

**Cultural Parks in the Przemyśl Fortress - the opportunity to protect the endangered heritage and the phenomenon of 'strategic landscape'.
(Культурний парк в Перемишльській фортеці – можливість захистити зникаючу спадщину і феномен «стратегічного ландшафту»)**

Kasper Jakubowski (Master of Art.)

and Katarzyna Martyna-Jakubowska (Master of Art.)

The Cracow University of Technology, The Faculty of Landscape Architecture

The sudden abandonment of Austro-Hungarian fortification by armies and the progressive devastation of military structures in connection with uncontrolled natural succession have determined the shape and form of the contemporary cultural landscape in the suburbs of Przemyśl. Moreover, the historical defense system and the whole area give us an amazing chance to take back in time, at the turn of the 19th and the 20th centuries. Nowadays, this phenomenon of strategic landscape¹ seems to be inconvenience and an “unwanted” heritage for local authorities on a one hand, while on the other hand it presents a great potential for cultural tourism² development, sustainable development and real profits for local societies in the context of the unique cultural and natural heritage in the territory of eastern United Europe border. How to take a chance on cultural tourism and the exceptional landscape in the Przemyśl Fortress in the cooperation of Poland and Ukraine? How to create the places which can improve people's life?

We have presented these ideas in the concept of Cultural Park protection plans in our diploma project (2009) in The Faculty of Landscape Architecture in The Cracow University of Technology. In 2010 our project received the international award: The Professor Jan Zachwatowicz Prize for the best project in the field of cultural heritage protection.

¹ The understanding of **strategic landscaping** was implemented into the Polish language by Prof. Janusz Bogdanowski at the end of the 20th century. First publication in which J. Bogdanowski used this term is: *Fortified Landscape XIX/XX: History and Revaluations*, Cracow 1993; develops this further in a monumental monograph *Defensive Architecture of the Polish Landscape*, Warsaw-Cracow, 1996. **Strategic landscape** is the linguistic equivalent of the German “*Wehrlandschaft*”. It encompasses all aspects of modeling, covering and adapting consciously chosen terrain for defensive purposes. It is a broadening of a universally used term “*Architectura Militaris*,” which is mainly identified with building, arming and equipping combat structures. Strategic landscaping, above all, takes into consideration non-combat aspects which help aid in defense such as; engineering, logistics, barracks, roads, hydraulic engineering, railways, greenery (concealing, deterring, useful and aesthetic), and divisions of land. All of these aspects result in a system of architectural limitations, which integrates the arrangement of construction planning with communicability and warfare emplacements.

² **Cultural tourism** is that form of tourism whose object is, among other aims, the discovery of monuments and sites. It exerts on these last a very positive effect insofar as it contributes - to satisfy its own ends - to their maintenance and protection. This form of tourism justifies in fact the efforts which said maintenance and protection demand of the human community because of the socio-cultural and economic benefits which they bestow on all the populations concerned [From the 1976 ICOMOS Charter on Cultural Tourism, from: http://www.icomos.org/tourism/tourism_charter.html].

The Fortress Przemyśl in the past and present

The Fortress Przemyśl, constructed between 1854 and 1916 is a massive defense system with hundreds of permanent and field fortification objects, as well as non-fortification structures within the length of approximately 52 km. Undoubtedly, it was one of the most interesting and big fortresses of the Austria-Hungarian monarchy and even today, despite the damaged degree, the giant fortress groups present an extraordinary landscape value which covers about 260 km². The ring fortification consists of ring forts, armored land forts, points of resistance, shelter barracks, overland battery and greenery and divisions of land as well as back up elements such as: guardrooms, barracks with gardens, warehouses, fortress roads and supporting infrastructure. Today existing spectacular ruins and mostly abandoned forts are dramatic monuments of the history from the beginnings of 20th century. Together with the entire landscape, the whole area presents itself as a great relict of the battlefield on the one hand, while on the other hand a tremendous memorial monument for many European nations which evoke the dramatic events of the Great War in 1914-1918. What is more, the longstanding use by armed forces has guaranteed the preservation of those territories of significant historical and natural value localized close to the town center, up until the XXI century. Apart from military and war memorial aspects, the contemporary landscape is increasingly recognized due to its ecological and aesthetic value, for example sustainable rural landscapes, harmonious villages, picturesque open spaces and spectacular natural habitats with a great number of rare and endangered species. The natural heritage demonstrates an intangible attributes and is placed on an equal footing with cultural and historical elements. Comparability of data and historical studies as well as the observation of the changes of the ring fortification, in context of its landscape, the Fortress Przemyśl may still be utilized as a recreational space, cultural tourism development (f. i. paragliding, historical reenactment, seasonal events, fortification tourism, birdwatching, horse riding, cycling, eco-tourism, agro tourism, environmental education etc.) and - last but not least- sustainable development of the whole area. The question is how to ensure effective and acceptable solutions for systemic preservation of the dispersed components of the fortress..

