

PYRAMIDAL CYPRESS TREES, LINEAR TERRACES AND
A WALK AMONG AROMATIC HERBS.
MULTIFACETED CULTURAL LANDSCAPE AND HUMAN
PERCEPTION THEREOF

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ABSTRACT

The author discusses the multifaceted nature of cultural landscape and the human perception. We are usually not aware of the significance of this multifaceted nature. By studying scientific publications and certain statutory provisions in the field of environmental conservation, the author wanted to examine the diversity of the term cultural landscape and of the differences in our perception of it. This diverse picture (based on examples from the Slovenian Littoral region) incorporates findings from different fields such as psychology, phenomenology, hermeneutics, aesthetics etc. The aim of this paper is to present the many layers of our perception and thus our interpretation of landscapes that influences also our relationship with and conservation of landscape.

Keywords: Landscape, cultural landscape, historic cultural landscape, perception, authenticity, visual attributes, intangible attributes, visual analysis, appreciation of landscape, environmental aesthetics, the Slovene Littoral

CIPRESSI PIRAMIDALI, TERRAZZE LINEARI E UNA PASSEGGIATA
TRA LE ERBE AROMATICHE.
PAESAGGIO CULTURALE SFACCETTATO E LA PERCEZIONE CHE L'UOMO HA DI ESSO

SINTESI

Nel contributo l'autrice mette in evidenza la poliedricità del paesaggio culturale e della percezione umana, di cui non siamo sufficientemente consapevoli. Attraverso lo studio di alcune disposizioni di legge relative alla tutela dell'ambiente e di diverse pubblicazioni scientifiche, cerca di esaminare ogni sfaccettatura del concetto del paesaggio e della nostra percezione di esso. Questo quadro caleidoscopico (basato su esempi del paesaggio culturale del Litorale sloveno) comprende conclusioni provenienti dall'ambito della psicologia, fenomenologia, ermeneutica, estetica ecc. Lo scopo del contributo è quindi di segnalare i numerosi livelli della nostra percezione del paesaggio e della nostra conseguente interpretazione, che influiscono anche sul nostro rapporto con il paesaggio, nonché sulla nostra gestione e tutela dello stesso.

Parole chiave: paesaggio, paesaggio culturale, paesaggio culturale storico, percezione, autenticità, elementi visivi, elementi immateriali, analisi visiva, valutazione del paesaggio, estetica dell'ambiente, Litorale sloveno

People strive to preserve cultural and natural landscape – landscape that they deem (appreciate) worth preserving. A landscape is evaluated as such by specific criteria defined by experts. In the past, professionals relied mostly on visual and physical elements and structures of a landscape; however, at the end of the 20th century they somewhat broadened these criteria. How did they broaden these criteria? What did they emphasise? Why are these new criteria important and what do they indicate? These are some of the questions this paper aims to answer. Thus, the paper contains a short definition of (historical) cultural landscape, followed by a presentation of the already mentioned criteria that enable the evaluation and further preservation of landscape. Further, since man is the one who lays down these criteria, the paper discusses the multifaceted human perception of space. The paper is based on a review of scientific and technical literature from different scientific disciplines as well as a comparison between certain statutory provisions or strategies.

In the early 19th century, a simple definition of landscape was laid down, according to which a landscape is the overall appearance of an area of land (Earth's surface).¹ But when we try to specify landscape as cultural or historical cultural landscape, this definition or basis becomes too narrow and the need arises for a broader interpretation. Cultural landscape could be defined as a part of the physical space that surrounds us, the space where we live or as the landscape that man has visibly changed. It can also be defined as the opposite of the natural landscape.² When exploring different ways to define the term cultural landscape, we must not disregard the term "cultural" itself, since it originates from the Latin word *colere* (meaning to cultivate, care, maintain, reside, colonize etc.) and clearly indicates the relationship between man and his surroundings, his perception of these surroundings in terms of their value, and a relationship between wild and cultivated nature (Wöbse, 2008, 22; Kučan, 1999, 72; Wöbse, 1998, 157). In the

case of cultural landscape, the role of humans is always emphasised. Thus, some authors provide a very general definition of such landscape, e.g. »If the concept of a cultural landscape is to be given a broad definition, then any area where there are traces of human activity is a cultural landscape« (Frislid, 1990, 10). Other authors focus on the changeable human activity or the interaction of natural and human actions in a time frame in which these actions took place (Sedej, 1965, 1; Curk, 1965, 1).³ Although we regard human actions in space as changes made in landscape, we can also understand them as something stable, something that creates a cultural landscape which can "retain the same structure for a long period of time or can change quickly and radically, always as a reflection of social happenings" (Ogrin, 1989, 21–22).⁴

When speaking of historical cultural landscape, the element of time is of special importance. Historical cultural landscape is a complete "record" of changes in cultural landscape in a certain time frame. This record has different layers, some of which have been preserved until the present day, thus there are some elements or structures in the landscape that originate from past times (even preindustrial periods) but have maintained their original form. On the other hand, these historical elements or structures of the landscape can disappear and we can obtain knowledge about them only from older, archival sources or by examining findings based on newer archaeological or other methods and tools (Broermann, 2003, 11).⁵

As mentioned above, we today evaluate visual, physical as well as non-physical characteristics of a landscape. Landscapes all over the world that should be protected or "landscapes of special value are defined as areas of great experiential value connected with outstanding natural or designed landscape structures, with a high level of nature conservation or outstanding forms of cultural landscape or with other, mostly symbolic-associative meanings" (Bratina Jurkovič, 2011, 64). Provisions of of-

1 According to a text attributed to Alexander von Humboldt: "Landschaft ist der Totalcharakter einer Erdgegend" (Wöbse, 2008, 23; Wöbse, 1998, 157).

2 This definition should be considered with caution: if we define cultural landscape as a landscape with traces of human activity, any landscape of today's Central Europe can be considered cultural (Küster, 2008b, 14). As is generally known, there is hardly a piece of land that has not been directly or indirectly influenced by humans.

