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Cultural Heritage as a Shared Resource. The Role of Collaboration Between Stakeholders in Cultural Heritage Management

Abstract: A particularly important issue in the context of cultural heritage manage-
ment is currently the question of sustainable development, in which cultural heritage
objects are analyzed in terms of their economic, social and cultural values. Most ac-
cepted perspective in the current discussions focuses on the formulation and imple-
mentation of cultural policies. While on the other hand much less space is given to
local communities, their needs and expectations in relation to the available resources
of cultural heritage. In this text I will discuss the issue of the functioning of various
objects of cultural heritage within local communities and management of those ob-
jects at the local level. Particular emphasis will be placed on the issue of multiplicity
of cultural heritage stakeholders and interactions between them.

Key words: cultural heritage, cultural heritage stakeholders, social participation,
cultural heritage management

A particularly vital issue in the context of cultural heritage management to-
day is the question of sustainable development, in which cultural heritage
objects are analysed in terms of economic, social and cultural values.[1] The
most common perspective adopted in the debates focuses on the formula-
tion and implementation of cultural policies. Much less attention is devoted
to local communities and their needs and expectations related to the availa-

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[1] A. Góral, "Dziedzictwo kulturowe jako zasób wspólny. Rola współpracy między intere-
sariuszami w zarządzaniu dziedzictwem kulturowym," *Zarządzanie w Kulturze* 2014, Vol. 15,
No. 3, pp. 277–286.

ble cultural heritage resources. The following text discusses the management of cultural heritage objects on the local level, and how such objects operate. Particular emphasis will be placed on the issue of the multiplicity of cultural heritage stakeholders and their mutual interactions.

1. Introduction

Concepts such as a 'sense of belonging' and 'sense of identity' are widely referenced in discussions about cultural heritage. There are also other words, including 'culture', 'value', 'tradition', 'history', as well as associations with the UNESCO List of World Heritage Sites. This was confirmed by the report named "Dziedzictwo kulturowe w oczach Polaków – raport z badań społecznych" ("Cultural heritage in the eyes of Poles – social research report"), commissioned by the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage in 2012.[2] Such connotations make people associate cultural heritage with something grand, e.g. an architectural object, which is of great importance to the history and cultural identity of the nation, like the Wawel Hill in Cracow. It is only after further discussion that we are more likely to reflect upon cultural heritage locally and search for objects, things and practices that matter (often on the unconscious level) to ordinary people in their daily lives. These associations are in a way a reflection of their expectations related to cultural heritage resources: references to the sense of identity and belonging clearly emphasise the role of cultural heritage in the socio-cultural development of local communities, while references to tourism can be linked to the economic dimension of cultural heritage.

An interesting perspective on cultural heritage is expressed in humanistic geography, whose representatives, including Yi-Fu Tuan, Edward Relph and Anne Buttimer, reflect on the "essence of place," focusing on a human being as viewed through the prism of culture and its heritage on the regional level.[3] In this perspective, cultural heritage must be understood as something more than an object of high artistic or historical value – above all, it must be conceived as an expression of the man's culture and his relations with the place where he lives. These may vary, including cultural, identity-oriented, social and economic relations. In this way, heritage should not only be equated with the past, but also treated as an important element of the present which shapes the identity of a place and its inhabitants. In this context, particular attention should be paid to the words of Laurajane Smith, who claims that:

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[2] *Dziedzictwo kulturowe w oczach Polaków – raport z badań społecznych*, Warszawa 2012.
[3] Y.F. Tuan, *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience*, London 1977.

Heritage as place, or heritage places, may not only be conceived as representational of past human experiences but also of creating an effect on current experiences and perceptions of the world. Thus, a heritage place may represent or stand in for a sense of identity and belonging for particular individuals or groups.[4]

While considering cultural heritage, it is therefore worth taking a look at the role cultural heritage plays in local communities, depending on the individual and collective needs of their members, and at their commitment to cultural heritage protection and management. At the same time, based on the paradigm of sustainable development in the management of cultural heritage, it is necessary to discuss the relations between members of local communities and their influence on the protection and rational management of cultural heritage resources.