The Cultural Parks of The Fortress Przemyśl: ‘The Siedliska Group’ and ‘Hill Forts’ (The Yaksmanice defence group)

A cultural park is a new form in Polish legislation of cultural heritage protection and management in the condition of balanced development. It is a comprehensive instrument serving both the revival of the merits of cultural heritage and their exploitation for the sake of economic activation, specially the progress of tourism.³ A cultural parks is the opportunity for local authorities and societies for a comprehensive landscape protection, tourism development and a region promotion (as a product for tourism). In practice this means not only the implementation of Cultural Park preserve plans, but also provide coherent management system in accordance with spatial planning. The latest studies about processes in modern tourism show that the overall "environment" of old fortifications: greenery, biological diversity, local identity, wide vista openings and picturesque countryside is a profitable, economically measurable and integrated product in context of tourism development.

³ Z. Myczkowski, *The Cultural Park As A Form Of The Spatial Protection Of Historical Monuments*, in: *Ochrona Zabytków* (Historical Monument's Preservation), year: 2007, number: 2, pages: 105-116.

The first step in our project was to examine and valorize the historical and present state and values with the methodology of integrated registration of strategic landscape. The integrated registration is a mini-study of value and direction of past, present, future and demanded transformations, and not solely a database but also a static evidential fact that such groups of study exist. At the end, it allows to formulate general guidelines of adaptation and preservation for objects in table and project. Each stage of the study and project process is presented in a separated project poster. The final poster is the concept of preserve plans for two draft Cultural Parks near the Ukrainian border. It is a planistic document for territorial self-governments with the implementation to local spatial management plans.