3 It was already in the 1960s that Slovene professionals acknowledged the important role of humans in designing the cultural landscape. Some authors defined a cultural landscape as a designed landscape formed not only by climate, relief, soil, flora and fauna but also by a "dynamic role of a human-creator" (Sedej, 1965, 1), while others saw the cultural landscape as "a synthesis of geographical conditions and anthropographical consequences that accumulated throughout centuries in a given landscape and were tightly weaved together into a net of mutual causality, forming its physiognomy in a vertical temporal sequence, in whose visual image these conditions and consequences live in mutual coexistence as elements of the landscape's specific expression" (author's own translation – please consider that the translations from Slovenian to English have been made by the author of this contribution and are freely translated) (Curk, 1965, 1).

4 Therefore, man determines the form and interpretation of a cultural landscape, since he with his interventions changes the space in which he lives (his habitat) and thus creates different types of cultural landscape (for a possible classification of landscape see e.g. Küster, 2008b, 10–12; Ogrin, 1989, 13–14).

5 Man changed his environment according to the circumstances in which he lived. His interference with the environment was greatly influenced by historical structures such as: political-administrative (law, political regime); economic (production, production relationships); socio-cultural (tradition, legal system); natural and spatial structures (climate, geology). These structures thus affected the appearance of historical cultural landscape (Broermann, 2003, 12).



Slika 1: Piramidalne ciprese, vertikalni poudarek primorske krajine kot ga je prikazal Božidar Jakac na sliki Človekova usoda (istrski grobovi) leta 1979 (Jakac, 1988, sl. 147)

Figure 1: Pyramidal cypress trees – vertical emphasis in the Mediterranean landscape as shown in the painting Človekova usoda (istrski grobovi) by Božidar Jakac, dated 1979 (Jakac, 1988, sl. 147)

ficial documents dealing with the protection of the environment, nature and consequently landscape lay down the features that classify a landscape as a landscape of special value. In the field of environmental protection, Great Britain and Switzerland have played a leading role, since they started to designate areas of special value (outstanding landscapes and natural monuments of national importance) already in the 1960s and 1970s (Ogrin et al., 1996, 34). However, there is also a piece of German legislation regarding environmental protection that can be traced as far back as 1935. German legislation in this field is based on source material from 1935 and 1977 and emphasises physical and non-physical components of a landscape. More specifically, some paragraphs of this

legislative act refer to natural elements, animal and plant world and categories such as diversity, special features (authenticity) and beauty of the landscape (die *Vielfalt, Eigenart*⁶ und *Schönheit*). Furthermore, there are terms such as historical landscape and elements of the “image” of landscape (*das Landschaftsbild*; Küster, 2008a, 19; Wöbse, 2008, 25; Wöbse, 1998, 159–160). The criteria for classifying outstanding cultural landscapes are thus linked with the viewer’s perception of a specific part of a landscape or on a section of landscape “image”. Categories such as diversity, special features and beauty of a landscape are also stressed – these are the categories that do not relate only to what we see in a landscape (as explained further below).

6 “Mit dem Begriff *Eigenart* umschrieben wir den Charakter, die Identität und damit die Unverwechselbarkeit einer Landschaft” (Wöbse, 2008, 25).

The wider significance of cultural landscape is acknowledged worldwide. Participants of the 1992 UNESCO World Heritage conference emphasized the interaction between people and the environment, and in 1993 they included (into the process of valuation of a cultural landscape as an area of special value) the term *authenticity* which is reminiscent of the German term *Eigenart*. Since 1977, professionals have discussed the *intangible attributes* of a cultural landscape that were later defined as “the forces that shape the landscapes, and the values they are perceived to have” (Rössler, 2008, 50). Thus, these attributes include those elements in a landscape that cannot be clearly visually or physically determined and are consequences of the interaction of people with their environment (such elements can include: toponyms,⁷ folk tales about a specific landscape, mythization of a landscape, “symbolic” meanings of places, etc.; Rössler, 2008; Mitchell, 2008).

Such broadened significance of the landscape is recognized also at European level. The *European Landscape Convention* came into effect in 2004 and its general definition of landscape reads as follows: “Landscape means an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors” (European Landscape Convention, 2000). Thus, it emphasizes not only the connection of natural and anthropogenic factors, but also human perception.

In Slovenia, important steps towards the definition and preservation of landscape were made in the 1990s – especially with the *Strategy for landscape conservation in Slovenia*, which defines, among other things, outstanding landscapes or landscapes of exceptional value (Ogrin et al., 1996). In this research paper we can find definitions and criteria for different landscapes, including outstanding landscapes. The criteria for the selection of outstanding landscapes include: structural value, a high level of correspondence between spatial use and natural characteristics of the area, authenticity of the structure, traditional landscape patterns, the presence of historical, monumental, archaeological and similar qualities, the correspondence between landscape and urban patterns, complexity, symbolism, prospects of landscape survival etc. (Ogrin et al., 1996, 9–10). Looking at these criteria, we can see that they are based on visual or rather physical characteristics, such as landscape structures and patterns, the correspondence between natural and anthropogenic elements, diversity within a single structural element, urbanization patterns etc. However, the proposed criteria also include intangible elements (non-physical characteristic of a landscape) such as the testimonial value of landscape patterns, the descriptiveness of social condi-

tions, the symbolism of a landscape, and landscape as an educational tool. There are also other criteria that indicate a connection with physical elements, e.g. the “*historical, monumental, archaeological and other qualities*” that Dušan Ogrin and his colleagues incorporated into their criteria for outstanding landscapes (Ogrin et al., 1996, 9–10). This broad interpretation of landscape and criteria for classifying outstanding landscapes were accepted by professionals in the field of environmental protection and conservation, as indicated in an article by Blanka Bartol from 1999, where all of the aforementioned criteria can be recognized more or less easily. Bartol divides the criteria into natural and cultural values. Natural values in the cultural landscape are: natural elements, structural characteristics of natural elements, the level of nature conservation, and natural processes. Cultural values include historical, spatial-structural, typological, visual, functional, symbolic and non-material values (Bartol, 1999, 79). With regard to criteria listed above, an issue arises regarding the criterion of symbolic value of a landscape, as it is understood differently by different authors. The symbolic value of landscape is classified as an intangible attribute in the UNESCO Convention – in this case, the symbolic value is a value that can develop and change. Ogrin (as well as Bartol) understands landscape as a medium that carries specific symbolism: “a landscape carries symbolical meanings arising from a historical tradition of a ritual, state-building, political or other nature” (Ogrin et al., 1996, 32). The interpretation of an outstanding landscape by Nataša Bratina Jurkovič also does not clarify the symbolic-associative meanings that give a landscape its special significance. It seems that, in all the examples stated above, the term “symbolic” refers to emphasizing a special meaning attributed to landscape by the society, a meaning that depends on historical circumstances and can be e.g. a myth about a specific landscape or even a toponym. According to Svend Erik Larsen (Larsen, 2004, 476), it is also possible to understand these symbolic meanings of a landscape through the existence of deities.⁸

