

PREFACE

The Cultural Landscape Commission of the Polish Geographic Society is an interdisciplinary scientific forum dedicated to carrying out research, popularization of research approaches and concepts regarding evolution, development and protection of cultural landscape in both regional and general aspect. Currently, the Commission consists of over 50 members and a large group of followers including geographers, landscape architects, cartographers, landscape ecologists, geologists, philosophers, sociologists and psychologists, historians and archaeologists. These people work in different Polish scientific center, research institutes, as well as offices of self-governments of various administrative levels and environmental protection services. That ensures thorough discussion and wide range of possibilities of landscape interpretation, and also gives an opportunity for application possibilities.

The Commission carries out its academic and application objectives and well as organizational and editorial tasks.

Academic tasks of the Commission are interdisciplinary and they include:

- working out concepts of cultural landscape: theoretical-methodological, typological, evolutionary (historic-genetic), or structural-functional aspects);
- systemization and direction of landscape research within main research approaches: classical, physio-geographic, tangible (real), semiotic (symbolic) and aesthetic approaches;
- working out methodological foundations for developing a map of cultural landscapes of Poland and developing such a map;
- analyses and assessments of directions of development of cultural landscape of particular regions (regional aspects of landscape research).

Application objectives of the Commission are carried out through:

- participation of members of the Commission in major Polish and European initiatives regarding landscape planning, development and protection (European Landscape Convention, projects of government's acts regarding improvement of tools for landscape protection and membership in scientific and controlling Commissions of European landscape projects; co-hosting and participation of members of the Commission in application projects aimed at improvement of landscape quality – e.g. Projects of revitalization of river valleys, Forum of reconstruction of historic objects, or Project for assessment of threats to encastelled sacral objects in the Silesian Province);
- working out expertise and other documents necessary for spatial planning (e.g. Landscape study for Ecophysiographic report for changes of the local plan of spatial management in the Silesian Province);
- opinion-making, educational and marketing actions – hosting lectures, speeches, exhibitions, field trips and participation in local initiatives for harmonious development of cultural landscape.

Organizational tasks of the Commission consists in:

- hosting theme scientific conferences dedicated to theoretical and practical aspects of research, development and protection of cultural landscape. During twelve years of activities of the Commission (2002-2014), 18 nationwide and international conferences have been held, with a common name: *Interdisciplinary Landscape Seminar*. So far, the topics of the conferences have been: *Current research directions of cultural landscape*, *Cultural landscapes – unity in diversity*, *Landscapes of Upper Silesia*, *Landscapes of the Carpathians*, *Water landscapes*, *Industrial and post-mining landscapes*, *Borders in cultural landscapes*, *Landscapes of river valleys*, *Landscape management*, *Methodological aspects of landscape research*, *Sound in landscapes*, *Rural landscapes*, *Landscape and tourism*, *Intangible values in landscapes*, *Cartographic resources in landscape studies*, *Sacrum in landscape*, *Space and landscape*.

A common feature of landscape seminars is theme landscape workshops. Their topics always accompany and broaden the matters brought up during study conferences.

The Cultural Landscape Commission has a periodic publication entitled *Dissertations of the Cultural Landscape Commission*. So far, 23 issues have been published, including volumes 8 and 9 all in English and articles in volumes 2, 3, 10, 11 and 20 in English, Russian and Ukrainian. The publications aim at popularizing scientific papers regarding cultural landscape. The scientific council of the publication consists of scientists from many foreign universities. Works of the Commission are available online at: www.krajobraz.kulturowy.us.edu.pl.

The Commission also co-hosts major scientific events of international rank. Moreover, members of the Commission act as experts during conferences held by local governments and societies.

Members of the Cultural Landscape Commission cooperate with numerous scientific organizations in Poland and Europe. These include:

Katowice Office of the Polish Geographic Society, Polish Association of Landscape Ecology, Institute of Landscape Architecture of Krakow Technical University, Institute of Geography and Spatial Management of the Polish Academy of Sciences in Warsaw, Institute of Earth Sciences at UMCS in Lublin, GIS FORUM in Zagreb, Katowice Office of the Polish Urban Planners Society, local self-governments at the level of municipalities, counties and provinces, Polish Tourist and Sightseeing Society, and multiple societies whose statutory tasks include actions for protection of cultural landscape, e.g. "My city".

During twelve years of proceedings of the Commission, the theoretical and methodological framework has been defined. The definition and scope of notion of cultural landscape have been formulated: *Cultural landscape it is a fragment of geographical space, shaped throughout history, created as a result of combined environmental and cultural influences, which creates a specific structure characterized by regional*

distinctness perceived as peculiar surface features (U. Myga-Piątek, 2001). Cultural landscape is therefore considered as an actually existing being. The adopted definition differs significantly from approaches of the American and French schools. It was acknowledged that many centuries' economic activities of communities contribute additional values to the natural environment and are not only a stage of devastation of natural landscapes as a result of anthropopressure – which is what landscape ecologists claim.

Alongside with the proceedings of the Commission, some monographic publications also emerged. Those that are worth mentioning include books by: F. Plit (2011: *The cultural landscape. What is it?*), U. Myga-Piątek (2012: *Cultural landscape. Evolutionary and typological aspects*); J. Nita (2013: *Landscape changes occurring as a result of rock mineral mining activities in uplands of middle Poland*).

The present volume of Publications of the Cultural Landscape Commission presents selected papers by members of the Commission. It represents all the above objectives and scopes of activities of the Commission. Articles included in this volume address theoretical-methodological issues: (paper: *The evolution of globasteme and contemporary geography*), typological and evolutionary aspects of landscapes (papers: *Natural, anthropogenic and cultural landscape an attempt to define mutual relations and the scope of notion*; *Sound in landscape: the main research problems*; *Contemporary views on social participation in the context of sustainable development of rural landscapes*; *Mining landscape as a type of cultural landscape*); problem aspects (papers: *Post-industrial culture as a source of transformation of space and landscape*, *Spatial system of landscape protection in Poland*; *Secular forest exploitation and its landscape consequences evolution of forest landscapes on polish territories*); regional aspects (*Podlasie – the landscape of cultural borderland, and not of the boundary*) and applicational aspects: (papers: *Shaping the traditional landscape of rural areas – programs and methods*; *Social participation in urban planning in polish cities*).

We believe that the matters presented in the volume will also draw attention of foreign readers and entourage a wider circle of scientists to cooperate within the Cultural Landscape Commission of the Polish Geographic Society.

Urszula Myga-Piątek
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