

## ŠTÚDIE

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**CONCEPTION OF RESOURCES OR CONCEPTION OF THE LANDSCAPE  
POTENTIAL IN THE GEOGRAPHICAL RESEARCH?**

Emil Mazúr, Ján Drdoš: Conception des ressources ou conception du potentiel de paysage dans la recherche géographique? Geogr. Čas., 36, 1984, 4; 30 réf.

Lors de l'évaluation de la convenance de paysage pour l'utilisation économique variée on opère le plus souvent avec la conception ressource ou la ressource naturelle et au cours des 10–15 dernières années aussi avec la conception le potentiel naturel ou de paysage. Par la ressource naturelle on indique le plus souvent les matériaux et les forces des éléments naturels individuels qu'on utilise dans les diverses branches économiques. Ici la question de la protection de paysage est le sujet de la thérapie. La conception du potentiel naturel est plus complexe, mais elle se rapporte seulement aux éléments naturels de paysage. La géographie tchécoslovaque avait développé la conception du potentiel de paysage, qui considère non seulement la convenance de paysage (en tant que système hybride) pour l'utilisation économique, mais aussi la mesure de cette utilisation, fondée sur la connaissance de la stabilité du sous-système naturel de paysage. Cette conception comprend la prévention de la destruction de paysage. Dans la recherche de paysage la conception du potentiel de paysage est plus convenable que la conception de la ressource naturelle, car elle exprime non seulement les propriétés de paysage, mais aussi la rapport de l'homme au paysage.

## INTRODUCTION

Man's relationship with the environment passes through many changes in various historic stages and various spatial conditions. In part since the appearance of man to the recent past his relationship with this environment, simply said with the landscape started from the feeling of existential certainty, from the conception that the landscape is a permanently suitable undisturbed man's home.

The scientific and technical means, of which man disposes presently, enable such interventions in the environment, in the landscape, as never before in the past. Technicization, or better said anthropogenization of the environment had long ago overpassed the local or the regional inhabitants,

changes character. Growth of the number of inhabitants, changes of the social structure, incessant rising of man's living demands, etc., all this led to an intense growth of claims for classical and new untraditional resources, for foods, for energy, for water, for new utility spaces, etc.

This growth in requirements and acceleration of the anthropogenization, or technicization of the landscape is manifest in the conditions of the scientific-technical revolution with the occurrence of conflicting to crisis situations, in the relationship man-environment.

The old forms of coexistence of the society and environment (landscape) were outdone.

The conflicting situations put man before the task to distinguish quickly and radically the activities which preserve or raise to a power the qualities of the environment to be man's home from activities which disturb this quality of the environment.

For the society's practice in the past it was sufficient to have a general knowledge of the environment, based in substance on the summation approach. The individual natural sciences, or some other disciplines offered sufficient informations on the individual landscape elements and on its resources. The practice did not require a systems knowledge of the landscape environment as a whole.

The existing, or in the future possible, conflicting situations in the relationship man-landscape show evidently that the summation knowledge, whatever detailed it may be, resulting from the syncretic understanding of the landscape, is insufficient. The landscape becomes a resource ofgnoseological problems immensely complicated.

Indispensable becomes the study of the landscape environment as a system in its entirety. Beside the highly specialized researches the systems approach as an equivalent and irreplaceable one enters the knowledgeable process of the landscape.

In the light of the indicated facts there emerges before geography, as a basic discipline of the landscape, the obligation to provide such systems facts which would significantly contribute to the positive solution of the new, frequently conflicting relationship man-environment, in the interest of the landscape system functioning as man's home even for the future. One of the conditions of the new systems approach and of the rational use of the environment — landscape based on it is the clarification of the idea of the landscape resources and potential. There occurs the question of approach to the landscape function from the conceptional position of resources or from the conception of the potential.