As regards the criteria for definition and evaluation of landscapes that were laid down in the nineties in Slovenia, we can conclude that these criteria were in line with the contemporary environmental policy and that they gave rise to the need to understand the intangible elements of landscape in Slovenia. However, when examining the relevant Slovenian legislation (especially in the field of environmental protection) we can see that the legislation does not sufficiently take into account the aforementioned criteria. Thus, the *Spatial Management Act* defines landscape as “part of an area which is char-

⁷ Penko Seidl, 2011.

⁸ Larsen’s definition of landscape is based on the temporal aspect and the emphasis that man places on his environment. Historically speaking, landscape was first defined as *physical surroundings* (Greek *physis* or Roman *mundus*), and later as a *geographical and geological entity* (mountains, plains, etc.); subsequently, it was regarded as a *symbolic phenomenon* controlled largely by deities (mostly with reference to the will of God or the gods). In recent history, landscape has been understood as a *mental projection* of human hope, fear, joy, or memory (Larsen, 2004, 476).

acterized by a prevailing presence of natural components and is the result of the interaction between natural and human factors" (ZUreP-1, 2002). The same definition can be found in the *Spatial planning Act* (ZPNačrt, 2007). In the *Nature Conservation Act*, landscape is a natural value and a "spatially complete part of nature with a specific distribution of landscape components resulting from the characteristics of animate and inanimate nature and human activity" (ZON, 2004). The *Cultural Heritage Protection Act* contains a definition of cultural landscape – it defines cultural landscape as immobile heritage and "an open space with natural and artificially made (man-made) components, whose structure, development and use are mainly determined by human intervention and activity" (ZVKD, 2008). It is evident that the physical aspects of landscape were considered as well as active human intervention in the landscape and the understanding of the landscape as a space of human and natural activities. However, while the European Landscape Convention defines landscape as "an area, as perceived by people," such interpretation is missing in Slovenian legislation. Therefore, the multifaceted nature of human influence, actions and perceptions in the context of time and society is neglected.

Recently, the question of man's perception of his environment has become important, as indicated by the fact that professionals have introduced new terms such as *intangible elements* or *authenticity*, i.e. terms that indicate the multifaceted nature of landscape, the physical and non-physical elements of the environment, the meanings attributed to heritage (in this case to the cultural landscape) by man and society, and the values that were shaped over time and are connected with a certain landscape. The importance of these new criteria is reflected also in the wider definition of objects to be protected. In the case of landscape we can – taking into account all the relevant criteria – define it as physical space shaped by natural forces and humans, and as "mental"⁹ space, as perceived by people.

How does man perceive the space? This is an important question since it is man's perception that dictates the decisions on whether something (e.g. cultural landscape) is worth protecting or not.

When we try to describe the space around us, we first look at it and then describe it with words. So, we first

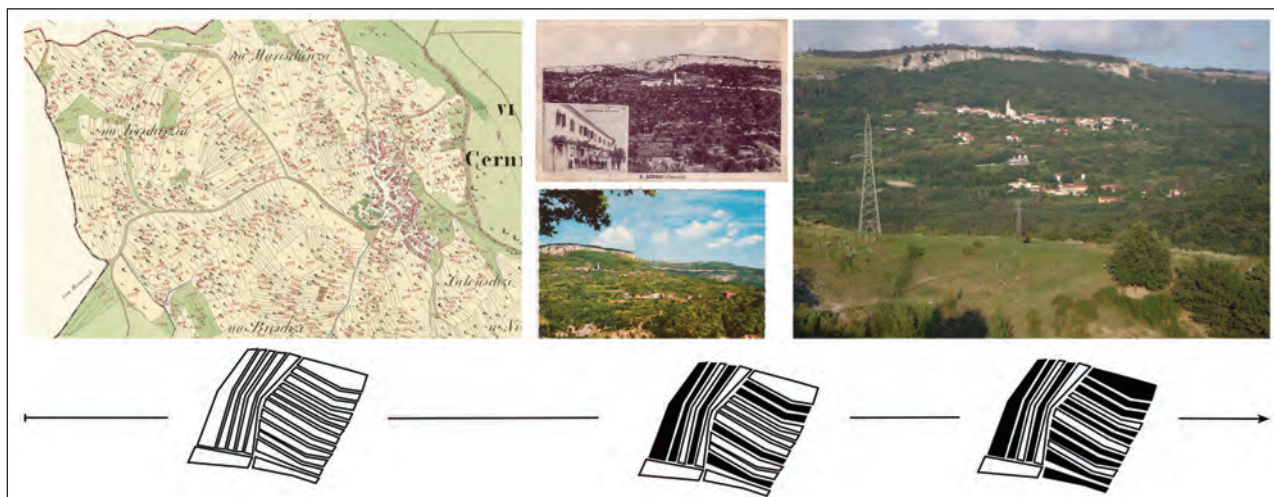
look and listen and then use all the other sense organs and let all other external and internal factors influence our perception of the surroundings. Therefore, sight plays an important role in our perception of space and it is not unusual that our description, valuation and protection of a landscape are based on the visual elements of the landscape. Today, professional analysis and evaluation of a landscape are also mostly based on its visual elements and structures of a specific part of the landscape. Visual analysis was used in the United States of America in the 1960s and 1970s, and it is still used all over the world (Benzinberg Stein, 1991, 243). Apart from this analysis, let us mention the descriptive-analytical approach that was first used by German geographers and moved away from the subjectivity of the viewer, thus contributing to the understanding of a landscape as an object. Landscape thus became more objective and German geographical community defined it as a physical substance, divided into an area of inanimate nature, an area of biosphere and a socially determined area (Ogrin, 1989, 12). Such perception of a landscape (through sight) creates a clear dividing line between the user of a landscape and the landscape itself – it creates distance between the subject and the object and in thus follows the traditional aesthetic evaluation discussed below (Berleant, 1991).