2. Cultural heritage stakeholders

Contemporary discussions on local development and the resources used to stimulate it increasingly often revolve around the multiplicity of the so-called stakeholders interested in such resources. The concept of "stakeholders" was first used in 1963 by the Stanford Research Institute.[5] The classic definition proposed by Freeman describes a stakeholder as "any group or person who can affect or is affected by the achievement of the objectives of the organization."[6] However, the more accessible definition is "actors on cultural scenes," which appears more and more frequently in the context of cultural resources and heritage management and has been proposed by the Malopolska Institute of Culture (Polish: MIK) in its publication "Sceny kulturowe a polityki kultury w Małopolsce"[7] ("Cultural scenes and cultural policy in MalopolskaLesser Poland"). When analysing the structure of the space in which cultural heritage resources function, it may be observed that its vital part includes people or groups who perceive these resources as an opportunity to meet their own individual needs or to develop the entire community. One needs to remember that this development may be interpreted in different dimensions: social, economic and cultural. Thus, stakeholders, when satisfying their needs by using cultural heritage resources, have a significant impact on their preservation and growth, and, at the same time, these resources significantly influence

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4   L. Smith, *Uses of Heritage*, London and New York 2006.
5   R.E. Freeman, *Strategic management. A Stakeholder Approach*, Cambridge 2011, [after:] Ł. Gaweł, "Zarządzanie strategiczne szlakiem dziedzictwa kulturowego w świetle koncepcji stakeholders," *Turystyka Kulturowa* 2012, Vol. 10, pp. 31–40.
6   *Ibid.*
7   Ł. Krzyżowski *et al.*, *Sceny kulturowe a polityki kultury w Małopolsce*, Kraków 2010.

stakeholders themselves, their development and their relations with the environment. In this way, the interaction between cultural heritage resources and their users becomes bilateral. Freeman divides stakeholders into two groups:

a) Internal stakeholders, i.e. people/institutions that have a direct impact on the shape and functioning of heritage objects. At the same time, all the changes taking place in heritage objects themselves directly influence this group. For example, if a heritage object or a cultural event is popular with tourists, direct benefits are derived from it by the staff of a cultural institution or the organisers of the event, but if the object/event is becoming less popular, the staff or the organisers are also the first ones to suffer losses. This group also includes members of local communities as 'live carriers' of cultural heritage, as well as social organisations.

b) External stakeholders, i.e. people/institutions that indirectly benefit from the profit made by a cultural institution/event. These include providers, users of goods and services, local authorities, and the media. For instance, local companies feel it is important that a particular cultural institution is successful or that a specific cultural event continues to be organised, because the audience may incidentally buy the services or goods of nearby companies (e.g. hotels or restaurants).

However, Freeman's division seems to be incomplete, as many a time certain individuals play multiple roles in their communities: a person may be an employee of a cultural institution that organises cultural festivals, a resident of a commune, an attendee of a folk festival organised by a local association, and, in his spare time, may create hand-made doilies based on traditional local patterns, which s/he then sells to tourists. The roles depend on individual interests or needs to be met at a given moment.

At the same time, while observing the diversity of stakeholders interested in cultural heritage resources, it is easy to notice that there are dependencies between them which, on the one hand, reflect the "copybook" process of developing cultural heritage awareness in the inhabitants of a region, but, on the other hand, present the complementarity of various cultural heritage stakeholders' actions in the context of sustainable local development based on cultural heritage resources. The first social actor that we meet when learning about our cultural heritage is a family, where, from the day we are born, we observe cultural practices, which are often an integral part of everyday life. In further stages of human development, it is school that teaches us about cultural heritage resources available in our region. This knowledge is developed through contact with local cultural institutions (libraries and museums), which gather and document the manifestations of local culture. At the same

