

Vegetation accompaniment of small monuments and its interpretation in landscape archaeology

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In the geographical and historical space of Central Europe, small monuments or built artefacts connected with trees are generally considered a typical identification feature of landscape. Besides the connection between the built object and its vegetation accompaniment, the presented paper points out to the significant relation to the specific place and landscape. The text covers a phenomenological definition of such places defining the space (landscape) towards a structural understanding of the relation of place – small monument – tree. Small monuments and trees explain the space that is concentrated within them and their mutual interconnection reflects the character of the landscape, history of the place, perception, and preference of values in the society. On a background of the basic historical excursion covering vegetation as an accompaniment of small monuments, the methodology concentrates on structural investigation and covers the aspects of typology, evolution, and landscape design. In terms of typology the text presents a basic listing of woody species that commonly accompany small monuments in the Czech Republic, and defines the prerequisites of a relation between the individual species to a specific type of built monument. In terms of evolution, basic model situations are outlined that characterise the dynamic of places, small monuments, and trees in the landscape. In the perspective of time, a place in a landscape is understood as a domain of transformations in the relation between the small monument and a tree. The paper characterizes partial principles of this evolutionary dynamics on selected model sites. In terms of landscape character assessment, the paper identifies and summarizes key model situations documenting how places with small monuments and trees manifest in a landscape. The presented paper is a result of a long-term continuous research of a collective of authors. It issues from already delivered as well as currently performed field surveys and documentations in an unbuilt landscape and in the countryside of small rural settlements in the Czech Republic.