As observers of landscape we first focus on visual elements and thus identify structures and patterns in our environment. We then connect these perceived structures and patterns with the particular landscape. As already mentioned in relation to the Slovene Littoral (southwest part of Slovenia), identifiable visual patterns in a landscape can also be found in characteristic vegetation – one of such patterns are pyramidal cypress trees, which create a sort of vertical emphasis in space and are characteristic of the region. These vertical green elements are familiar to every user of landscapes in the abovementioned region. Therefore, these trees are identified as part of the Mediterranean and serve as some kind of a landscape sign (see Fig. 1).¹⁰

Characteristic landscape patterns of the Littoral also include narrow terraces that (visually) divide slopes into linear belts. We perceive these terraces and analyse them first as visual elements as shown in Figure 2, which shows a part of a landscape that generally encompasses the essential characteristics of the studied landscape.

⁹ The term "mental" is taken from Larsens' definition of landscapes (see footnote 6)

¹⁰ The Slovenian Littoral consists of many recognizable landscape patterns, and every landscape pattern gives to the region its unique structure, which includes narrow settled terraces and natural vegetation in narrow gorges that are part of the traditional image of Istrian and seaside landscapes. This landscape image is slowly disappearing due to the reclamation of coastal lowlands, abandonment of salt pans, arrangement of large viticulture areas, overgrowing of slopes, soil sealing etc. Littoral is also characterized by grapevine and the abundance of fruit trees. In Slovenian Istria agriculture, which was once intensive, is slowly disappearing, the terraces (above Strunjan and Fiesa) which used to be inhabited and cultivated are now being overgrown, and the traditional "plante" (mixed cultures of grapevine, fruit trees and garden crops) are now disappearing from the landscape image. Visible changes can be observed as a result of settlement and emigration – many inhabitants have moved (and are still moving) to coastal areas, especially large coastal towns, and villages in the hinterland (e.g. in Šavrinsko gričevje) are being abandoned. In different parts of the Littoral region one can observe different patterns – flysch hills (Brda, Brkini); karst fields; bare karst; karst plateaus with karst phenomena; wide valleys (Vipavska dolina) or karst grasslands. Apart from the seacoast and flysch cliffs, characteristics of the Slovenian coast also include salt pans, agricultural areas on seaside plains and on terraced hillsides, settlements on terraced hillsides and overgrown terraces (Marušič et al., 1998, 37–38, 64–67)..



Slika 2: Analiza spreminjanja zgodovinske kulturne krajine Črnega Kala na podlagi starejših virov (katastra iz 19. stoletja in fotografij iz 20. stoletja) in obstoječega stanja (delo avtorice)

Figure 2: An Analysis of major changes in the historic cultural landscape of Črni Kal on the basis of archival sources (19th-century cadastre and photos from the 20th century) and the present state (prepared by the author)

Based on this landscape fragment in Figure 2, a notion of all the linear belts arranged in a landscape can be created taking into account their changes in the past. We can determine that the terraces are placed close to one another and that they run parallel or perpendicular to each other. When we analyse the selected pattern over a certain time frame, we can conclude that, over time, more and more terraces became overgrown (in the Fig. 2 they are marked with black colour). Thus, a part of visual analysis is performed based on old maps (cadastre), postcards, photographs etc. The chosen part of the landscape is located on a hillside at Črni Kal. Our visual analysis enabled us to partly analyse and evaluate a typical landscape in the Slovenian Littoral. Our findings suggest that the landscape elements and structures that give this area its characteristic appearance are now being overgrown and consequently the traditional image is disappearing. Based on our findings we now know that it is necessary to encourage terrace cultivation to recreate the traditional recognizable image of this landscape.

As stated above, man perceives his environment through different sensory receptors – with his whole body; through hearing, taste, haptic sensory system, kinaesthetic sense etc. (Berleant, 2012, 54). Sight and hearing, which enable us to distinguish between different structures, shapes, colours and distances, and to detect movement and hear noise or sounds, belong among *distance receptors*, while scent, taste, haptic sensory system and kinaesthetic sense, which enable us to perceive objects and space from close up, belong among *contact receptors* (Berleant, 2012, 54–55). Thus, landscape can be perceived from a distance by looking at it or listening to different sounds (sounds of waves, seagulls, folk music etc.), while the scent of a place (the scent of lav-

ender or other Mediterranean herbs, the scent of the sea, the smell of seafood etc.), immediate touch of a surface (when touching soil, grass, plant leaves, sand or even sensing humidity in the air etc.), the way we move in the landscape (walking up the hills, cycling among salt pans, cultivating the terraces etc.) enable us to perceive the space in which we are from close proximity. Based on a closer examination and deeper understanding of different ways in which man perceives a landscape, we can create a broader image of the landscape. Consequently, it is also easier to find answers to questions such as how we can protect and preserve specific landscapes. Using the example of the slope at Črni Kal (given in Fig. 2), we can ask ourselves: What are the characteristics of this area? Which senses should it awaken? Which plants attract visitors or what kind of paths should be arranged among them? By answering these questions we could – with a system of pathways among Mediterranean herbs – revive the visual image of the historical cultural landscape on the abandoned terraces at Črni Kal.

