book, which takes on expression along with the way the author has travelled. Therefore, it turns out that its content is in fact a road, and the journey becomes an experience, at times of an extreme nature, which is born in motion, with every step, every breath, every place visited, and every person encountered. In the journey undertaken by Brzoska, each chosen path may turn out to be a fate, a place to rest—a threat, and the road itself may lead nowhere: it is determined randomly, day by day, from section to section, without imagining how long one will stay in a given place and what might await the wanderer in the next place. In this sense, the journey described and travelled evokes one of the oldest and most universal metaphors of human life, brought into the canon of a wandering life by Ulysses, who wanted to return home, and by the Wandering Jew, who was looking for a place to live. It was perfectly put by Brzoska: “Throughout these few months of permanent movement, the road ‘sunk’ into me and I became a part of it” (vol. 2, 45). It wasn’t the journey that was the road, it was the traveler who became the road.

Georg Simmel said that a wanderer is someone for whom the road is home: individual places are only stops and the destination remains undefined. This is someone who has not given up the freedom to come and go (“today he comes and tomorrow he stays”). Simmel’s wanderer remains uprooted and has no connection to a specific place in space; he sets off on his way, usually alone, and anonymously arrives in a new place. If we treat this short description as a definition, then *A Year of a Wandering Life* complements it perfectly and represents it: “The essence of this journey was lonely moments, unlimited being vis-a-vis the world, and the more the space around me was wild, lifeless, deserted, rocky, archaic, the more excited I felt” (vol. 2, 217). It is a metaphysical dimension of a journey that takes place not so much in space as in experiencing it through direct and immediate perception, sometimes the experience is of a borderline nature.

This experience is manifested in the signs of presence that the author-artist-wanderer left along his path, which will never return: stones entwined with colored yarn as open signs of his presence and the effect of spontaneous artistic action. With this artistic gesture, the artist entered the landscape, added something of himself to it, and at the same time transformed it, leaving it forever changed. In this action, the colored stone lost its properties and became a minimal work of art from the borderlands of Land Art: the “yarn-stone” became more real than the rock—and through the contrasting color, more material than the desert or rubble.

For Brzoska, wandering is the key to what is existential (life, sometimes on the edge), artistic (art, expressed in spontaneous actions), and topographical (landscape

traversed and contemplated, and at the same time almost touched). These three dimensions interweave with each other, overlap each other so that they become one, as if they deliberately did not allow themselves to be separated, or merge with each other so that it is impossible to see the moment of transition between them—just as it is impossible to determine when a contemplated landscape takes on a tangible character and becomes one in which the wanderer participates according to the rights of all—human and non-human—subjects inhabiting it. Then not only are the eyes full of sights, but all the other senses begin to take part in it: every step, movement of muscles, and gulp of air reflects the essence of the landscape being traversed. The desert landscape takes on a metaphysical nature, opening up unlimited space to itself, but when it invades the eyes and mouth in the form of a sandstorm, it touches the wanderer with every grain of sand; it becomes a tactile impression, according to the principle that “touching means being touched”: it wasn’t he who touched the desert, it was the desert that touched him, it embraced him with its arms so much so that he was left breathless. In such a dimension, life becomes an extremely perceptible value, tasting better and better with every event, with every situation, artistic one as well, which becomes its, life’s, expression. This fragment is significant:

I was fully aware that my feet belonged to the land on which I was standing, and as there was no division between the parts of my body, my guts and hands and head also belonged to this place. The place has no borders. The ground under my feet, which occupies several tens of centimeters, is not separated from what’s next. And so to the horizon and beyond. Thanks to this, even those areas that I have not seen are also part of me and I am part of them. This growing awareness of community and mutual belonging fostered a sense of happiness and I could not wait for the morning to return to the desert again. (vol. 2, 217)

The element that unites it is the topographical experience, which can be born only on the road, not just in the form of recognition of the terrain and its characteristic points, but also of the materiality of the road under our feet, of all the external stimuli that make the impressions take on an exceptional intensity; it is the experience shaped on the road, focused on the details, recognizing the places. The road means abandoning the observation point in order to enter space, to reach a place, to be in the landscape. This essentially practical aspect of being in the landscape is based on the experience of wandering and the difficulty of settling down or undertaking actions designed to create one’s own safe space. Wandering in this aspect is akin to creating space which becomes a space of sensory experience—the more intense the more the place remains a mystery. But it is also a performative experience in which art and life, road and senses, become one.

The key to reading Brzoska’s journey, described in both volumes of the monograph, is the topographic experience inscribed in the encounter with the landscape.

It really determines the rhythm of the trip and the intensity of the feelings that are amplified with each step taken, and sometimes with staying put. For some time—not metric or clockwork but metaphysical, counted by the number of steps, the length of a conversation, or listening to oneself and one’s surroundings - this kind of “encounter with the landscape” requires a form of perception other than a purely visual one, which means that the wanderer has to open himself up to poly-sensory experience, the constant presence of senses, in order for perception to take on an active character and the form of “being in the landscape.” It is a situation where we cannot keep our distance, where we are surrounded by nature and its shaping factors, and it is not indifferent to us. Being in the landscape is a bodily experience that involves all the senses, through smells, sounds, movement, and haptic sensations: when the wind blows through your hair, rain drops fall on your face, your legs get stuck in the mud, or you are soothed by the singing of birds. It is the active presence of the human body in the evaluative experience. Here, as Arnold Berleant says, events are turned into experiences. These in turn create the world that we inhabit. As a wanderer, a human being becomes part of the landscape, and so he is situated *in the landscape*. Wandering allows one to transform an image into smell, sound, and tactile quality. The senses, understood as an integrated sensorium, are primarily active. In topographical experience, we do not abandon perception, but, as Ingold claims, we intensify consciousness. The two volumes of *A Year of a Wandering Life* testify with all openness to this kind of experience.

It is difficult to overestimate the value of this two-volume monograph. It is a type of narrative that comes from deep within. It is extremely personal, sincere, sometimes revealing, but at all times aiming at the truth of the moment and of the impressions. What is more, it is a narrative which attests to excellent writing skills, a knack for the written word, and the ability to weigh every expression. The story is a real page-turner, with the reader waiting for more meetings with people, descriptions of landscapes and places visited, and events and fortuitous incidents. Certainly, it becomes an experience for the reader, and thus opens up another layer of its potential.