time, it is usually cultural institutions (next to families, especially grandparents) which use cultural education to teach children how to reconstruct local traditions, customs and rituals. Next, during the course of our personal development, there are churches, religious associations and local NGOs, which show us how local culture works in practice (by nurturing local traditions and reconstructing them in line with their calendar) by implementing unconventional and unique projects that stimulate local community's creativity and encourage people to utilise the existing resources in an innovative fashion. In this way, the most resourceful members of a local community start their own businesses and either directly derive from local heritage resources (e.g. handicrafts) or develop the elements of tourist infrastructure in the region, contributing to an increased influx of tourists (e.g. restaurants, hotels , tourism). Managing the entire process is the responsibility of regional authorities, whose task is to formulate a development strategy which not only indicates the priority areas of support in a given programming period, but also indirectly specifies the nature and scope of potential interactions between intangible cultural heritage resources stakeholders.

3. Top-down or bottom-up management?

When reflecting upon the management of cultural heritage resources, one cannot ignore the role of stakeholders in the development and preservation of these resources. According to the practitioners of heritage management, this issue is one of the priorities. Full and sustainable use of cultural heritage resources in a given area is, in fact, a key premise of local development based on endogenous factors. Another important condition for effective cultural heritage management is the active involvement of stakeholders, especially local communities, which are "live carriers" of this heritage. However, as noted by Smith and Waterton in the course of their studies, "the rhetoric of 'community' is used to make ourselves feel good about the work we do as heritage professionals."[8] In an era when the 'participatory approach' dominates the discourse on management, especially in the public sector, more often than not it becomes mere 'political correctness' instead of tangible actions. Reality shows that cultural heritage management is primarily the responsibility of public institutions, NGOs (particularly those with at least a regional range) and entrepreneurs, all of which act separately. This is mainly evidenced by large-scale projects realised in Małopolska and financed with public funds (EU, ministerial and provincial funds), e.g. "Szlak Tradycyjnego Rzemiosła" ("Traditional

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[8] L. Smith, E. Waterton, *Heritage, Communities and Archaeology*, London 2009, p. 12.

Craft Trail"), implemented and animated by the NadWyraz Foundation, or the Galician Town project in Nowy Sącz, led by the local District Museum. Even the famous "Smakowanie Małopolski" ("Tasting Małopolska") project, which seems to be a successful yearly recurring event, aimed to promote the cuisine of the Małopolska region, is a top-down initiative of the Małopolska Province. Such initiatives can certainly be considered successful, both in terms of their social (raising awareness of local communities about the richness and value of cultural heritage) and economic impact (developing the so-called heritage industries) on regional development. However, they are clearly lacking good projects and grassroots initiatives, originating from and implemented by local communities. The initiatives that appear are definitely not very media-attention-grabbing, and – as shown by numerous examples – can be considered more effective in the context of protection and sustainable use of cultural heritage resources. This is evidenced by numerous initiatives, including the measures taken in the commune of Lanckorona by local associations (e.g. the "Na Bursztynowym szlaku" ("Amber Trail") Association and its Ekomuzeum project) or in Lipnica Murowana, where the 50-year-old initiative to organise a competition for the tallest Easter palm came from a local social activist. Cross-sectorial partner initiatives are rare too. Public and private entities frequently operate completely independently of each other, although concerted actions would certainly bring better results.

Top-down approach to management is not wrong and undoubtedly deserves credit. Existing legal regulations oblige state and local authorities to take measures in the broadly defined realm of cultural heritage resource management. The organisation and scope of tasks set out by relevant legal provisions, as well as the management tools available for local governments make them important stakeholders of cultural heritage, both as supervisors and as sponsors. Owing to their strategic and financial role in education as well as powers to plan spatial development, grant concessions and licences, draw up legal regulations related to the operation of enterprises, and monitor trade standards and product quality, local governments can stimulate the sustainable development of the region based on the existing resources of intangible cultural heritage. This development is not only social, but also economic, which is particularly important today. What is equally important, such intervention of state and local authorities belongs to the duties of relevant institutions and does not require authorities to use any additional funding.[9]