Our perception of the surroundings is inseparably connected with what is happening inside of us. This fact is well known in the field of psychology, which emphasises the influence of many different factors and circumstances on an individual. In this context and in the context of landscape perception, it can be said that an individual who never came into contact with the cultural landscape in his/her childhood will perceive it differently than an individual who grew up in it. Furthermore, various events (not necessarily taking place in childhood) influence our perception of cultural landscape. One of such events is war, a shocking event with a strong effect on people and their perception of their environment. War can give a landscape a totally different significance and

a new function which is usually (but not necessarily) replaced with the old one after wartime. However, for the people who actively took part in activities in a specific landscape during wartime, this landscape will have a different significance after the war despite the old function it re-assumed (e.g. for former soldiers, cultivated fields can still represent a battlefield in time of peace). Furthermore, a former soldier can transfer his perception of a specific landscape – as he perceived it during the war – to a “neutral” landscape, that is a landscape where war battles did not take place. Thus, the (former) soldier can get an unpleasant feeling in a large open field that offers no protection and thus represents a high-risk area. On the contrary, the same soldier can see a forest or a wooded area as a possible hideout, a dense and dark place that enables him to hide from the danger. Only when this individual perceives a wooded area as an area, which serves a different function (not as a hiding place), this area can be seen as a brighter, airy space (Lewin, 2009).

Man interprets a landscape also with regard to the aim of his action or as a space in which to perform his activity. Therefore, it is not unusual for a soldier to perceive a forest as a pleasant space (more than open fields), while a recreational user of the space considers the same cultivated fields with paths suitable for cycling more pleasant. Indeed, our perception is influenced by the society of which we are a part, by our profession, our way of life, our economic situation or our national consciousness. All these factors determine whether or not we see the overgrown terraces at Črni Kal as a lost historic cultural landscape or merely as some hillside that we pass while driving on the highway on our way to the coast. At this point, we will not proceed with an analysis of all the circumstances that can affect human perception, but we can discuss the influence of education, knowledge and profession using the example of the Slovenian painter Božidar Jakac (1899–1989). We can use this painter, who left us some written accounts of his impressions, as an example of how all three factors influence a person's perception of a landscape in which he/she is located. Božidar Jakac worked in different countries, including the United States of America, where he visited and painted the Grand Canyon. He described his impressions in the following words: “*Before me was a deep abyss, on whose bottom the mysterious Colorado River flowed through the dark chasm. On both sides – mighty terraces that narrow into spaces reminiscent of shrines of ancient deities, temples of the ancient Egyptians, Babylonians, Assyrians, Persians, Indians. The Na-*

ture itself formed them.” (Jakac, 1968, 34). The painter's knowledge enabled him to make a connection between the natural phenomena in the observed landscape and advanced ancient civilisations, which also demonstrates the influence of the society in which he lived (the society that appreciated the exceptional achievements of these ancient civilisations). The nature of his profession further affected his perception, which the painter described with words such as deep abyss, dark chasm and mysterious river. In addition, this painter's knowledge of the history of the observed landscape contributed to another experience described in the text: while painting, he heard Indians drumming and singing and an awful echo, “... *as if all the dormant demons of the “valley of dead spirits” have awoken...*” (Jakac, 1968, 34). The fact that the painter “heard” the drums and the singing of the Indians and used the words *valley of dead spirits* when describing his experience in the landscape clearly demonstrates his knowledge of the history of the area, since he enriched his interpretation of the landscape with the tradition of American Indians irrespective of whether they were actually present in the area.¹¹

With all this in mind we need to stress that a user of a space cannot be separated from the object he/she is perceiving – in this case from cultural landscape. The observer creates the space around him; he is connected with it and perceives it from his viewpoint (while the viewpoint is constantly changing). From a phenomenological point of view, it is important to know that the person perceiving the space is in a situation (*being in a situation*) – the person not only looks at the landscape but sees “with” the landscape or in relation to the space in which he is (Berleant, 1991, 61–62).

A landscape is also a social construct and is subject to cultural process; therefore, it should be kept in mind that human perception of landscape is learned. Man determines the meanings of the studied object and those meanings are always in correlation with the contemporary society's interpretation and also depend on the interpreter himself. Thus, various influences, dependencies or connections can be found within an individual interpretation of a landscape and within the contemporary society's interpretation (Berleant, 2012, 55; Berleant, 1991, 59). The landscape in the Slovenian Littoral is appreciated in today's capitalist society and understood mostly as a popular tourist destination. That is why it is possible to assume that the majority of (leisure-time) users of this area would describe the Littoral landscape as pleasant or use other positive words.

11 Let us add that Jakac's profession, education and national identity exerted an even broader influence through his works. Through his work, the painter strove to preserve his contemporary world, as he saw “*how his beloved world changed before his eyes, how farmers modernise their homesteads and do not cover their hay drying racks, not even with brick, let alone with wood or straw, how fields are disappearing beneath new settlements...*” (Čopič, 1988, 104). In a way, Jakac acted as a conservator of the cultural landscape by striving to capture and preserve its contemporary image (even though only on canvas) and by emphasizing the significance of the cultural landscape and trying to weave it into social consciousness and national identity. He succeeded in achieving these aims, for example in the case of the landscape of Dolenjska region, which is today well known and appreciated because of his many landscape paintings of this region.

Cultural conditionality of our perception of the environment is connected with the construct of identity, and cultural landscape is an important medium that shapes the identity of a certain group of people. People used to tie their identity to the place where they lived and to folk traditions preserved through the words of older inhabitants. At the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century, there were two main levels of identity – “the local one, learnt through the living memory of vernacular culture, and the national one, produced by history and taught within the school system” (Claval, 2007, 85–86). Now, at the beginning of the 21st century we can again observe the strengthening of “local identity” as we are now more inclined to identify ourselves with our surroundings in which we live (as indicated also in a research paper by Sedmak and Zadel, 2015, 165).

Most Slovenians attach great national significance especially to agricultural landscape. Our attitude towards cultural landscape as an area of great importance that is worth protecting arose recently, when we became aware that cultural landscape is a fast changing structure and when we learned how to distance ourselves from it in the role of tourists that offers a different viewpoint on the landscape (Kučan, 1999, 72, 74). We started to recognize our landscape as a symbol of national identity and thus some Slovenian landscapes or their images became “carriers of special meaning, signs understandable to certain social groups” (Kučan, 1999, 72).¹² In Slovenia, the landscapes typically recognized as national landscapes are those that contain scenes of homeliness and tradition – sometimes even moralistic scenes of idyllic homeliness (deriving from the agricultural origin of Slovenian landscapes). Such perception was evident already at the beginning of the 20th century, e.g. in the works of Slovenian impressionists,¹³ and further strengthened somewhat later in the 20th century through ample propaganda material (Žerovc, 2013; Kučan, 1999, 73–76; Kučan, 1998).

