

THE PERCEPTION OF URBAN CULTURAL LANDSCAPE - A RESOURCE FOR SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract

Everyone interprets the landscape differently; this may be due to the influences of religion culture, even childhood. However, it is important to consider how landscapes can be categorized and how people perceive them. Cultural landscapes can be analyzed as a cultural property, or as a heritage property, consisting of cultural resources - landscapes and buildings. For a better understanding of perceptions of urban cultural landscapes, case studies based on a specific methodology of interviews were necessary. The topic or question to be answered is related to how they perceive the cultural landscape in question. They are important targets, they are landmarks in different cities in Romania and, each of them offers a very unique setting, a particular local landscape. The results obtained have taken into account: Natural features, Historical features, Contemporary features, Cultural activities, Historical events, Contemporary human activities, Sense of place, Links with the past, Memories offered. Each of these chosen landmarks offers, according to the interviews, a different perception.

Key words: cultural property, city, history, heritage, cultural identity

Introduction

Along with the rapid social and economic development of communities, cultural landscapes are the most fragile and threatened sites (Barretto, 2007). This paper identifies the interconnected values of cultural landscapes to conserve and re-qualify cultural landscapes. This set of values explores how sense of place, cultural identity and heritage can become touchstones for the study of cultural landscape transformation (Teodorescu C., et al, 2017). Researching, documenting, analyzing and evaluating cultural landscapes requires a comprehensive, multidisciplinary approach. Although the transformation of cultural landscapes has been extensively studied, there are limited approaches that consider how a particular landscape should be transformed to continue its cultural traditions, social values and inspirations (Dincă et al, 2015; Dumitrașcu et al, 2023). The concept of value, once considered to be an intrinsic and universal state, is now generally a social construct that emerges from the cultural contexts of time and place. People hold certain values but also express value for certain objects. In this sense, how a landscape is valued involves understanding both the nature of the object being valued (or the appearance of the landscape) and the nature of the values expressed for that object. Everyone interprets landscape differently; this may be due to the influences of religion and culture, even childhood. It is therefore important to study how landscapes can be categorized and how people perceive them. What people see in physical landscapes depends on the individual, their cultural background and location. There is a close relationship between people and certain landscapes. This mutual relationship shapes the landscape itself, which perceives the space it inhabits as a unique entity. What is important about a landscape is what defines landscape values, and those values can be divided into two main groups as : "tangible values" and "intangible values". Tangible values are physical and measurable aspects of the landscape. Intangible values are the abstract features of the landscape. They are therefore much harder to understand and are also much easier to overlook or dismiss.

Material and methods

Approaching a method of analysis in these cases was somewhat difficult, given the subjectivism of each interviewee. This empirical analysis of the dialog with local residents, the qualitative method of the survey can have very beneficial effects for the residents or in the relationship between the local administration and the residents. Landscape methods that focus on value typologies inherent to a particular discipline may be insufficient to explain the variety of values perceived by the people who are the users and perceivers of the landscape. It is possible to arrive at integrated approaches to

landscape using a conceptual framework that links the findings of scientific methodologies with the experiences of individuals.

The selection of monuments followed certain criteria:

- The cultural importance of the chosen moments or urban area;
- The cultural interest of each monument;
- Educational resource for generations of communities.

Results

The taxonomy of the urban cultural landscape can be divided into several types. UNESCO has categorized the cultural landscape into three types. First, the landscape that is designed and created intentionally by people, such as a garden or park. Second, landscape that has evolved as a result of changes in society, economy, administration, religion and faith. Finally, landscape is involved in religion, art and culture or natural elements. Furthermore, urban cultural landscapes are divided into historic sites, historic designed landscape, historic vernacular landscape, and ethnographic landscapes (Dragici et al, 2016; Trujillo González et al, 2016). Each person interprets landscape differently; this may be due to the influences of religion and culture, even childhood. Therefore, it is important to study how landscapes can be categorized and how people perceive them (Szemkovics et al, 2018). What people see from analyzing physical landscapes depends on each individual, their cultural background and where they have lived with certain local values. There is a close relationship between people and certain landscapes.

Case studies

For this study, in analyzing urban cultural landscapes, the supply of relationships between people and landscape characteristics are very close. Two important monuments in two cities were chosen: the Monumental C-tin Brâncuși in the Central Park of Târgu Jiu Municipality (Fig. 1) and the Palace of Culture in Iasi Municipality (Fig. 2). They embody the history of local communities, and they, the people, are the people who have been and will be. People know those places, where they often live their whole lives and their ancestors also lived with these landmarks that have been part of the local landscapes for decades (Teodorescu C., et al, 2023).

a. The C-tin Brâncuși Monumental Ensemble in the Central Park of Targu Jiu - the work of sculptor Constantin Brâncuși



Fig. 1: Kissing Gate, Silence Table and Chairs Alley - Central Park in Târgu Jiu City

The interviewees, selected among the people who visit this monumental ensemble, emphasize the relationship between the formal, the functional and the intangible. Eight men and eight women of different ages and different professions answered the question *"what is important to you when you see the ensemble you visit?"*. Four interviewees were under 30 years of age and 12 interviewees were between 31 and 60 years of age.