The role of local governments in the management of cultural heritage resources can be therefore defined as "providing framework" for the efficient

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[9] This issue is elaborated on in the text: A. Góral, "Rola samorządu terytorialnego w zarządzaniu niematerialnym dziedzictwem kulturowym," in: *Niematerialne dziedzictwo kulturowe: źródła – wartości – ochrona*, Warszawa 2013, pp. 99–110.

development and functioning of cultural heritage in local communities. On the other hand, this framework specifies the scope for other stakeholder groups, primarily for non-governmental and private sectors. It may curb the activities of other entities when it comes to the usage of cultural heritage resources or allow for the broad exploitation of those resources. Choosing the right strategy often depends on the level of awareness and development of the society in which a local government unit operates.[10] It is thus worth finding opportunities for the cooperation between different actors so that our cultural heritage resources are fully and efficiently utilised in the process of fostering local development.

4. Cooperation between stakeholders for cultural heritage. Case study

As already highlighted, managing cultural heritage resources and, in particular, specifying and achieving cultural policy goals is the responsibility of local authorities. Both in the case of Lanckorona and Lipnica Murowana, direct implementation of tasks related to culture and heritage is the role of municipal cultural institutions. At the same time, in both communes, an important role in initiatives undertaken for cultural heritage is played by other socio-economic actors.

In Lanckorona, there are numerous organisations and associations which are a vital part of the commune's socio-cultural life and are actively involved in culture and national heritage:

1. Towarzystwo Przyjaciół Lanckorony (The Society of Friends of Lanckorona) – major activities: managing the local Antoni Krajewski Museum and publishing the cultural quarterly called "Kurier Lanckoroński."
2. The "Na bursztynowym szlaku" ("Amber Trail") Ecological and Cultural Association – major activities: managing the Ekomuzeum Lanckorona museum, organising regional events, e.g. "Anioł w miasteczku" ("Angel in Town"), and promoting local handicraft and culinary products.
3. Terra Artis Association – major projects are implemented in the areas of art education and shaping cultural identity.
4. The "Gościniec 4 żywiołów" ("The Four Elements Inn") Local Action Group – the most important initiatives of the Association (which operates in four communes: Kalwaria Zebrzydowska, Lanckorona, Mu-

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[10] D. Throsby, *Ekonomia i kultura*, Warszawa 2010.

charz and Stryszów) are defined in the Local Development Strategy; priorities include the protection, development and economic exploitation of cultural heritage.
5. The "Horyzonty" ("Horizons") Social Company – major activities: managing a cultural coffee house and a shop with regional handicrafts.

An important element of Lanckorona's local economy – directly related to cultural heritage resources – are services in the domain of cultural industries developed by public institutions, NGOs and entrepreneurs: art galleries, quaint themed cafés and events of the annual cultural calendar (e.g. "Anioł w miasteczku" Festival ["Angel in Town"], Jarmark Świętojański [St. John's Fair], the "Pracownia Muz" guitar workshops, etc.). Such use of cultural resources is exemplified by the initiatives of the "Horyzonty" Social Company, the transformation of a former magistrate into a stylish tavern ("Cafe Pensjonat") and, last but not least, one private investment project: turning the nineteenth-century wooden house (Świętokrzyska St.) into a stylish café ("Cafe Arka") and a gallery of artistic ceramics in one.

The multiplicity of actors involved in guiding the development of culture in the commune, and their active participation in its implementation proves that these resources are of great importance to the local community of Lanckorona. The closeness of cooperation between the stakeholders of local cultural heritage is evidenced by "Strategia Rozwoju Gminy Lanckorona do roku 2015" ("The Development Strategy of the Lanckorona Commune by 2015"), which is the result of the collaboration between the commune and the leaders of the local community. The Strategy identifies culture, cultural heritage and education as main areas of intervention and the pillars of sustainable development.