We can see that man perceives landscapes in different ways, and he does not even recognize many of them – not until he conducts an in-depth deliberation. How and what we perceive in a landscape dictates our appreciation of the landscape that can be linked with arts and the question of the aesthetic. Indeed, the greater

the aesthetic value attached to a landscape, the more people will appreciate it (and thus be more interested in its preservation and protection).

As Alois Riegl wrote in 1905, when he emphasized the importance of protection of natural and cultural heritage and proclaimed them equal, Georg Gottfried Dehio and Alois Riegl believed that the question of aesthetics was inappropriate in the case of cultural heritage (including the cultural landscape; Riegl, 1905; Wunsch, 2010, 5). According to Riegl, an observer sees a cultural monument – whether a painting, a castle or a landscape – as proof of our existence (*das Dasein*) which has greater significance than the aesthetic aspect. This proof of human existence is linked to history, to national consciousness and to humanity – thus, it is more than just artistic or historical interest that is evoked by the monument in professionals; it is a subjective feeling, a honour of a man, of a nation or of a humanity (*das Menschenheitsgefühl*), a feeling reminiscent of a religious feeling, which cannot be easily analyzed like for example the category of the historical or the beautiful (Riegl, 1905).

Despite the above view from the beginning of the 20th century, it seems that the question of the aesthetic and environment became popular again in the late 20th century. A new connection was established between the aesthetic, which is usually associated with art, and the environment, especially landscapes or, more specifically, landscape painting. Landscape painting is based on a sight (or view) of a part of a landscape¹⁴ framed in a picture frame, and on the artist’s creative work. We, as the observers of a landscape, also perceive it first with our sight, thus the idea of looking or gazing – which is also present when observing a painting – is familiar to us. This familiarity evidenced by some historical facts, such as the use of a Claude glass, small and tinted convex mirror, which tourists used to observe a landscape, or the popular *camera obscura* and pictorial boxes used in the 18th and 19th centuries. In addition to these examples from the past, there are more recent successful projects which combined the legacy of landscape painting with existing landscapes¹⁵ (Bos, 2015, 92; Berleant, 2012, 55; Berleant, 2004, 78–79; Berleant, 1991, 68; Carlson, 1979, 270). The other contact point between a landscape as a human habitat and a landscape as a mo-

12 The author names this phenomenon landscape iconography (Kučan, 1999, 72).

13 A picture of Ivan Grohar (titled *Sower*) was marked as a Slovenian myth and as a mental picture of patriotic scenery. This fact demonstrates how big influence could the art have on a subjective public perception of a landscape. After the exhibition in the year 1907 in a National home in Trieste in the newspaper *Slovenec* (Slovenian) said: “*This picture needs to become the most popular picture of our nation; you can see in it not only a piece of our country life, but also it reflects our soul, our being. It seems, as if the soft sound of heavy sowers’ step and a hidden melody of a mellow national song strike your ear from the morning mist ...*” (Slovenec, 1907).

14 Here, it is worth recalling the German legislation on environmental protection and the term *das Landschaftsbild* used in it.

15 In Great Britain, some cultural landscapes were restored based on paintings of these landscapes by the local artist John Constable. In south France, reproductions of impressionist landscape paintings were put into the landscapes where the original paintings were created. The Dutch followed the French example and put into a landscape a painting from the Hague school from the second half of the 19th century with the aim of raising the awareness of the locals and tourists and highlighting the importance of cultural-historical values of these landscapes (Bos, 2015, 92). In the Nordic lands, landscape paintings have been included in the elementary curriculum – since the 19th century landscape paintings have been a teaching tool for pupils enabling them to gain additional knowledge on their environment (Mels, Setten, 2007).



Slika 3: Ozke, navadno dolge obdelovalne površine, ki si stopničasto sledijo na terasiranem pobočju tvorijo prepoznaven krajinski vzorec primorskega sveta kot ga lahko vidimo tudi na Jakčevi risbi Zvonik in ciprese – Izola iz leta 1961 (Jakac, 1988, sl. 149)

Figure 3: In the painting *Zvonik in ciprese – Izola* by Božidar Jakac, dated 1961, we can see narrow cultivable terraces that rise in tiers and represent a recognisable landscape pattern of the Slovene Littoral region (Jakac, 1988, sl. 149)

tif in a picture is the fact that both are cultural constructs (Berleant, 2004, 86).

A landscape is an entity that can be aesthetically appreciated. When we talk about *appreciation* we need to understand it as a two-part process consisting of: the *sizing up* of the object and our reaction to the discovered object (this reaction is mostly equated with gratitude); at the same time, appreciation is a process in which the greatest importance should not be placed on the object we appreciate but on the process of appreciation itself (Berleant, 2012, 53; Carlson, 1995, 395–397). In the process of aesthetical appreciation we can encounter a problem if we evaluate environment as a whole, we see the world around us and we take it for granted, as something that we barely notice – as a background. What should we appreciate in the background, when no object is exposed? Allen Carlson suggests that

we appreciate everything (Carlson, 1979, 271). Consequently, this means that sight and hearing lose their priority when perceiving an object, as different senses must be used for perception (Carlson, 1979, 272). This fact – the loss of priority of the sight and hearing in perception – should be emphasized in the field of aesthetics, since the aesthetic appreciation and evaluation in western civilisation has been based especially on these two sense receptors in the last two hundred years (this process could be described as a *disinterestedness* that underlines the distance between the object and the subject; Berleant, 1991, 54). Today, the emphasis is on the process of our perception, which leads to the broad idea that we should appreciate everything. However, appreciation of everything in our surroundings from different points of view, with different methods and based on different theories is an uncontrollable task. Therefore, it is