Six interviewees are students and ten interviewees are privately employed. The interviewees' responses provided insights into how the characteristic values of the local cultural landscape are understood. The formal values of the C-tin Brâncuși Monumental Ensemble in the Central Park:

Natural characteristics: stone

Historical features: symbolism

Contemporary features: recreational area

Functional values of the C-tin Brâncuși Monumental Ensemble in the Central Park:

Cultural activities: small-scale tourism

Historical events: periods of modern and contemporary Romanian sculpture

Contemporary human activities: walking, photography

The intangible values of the C-tin Brâncuși Monumental Ensemble in the Central Park:

Sense of place: sense of love and peace

Identity: being a part of artistic Europe and the Municipality of Targu Jiu

Links with the past: the apogetic image of the artistic life of Târgu Jiului

Memories: legends, myths, local culture.

b. Palace of Culture in Iasi

The interviewees selected to analyze the cultural relevance of the Palace of Culture in Iasi (Fig. 2), the people who visit this monumental ensemble of Iasi's culture, emphasize the relationship between formal and functional.

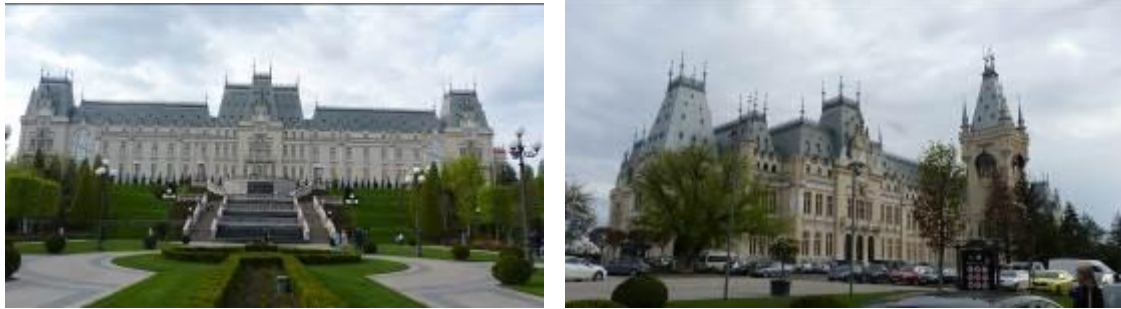


Fig. 2: Palace of Culture in Iasi

Eleven men and ten women of different ages, different professions, answered the question "what is important to you when you see the ensemble you visit?". Five interviewees were under 30 years of age and 17 interviewees were between 31 and 60 years of age. Nine interviewees are students and master's degree students, and 10 interviewees are employed in the private sector and 2 are employed in the public sector. The interviewees' responses provided insights into how the characteristic values of the local cultural landscape are understood.

Formal values of the Palace of Culture in Iasi:

Natural characteristics: masonry

Historical features: symbolism

Contemporary features: leisure area

Functional values of the Palace of Culture in Iasi:

Cultural activities: large-scale tourism

Historical events: the periods of European and Romanian architecture combining neo-Gothic, Romanticism and Neo-Baroque

Contemporary human activities: photography, visiting indoor museums and walking in the outdoor park

The intangible values of the Palace of Culture in Iasi:

Sense of place: sense of love and peace

Identity: being part of artistic Europe and Romania

Links with the past: European events, Romanian historical past

Memories: legends, myths, local culture.

Discussion

Case studies have shown that landscape values are not limited to physical availabilities. Connections between the past and possible future of a landscape play a significant role in determining values. Findings from the case studies have shown that the strength of a landscape's values lies in the fact that the landscape shows the multicultural structure it carries and makes this structure accessible to individuals. Landscape methods that focus on value typologies inherent to a particular discipline may be insufficient in explaining the variety of values perceived by the people who are the users and perceivers of the landscape. It may be possible to arrive through integrated landscape approaches using a conceptual framework that links the findings of scientific methodologies with the experiences of individuals. In addition to this kind of interview-based analysis related to the perception of the cultural landscape offered by specific landmarks/buildings/monuments in the cities of the Romanian geographical area, the urban residential cultural landscape is complemented by specific buildings, multi-storey or one or two storeys high, whose functionality is specific (especially commercial or small production spaces) (Vijulie et al, 2021).

Conclusion

Urban environments offer challenges for residents and those who just visit them. Most of them, through their landmarks, are cities with multiple functions, including tourism. In this study two different ensembles of monuments in two cities - municipalities have been analyzed. In the first case it was analyzed the monumental ensemble realized by Constantin Brancusi - a symbol of the Romanian and European architecture and the Palace of Culture in Iasi, a symbol of architecture and culture. Each of them offers a distinctive landscape, a unique attraction.

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Souhrn

Kulturní krajina odráží příběh lidí, kteří ji utvářeli nejen v minulosti, ale i dnes. Každá kultura má jedinečné charakteristiky, které spojují lidstvo s jeho prostředím. Ztráta kulturní krajiny by znamenala absenci lidstva.

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