In Lipnica Murowana, a special role in managing local heritage is played by the parish community led by the local parish priest. From the very beginning of his work in the parish of Lipnica Murowana, the priest has been actively involved in efforts to protect and promote local cultural heritage. However, the local community's increased interest in cultural heritage stems from initiatives of a clear bottom-up nature. The role of local cultural heritage in the life of local community was first appreciated by Józef Piotrowski, a local social activist, who in 1958 organised the first Easter Palm Competition.[11] With time the competition, held annually until today, has grown to be a very important event for the residents of Lipnica, an event that binds the local community, contributes to the preservation of local traditions, and is a chance to 'show off' the richness of local heritage. Now organised by the Municipal Cultural Centre in Lipnica Murowana, the competition annually

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[11] K. Przybyłko, *Historia lipnickich palm sięgających nieba*, Kraków 2008, p. 30.

attracts a wide audience of up to several thousand, making it an event of national importance. Another crucial stage in the preservation and development of Lipnica's cultural heritage is associated with the wooden Church of Saint Leonard in Lipnica Murowana, cared for by the local parish priest Rev. Zbigniew Kras since 1999. Thanks to his efforts, the Church has been included on the UNESCO *World Heritage* List. Rev. Kras is extremely committed to the preservation and promotion of local cultural heritage, trying to involve the local community and external stakeholders: private sponsors and public institutions responsible for the conservation of monuments. Lipnica Murowana is marked by the close cooperation between different entities to organise events related to local cultural heritage. The best example is the already-mentioned Palm Competition, organised primarily by the Municipal Cultural Centre. However, the event is co-organised by the parish, since the competition has its roots in the Christian tradition. The commune, which issues all the necessary permits, provides the stage and logistics (including the supervision of local firefighters). The event also involves local entrepreneurs, who can promote and sell their traditional and hand-made products during the accompanying fair. Thus, the Competition is clearly a joint event for the entire local community, where there is something for everyone.

A particularly interesting example of cultural heritage management, involving all stakeholders, especially the local community as a 'carrier' of these resources, is the strategy adopted for the Tac Festival (Festa dos Tabuleiros), organised in the town of Tomar in the Portuguese region of Centrum. This flagship cultural event is a major tourism product of the region. By definition, the Tac Festival is an event strongly associated with the local community and cultivated by this community. Therefore, in line with the long-standing tradition, every four years during the Festival there is a meeting attended by all Tomar inhabitants aimed at deciding if the Festival will take place and who will be its leader (it can be anyone, provided they are supported by other attendees). The Tomar inhabitants start to organise the event as early as six months before, preparing decorative flowers and garlands to adorn the town. Throughout the Festival week, the town sparkles with all the colours of the world and is even ornamented with rugs hanging from windows. Local authorities become involved in the preparations only after the decision to organise it has been made. They provide logistic support (including appropriate permits, event publicity, organise the procession and financial aid). On the day of the celebration, this small town in Portugal hosts over 150,000 tourists from both home and abroad. The Festival has a unique family feel to it, with hundreds of multigenerational family picnics around. The townspeople put on festive clothes and expose pride in their traditions and customs, which are appreciated by visitors.

5. Summary

Thanks to their systematic initiatives to nurture cultural heritage, both towns, based on their cultural resources, have developed own cultural brands, which are symbols of high quality cultural products, creativity and a strong sense of regional identity, combining both social and economic aspects. Lanckorona, Lipnica Murowana and the Portuguese town of Tomar are associated with a wealth of cultural heritage, which is regarded by the locals as an important pillar of development. They are recognised brands not only locally, but also in Europe, as evidenced by the fact that their representatives are often invited to international conferences, and their activities are presented as a role model of good practices.

This is the result of many years of cooperation and involvement of many different actors in the protection and development of local cultural heritage resources. The tradition of active participation in the management of available resources has contributed to the fact that the involvement of many entities has been evident from the very emergence of the idea to the development of the communes until today, when these ideas are being implemented. This makes the residents of Lanckorona, Lipnica Murowana and Tomar feel personally responsible for the success of their towns and constantly motivated to strive for it.

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