possible to find various approaches and ideas in scientific literature about which elements of a landscape (particularly natural landscape or general surroundings) are important for the appreciation of the landscape. Carlson emphasises knowledge as the main distinctive factor in our perception.¹⁶ Different landscapes are perceived differently and we have different knowledge of them that determines how and where we can find the essential aesthetic value and an adequate manner of assessing it (Carlson, 1979, 274). Of course, there are many other factors significant for aesthetic appreciation and evaluation. In his 1995 paper, Noël Carroll believed the thrill that is evoked in people when observing a natural phenomenon to be most important for their appreciation of nature. On the other hand, Stan Godlovitch (just a year before the publication of Carroll's paper) wrote that the most important factor in the process of aesthetic appreciation is the mystery of nature, including the feelings it evokes – resulting in the realization about the insufficiency of human knowledge or our powerlessness in general. However, this idea about mystery could be connected with acts of worship (Carlson, 1995). In addition to these approaches, we should mention Emily Brady's idea. She understands the emphasis put on knowledge by Carlson in relation to our appreciation of nature as the search for objectivity that would make it easier for conservators and other environmental professionals to determine the aesthetic value of our environment – wherein (as she believes) the problem of aesthetic value being equated to scientific value can arise. She

emphasizes a different factor in aesthetic appreciation, namely imagination or, as she puts it, our *perceptual and imaginative capacities* (Brady, 1998, 142). Thus she presents a non-science-based model for aesthetic appreciation that encourages a variety of possible perceptual perspectives, thereby expanding and enriching our appreciation, as imagination leads us to an unpredictable, arbitrary and fantasy-prone experience (Brady, 1998).¹⁷ When examining all the mentioned criteria for assessing aesthetic value we can observe that they overlap – it is hard to imagine being able to admire the stone terraces of the Slovenian Littoral using only imagination, without knowing the significance of farmers' work, the geology or the geography of the area. Similarly, it would be hard to evaluate a landscape that evokes thrill¹⁸ without including imagination or perception of known and unknown objects (e.g. when perceiving a strong blast of Bora wind or rough seas) into such evaluation.¹⁹

We can conclude that human perception and appreciation of landscape are multifaceted – and so is landscape. It is difficult to assume how exactly an individual perceives a cultural landscape or its constituent part. In the case of the historical landscape of the Slovenian Littoral we could anticipate some of the possible ways of perceiving such landscape by a member of our society. While walking on narrow terraces on a slope (e.g. hillside at Črni Kal), an individual will identify in a landscape specific elements such as cypress trees, parallel lines of the terraces, nucleated villages etc. His eyes will capture the structure of the landscape, while his hearing will help him

16 "We cannot appreciate everything; there must be limits and emphasis in our aesthetic appreciation of nature as there are in our appreciation of art" (Carlson, 1979, 272). "... knowledge, essentially common sense/scientific knowledge, seems to me the only viable candidate for playing the role in regard to the appreciation of nature which our knowledge of types of art, artistic traditions, and the like plays in regard to the appreciation of art" (Carlson, 1979, 273).

17 Brady divides imagination into 1) *exploratory imagination* that enables parallel associations (e.g. the image of wrinkled mountains or skin of an old man when observing tree bark texture) when observing an object; 2) *projective imagination* that adds to the observed object or even overlays it with some other image or experience (e.g. when looking at the stars at night, imaginative activity can overlay what we actually see with geometrical shapes created by the constellations we are familiar with); 3) *ampliative imagination* demands creative powers and a special curiosity (e.g. when we admire sea pebbles while visualizing the relentless surging of the ocean as it has shaped the pebbles into their worn form); 4) *revelatory imagination* that upgrades the object we perceive, stretches the power of imagination to its limits and often gives way to a kind of truth or knowledge about the world (e.g. we can perceive a lamb as something pleasant and adorable, which could lead us to forming an association between the lamb and purity/innocence. Brady determines two (safety) guidelines for landscape evaluation using the criterion of imagination, which is quite a subjective criterion. One of these guidelines is *disinterestedness*, which enables the observer to distance himself from the observed object so as to eliminate the danger of self-indulgence by the imaginative subject. The second guideline is characterized by comparing imagination to a virtue, so that we "imagine well" - "imagining well involves spotting aesthetic potential, having a sense of what to look for, and knowing when to clip the wings of imagination" (Brady, 1998, 142–146). A more precise look at the mentioned categories of imagination tells us that almost all of them (except maybe the first one) are in a way connected with knowledge; in order to see the geometrical shapes in constellations we need to know these constellations and these shapes; in order to be amazed by the form of pebbles, we need to know the workings of the sea; to be able to see innocence in a lamb or at least consider this connection reasonable, we need to know and understand cultural determinism.

18 Mystery as well as thrill can be connected also to the term "sublime". Yet even the experience of the sublime demands an intellectual emotion (Brejč, 2008, 54).

19 Let us give one more example regarding all the mentioned criteria for assessing the aesthetic value of the cultural landscape of the Littoral. When appreciating sinkholes on a karst plateau near the village of Črnotiče, where these circular forms create a moon-like landscape, we incorporate (in our appreciation) the knowledge of the creation of these karst phenomena and the resourcefulness of the local people to recognize in these holes filled with fertile soil a kind of farmland. The whole landscape dotted with the circular forms can activate other above-mentioned criteria – thrill, mystery and imagination. Looking at a landscape that is so unfamiliar to us wonder how such a landscape can exist on Earth (although we are familiar with the scientific explanation); at the same time, this sensation can evoke a feeling of thrill. Furthermore, our imagination can transport us from this landscape at Črnotiče to the Moon, which could constitute yet another criterion worth considering when preserving this landscape.