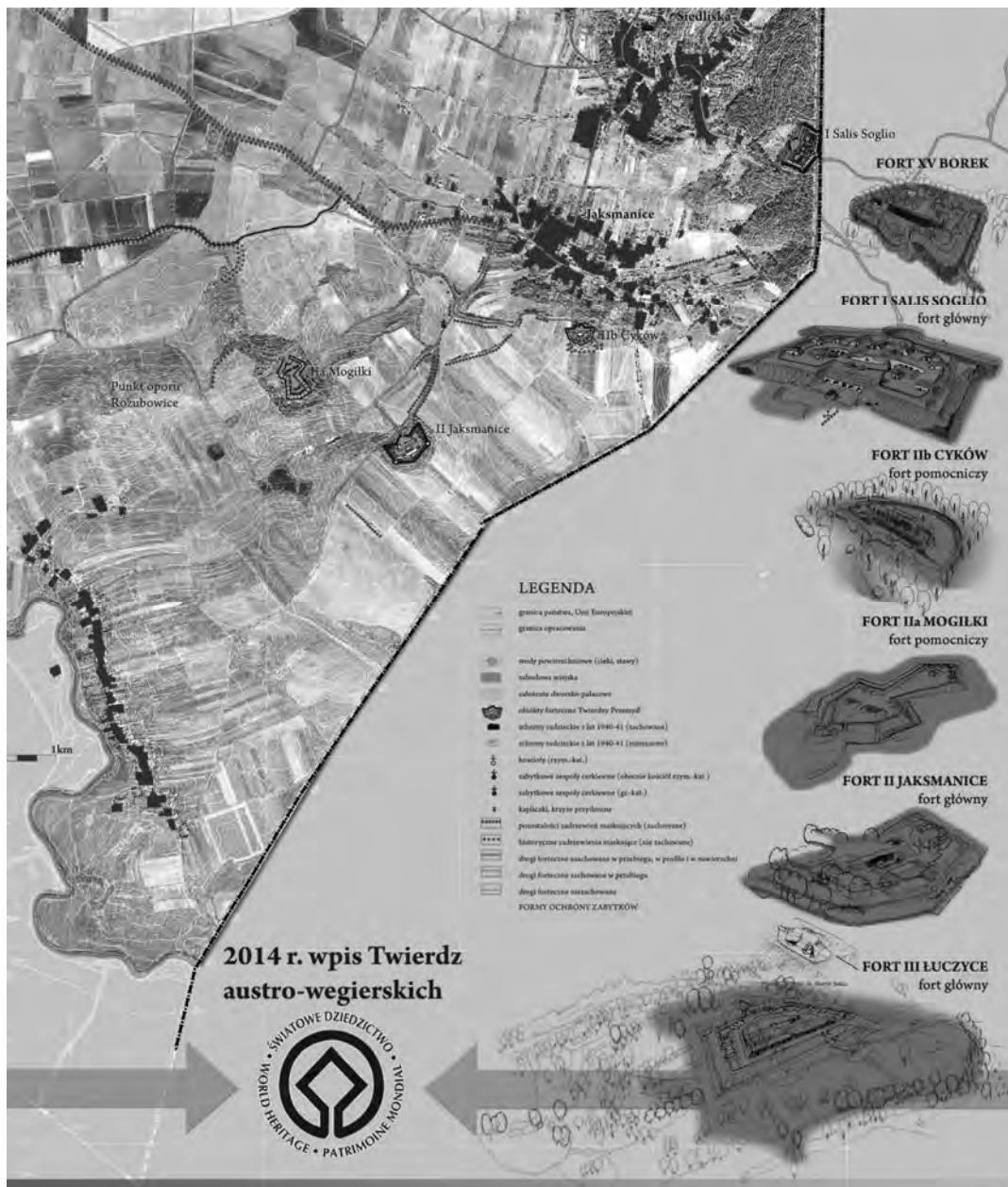


Fig. 1. The Fortress Przemyśl in the territory of Poland and Ukraine under the UNESCO heritage in 2014?

Contemporary threats: uncontrolled local-scale afforestation and negative transformations of the land. Unfortunately, these part of Przemyśl fortress (The Yaksmanice Defense Group) is under threat of land-use transformation and irreversible degradation! In recent years, the most spectacular part of hill has been closed for tourism movements and transformed into artificially created forests plantations. Thus, it closed the most interesting tourist's route with the most representative views and panoramas. As we visualized in our project, afforestation will completely deforms the reception of this part of fortress in next 10-15 years and moreover, it will degrade the phenomenon of the strategic landscape and devastate unique steppe ecosystems with endangered species. Steppe ecosystems are of high biodiversity and have a high potential for carbon storage in the context of climate changes. Consequently, this investment may unexpectedly block the inscription of the entire fortress on the UNESCO World Heritage.

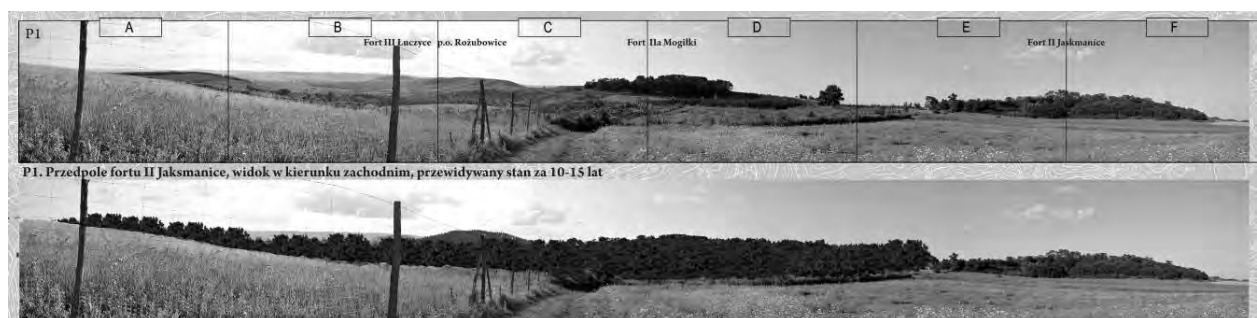


Fig.2. The visualization of afforestation in the Yaksmanice-Luczyce hills in next 15 years

Landscape architecture design: visitors facilities and cultural tourism routes

In our diploma project we proposed architectural solutions and design to provide tourism accessibility and facilities for visitors in context of the great idea of cultural tourism development in the Przemyśl fortress. Accessibility in tourism is, in general, how easy it is for the tourist to access and get to the desired destination with the use of appropriate information, professional network of tourist routes, tourism infrastructure, tourist information system and management etc.⁴. Katarzyna Martyna-Jakubowska prepared the holistic plan management for the fort in accordance with tourist route in the Fort III “Łuczyce”. The plan assumes a revitalization and non-invasive adaptation of terrain for tourism accessibility, i.e. the removal ahistorical vegetation, the restoration of old green masks and vegetation in their historical presence, making legible the vista (fire directions zones) and the reconstruction of the slopes and profiles, ground elements etc. The introduction of new design elements allows one to visit safely the fort and interpret all elements of the defense system. The proposed solution will improve the visiting standard and access for cultural tourism.