gather different information about this area (e.g. about the seagulls that found their dwellings among the salt pans). Through the use of other senses, his perception may be complemented with the sensation of the temperature of the atmosphere, the taste of local food, the scent of blossoming herbs, the touch of rough evergreen plants or his movement over the stony surface. It is possible that, in addition to the pleasant fragrances, temperature and views, his memory of e.g. a summer vacation in his childhood would make his experience in such surroundings even more relaxing. His education might direct his attention to cypresses, which he might perceive as a characteristic element of the Mediterranean, as a sign indicating the presence of a cemetery and death, as a carrier of ancient mythological symbolism, or he will notice similarities with other evergreen plants of the Littoral region. Maybe he will start to wonder what other vertical elements are present in the landscape or he will think of an artistic work such as *Cypresses* by van Gogh while observing a cypress tree in front of him. At this point, the observer's sight can contribute yet another perspective, as it triggers a comparison between the observed landscape and a landscape we know from before or a landscape that is typical and well known in this area. This comparison can result in the *anxiety of influence*. The observer's perception of a landscape in the Slovenian Littoral will also be strongly influenced by the society and culture to which he belongs. Thus, it is most likely that he will perceive the historical cultural landscape of the Littoral as a touristic attractive destination, as a cultural heritage object and as a part of Slovenian identity. Furthermore, such perception could be strengthened through a presentation of the landscape by placing panels showing reproductions of landscape paintings into the landscape itself (an example is given in Fig. 3) – following the examples of some European countries (see footnote 15) that succeeded in clearly demonstrating the cultural and historical value of an observed landscape. This kind of projects are successful due to the fact that a landscape is a result of relationships between action, conception and physical experiences – which take place while observing a landscape and its former image on a reproduction of a landscape painting. Thus, narrative becomes essential factor for the percep-

tion of a landscape (Hunt, 2012, 20). Based on the above findings, we can conclude that perception as well as aesthetic appreciation of a historical cultural landscape in the Slovenian Littoral by an individual will be positive.

This paper presents definitions of historical cultural landscape, a state of some of the existing provisions in the field of environmental protection, the fact that human perception, in the case of Slovenian legislation, is not taken into account in such provisions, new elements that are included in the process of definition and protection of landscapes (authenticity, intangible attributes, symbolic meanings of a landscape), the significance of cultural landscape for us as a human as a being (*Dassein* and *Menschenheitsgefühl*), the influences on man's perception of the environment (from different scientific fields of psychology, phenomenology, perception theory, aesthetics etc.), but mostly it presents some elements of landscape and of human perception that should be considered when evaluating or protecting a landscape. Keeping all these factors in mind, we can determine which criteria to use in order to make a comprehensive analysis of the landscape and consequently to protect an environment as a whole. Thus, we could make it possible for an authentic landscape to remain authentic. At this point, we should keep in mind the words of Lev Kreft, who warns that the authentic loses its authenticity as soon as we start to question it:

"It may seem paradoxical, but it is like this: when we talk about the authenticity of a work of art and about the authenticity of human historical and general existence, this is precisely how non-authenticity dictates the non-authentic, endangered and discontented existence of authenticity. As soon as we start talking about authenticity, it is already gone, since it becomes the topic of a conversation only when it is problematic or barely authentic." (Kreft, 2005, 69)

Therefore, we conclude that it is necessary to understand the multifaceted nature of landscapes and human perception to ensure that our authentic landscape retains its authenticity and remains as pristine as possible.

PIRAMIDALNE CIPRESE, LINEARNE TERASE IN SPREHOD MED DIŠAVNICAMI.
VEČPLASTNOST KULTURNE KRAJINE IN ČLOVEKOVE PERCEPCIJE LE-TE

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POVZETEK

Prispevek želi poudariti široko polje, ki ga zaobjema krajina in človekovo dožemanje le-te. Najprej so predstavljene različne definicije in pogledi na kulturno krajino, ki jih predstavlja strokovna literatura in nekatera zakonska določila. Že začetni pogled na definicije nam razkrije, da je kulturno krajino nemogoče opisati le kot fizični prostor ali zgolj kot prostor, v katerem delujeta človek in narava, ampak jo moramo gledati tudi kot neke vrste "mentalni" prostor, ki ga pogojuje človekovo zaznavanje njegovega okolja. V tujih zakonskih določilih in v Evropski konvenciji o krajini lahko opazimo, da je v podanih definicah krajine vključeno tudi človekovo zaznavanje, medtem ko v primeru slovenskih zakonskih določil iz področja varstva okolja in dediščine slednje ni prisotno. Tako se zdi, da so v času oblikovanja teh zakonskih določil od devetdesetih let 20. stoletja do danes, strokovnjaki pozabili na dognanja, ki so bila zbrana in objavljena v Strategiji varstva krajine v Sloveniji in so sledila sočasnim svetovnim trendom s tega področja. Že v devetdesetih letih sta se namreč na konferencah o ohranjanju svetovne dediščine UNESCO, utrdila pojma pristnost (authenticity) in neotipljivi elementi (intangible attributes) kulturne krajine, ki kažeta na novo, razširjeno dožemanje krajine.

V primeru preučevanja in varovanja kulturne krajine je pomembno, da se zavedamo, kako človek pravzaprav dožema svoje okolje. Posameznik prostor okoli sebe zaznava ne samo s čutili (vidom, sluhom, okusom, tipom ...), ampak nanj vplivajo še mnogi drugi dejavniki – od družbe, izobrazbe, poklica, finančnega stanja, počutja, spominov, notranjih doživetij idr. Zato moramo opazovalca prostora videti kot posameznika, kot del družbe, kot del opazovalnega prostora itn. Poleg tega je krajina kulturni konstrukt, je tvorec identitete, je dokaz človekovega obstoja in lahko vzbudi časten občutek človeka oz. človeštva. Dožemanje krajine moremo povezati tudi z estetiko in estetskim cenjenjem, saj večja kot je estetska vrednost, ki jo pripisemo krajini, večji bo interes za njeno ohranitev. Pri tem na našo estetsko cenjenje vpliva (glede na različne avtorje) znanje, vznemirjenje, skrivnostnost ali domišljija.

Pomembno je, da se zavedamo, da človek ne dožema svojega okolja le z vidom (in sluhom), ampak v njegovi zaznavi sodelujejo mnogi faktorji, ki se jih sam niti ne more takoj zavedati, ki pa lahko strokovnjakom pomagajo pri poglobljeni (in ne zgolj vizualni) analizi kulturne krajine ter posledično pri njenem celostnem ohranjanju.

Ključne besede: Krajina, kulturna krajina, zgodovinska kulturna krajina, zaznavanje, pristnost, vizualni elementi, neoprijemljivi elementi, vizualna analiza, cenjenje krajine, okoljska estetika, Primorje

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