Kasper Jakubowski concentrated on the tourism accessibility in the natural preserve (“Skarpa Jaksmanicka”) in Siedliska village with the precious habitats of rare and amazing bird, bee-eater (*Merops apiaster*). The major design challenge was how to preserve the natural habitats while creating the space for recreation (birdwatching) and education with a minimal design solution. The focal point is a specially-designed bird observation point. The form and wooden construction refers to ‘*parcitecture*’ style and the visual form of military defense structures from

⁴ http://wiki.answers.com/Q/What_is_accessibility_in_tourism#ixzz1Y1njorgH

the II World War. The idea was to mask and connect the object with surrounding landscape and natural background. This object is an example of non-invasive, ecologically safe, functional architecture for tourism destination with full exposition of the site. The roof of the wooden construction is covered by the green vegetation, therefore it looks more natural and improves the local biodiversity. To provide communications, a special boardwalk made of wood is designed to access the site. It stands 40-60 cm high. Various plant specimens are grown in order to reduce tourist impact and people's pressure. Also the special requirements of exotic looking birds in order to reduce disturbing of the nest holes and eliminate a spontaneous movement in the natural preserve.

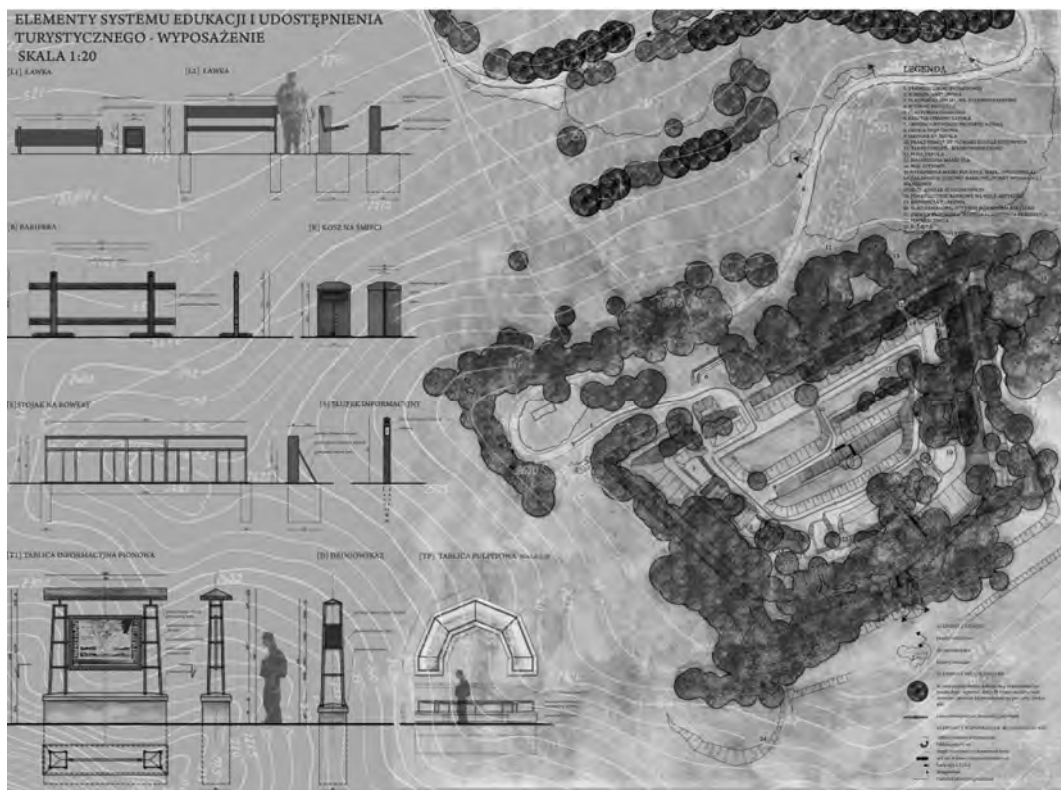


Fig.3. *The adaptation and tourist accessibility project of the Łuczyce Fort in context of cultural tourism development*

The application of the project in UE program in 2007-2013. What's next? The Fortress Przemyśl in the territory of Poland and Ukraine under the UNESCO heritage in 2014?

The diploma project of two Cultural Parks "The Siedliska Group" and "The Hill Forts" has had direct implementations into UE program⁵ concerning the reconstruction and revitalization of the fortress communication system and the barrack groups in Siedliska village including, for instance, the adaptation of the Mogiłki for tourism accessibility. The whole project is another step to protect, promote and finally, benefit from the preserved natural and cultural heritage, building up a holistic system for the management and tourism development, which is demanded for the Przemyśl Fortress to award a status of the monument of history and thus, a UNESCO World Heritage site.

⁵ Nr 37 by WKU-indicative list of the key individual projects for the Podkarpackie Voivodship in 2007-2013 (UE program).



Fig. 4. *The vista from the Fort III „Luczyce” (the present state)*



Fig. 5. *The vista from the Fort III „Luczyce” after clearings in ahistorical vegetation (the future state)*

We hope that our project and presented threat and possibilities contribute to initiate a broad discussion and public consultation to learn about the possibilities and threats of this region and about the proposed formula of cultural parks as a new form of protection for more individual, profitable and balanced development, appropriate to the rank of space. Finally, it is necessary to reduce and limit the negative processes of urbanization, afforestation and ecological degradation to prevent progressive afforestation of Yaskmanice-Luczyce hills near the Ukrainian border. Otherwise, these beautiful and amazing part of south-western ring fortress will be completely changed and transformed in the next of 20 years with negative impact on the whole region.

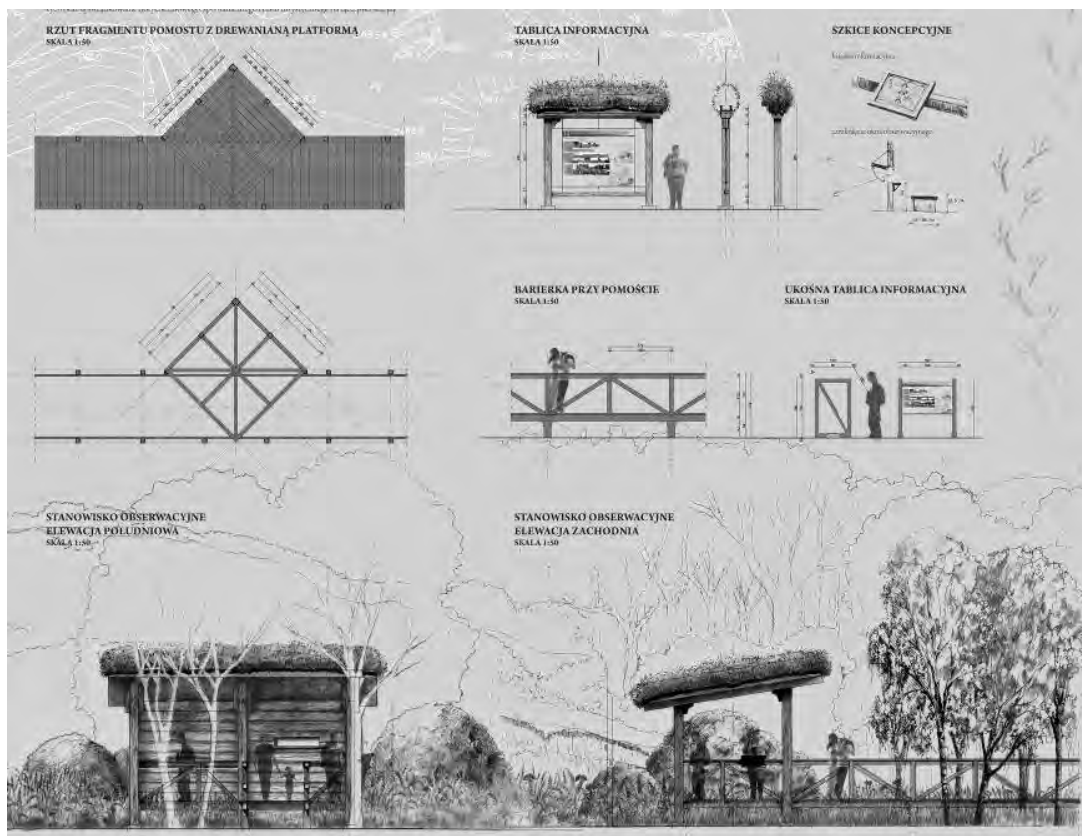


Fig. 6. *The project of tourism accessibility and watch observation point for birdwatching in the natural preserve for bee-eaters (near the “Salis-soglio” I Fort)*