### *Conception of resources in geography*

The conception of resources gained access to geography from the society's practice and this directly, or through various applied disciplines. The conception of resources starts from the traditional branch landscape use, and above all of its natural resources. The conception of natural resource made its access to modern discipline and to geography in fact from the 19th century and remains in its field till today. The conception of resource is the expression of human evolution. Nature itself has neither a positive or negative

value, this is given to it by man with regard to the possibilities of its use for his benefice. As I. Bartkowski (1979) underlines it, the conception resource does not result from the thing or substance, but from the function, which thing or substance it may have for man. The conception resource took origin as the result of interaction between man and nature. W. C. Mitchel (1940) stresses that each generation may disclose further resources and find new forms of using the resources. I. e. the resources are dynamic not only in the relationship to human knowledge, but also to the changing human needs and objectives. It is why even the definition of natural resources and resources in general in the literature changes considerably with time. According to J. D. Sauškin (1960) the natural resources are the natural elements of the environment which can be used to create energy (resources of water energy, fuel, wind, resources of sea waves, etc.); resources are further on the roots of savage plants, the meat of savage animals, fishes, industrial raw materials, wood, water and the atmosphere. According to N. Perloff (1969) the natural resources represent above all those elements of the natural process, which are necessary for the reproduction of the fundamental elements (products of agriculture, forestry, fishing, water reserves, raw material richnesses) and in a lesser measure also for certain services (possibility of recreation, water transport, etc.). According to A. Minc (1972) the natural resources are the masses and forces of nature, which at a given degree of development of production forces and science can be used to satisfy the needs of the human society in the form of an immediate participation in the material activity. G. Haase (1978) writes that the natural resources are substances and forces (energy and processes) of the space, which are used by the human work for productive aims and unproductive consumption. They have a consumption value. Their extent is determined by the structure of needs of the society, by the state of knowledge of nature and technology. They are an economic category, because their parameters are derived from the economic-technical relationships. T. Bartkowski (1979) indicates' as natural resources the reserves and forces of nature, serving to the socio-economic system. The division into reserves and forces results from the conception that reserves are material, forces are immaterial.

Near to resource is the conception of natural condition. We understand by it the elements of the natural environment, which cannot be used directly, but without which the production cannot be realized (e. g. the air humidity necessary for the technological processes in the production, water for soil irrigation, precipitations for the agriculture, relief, soil, as the environment for plants, etc. — J. G. Sauškin (1960). In the economic and economic-geographical literature even the elements of the socio-economic sphere are considered as a resource. As a resource are considered, for example, the working forces, the number of inhabitants, the education of inhabitants the quality and structure of communications, the structure and equipment of the primary and secondary production and of the tertiary sphere (J. G. Sauskin 1973, P. Hagget 1982, A. Minc 1972). Recently it was followed also in the literature that as a resource indicated also are the advantageous situation, the quality of the climate, the morphological character, localization, the quality and size of spaces, etc. (N. S. Perloff 1969, D. L. Armand 1962, V. S. Preobrazhenskij et al. 1980).

In summing, it appears, that the conception of resource is very variedly understood in various periods and by various authors, which results from the fact that a classical understanding of the conception resource mainly in the geographical literature, does not cover fully the present relationships man-environment. Man uses his environment through individual branches either of the primary, secondary or tertiary sphere. In the past this form of relationship of man with the environment did not result in such qualitative and quantitative consequence as presently under the conditions of the scientific-technical revolution, and it is why the conception of resource in the classical science as a raw material was sufficient. Presently the conception of resources for the interpretation of the relationship man-environment in geography is insufficient. Even today prevails the form of using the environment or the landscape through individual branches, however, the intensity of this use attained such dimensions that it affects the entire landscape system. This was not in the past. Therefore there occurred a change in the relationship man-landscape from the degenerative to the regenerative one. Therefore the present problems cannot be solved in geography from the conception of resources. It became inevitable to look for a new conception to evaluate the resources, the environment, i. e. landscape as an entire system, whose production and existential possibilities are affectable and an inconsiderate exploitation of this environment could lead finally to the loss of the quality of this environment — to be man's home. It is why new scientific ways are sought in geography, which would enable a rational use of the environment and of its resources and one of these ways is the conception potential.

### *Conception of landscape potential*

The term potential is not new in geography. It was used mainly in the geography of inhabitants as a population potential, in the geography of industry to indicate the sum of production equipment, working means and working forces, etc. More systematically elaborated was the conception potential mainly in the geoeological school of the DDR by E. Neef and other authors. E. Neef comes already in 1966 with the term of land economical potential, however, the term natural-spatial potential presents itself gradually (1973) and finally the relatively stabilized form natural potential (for example, R. Schmidt (1973) and mainly G. Haase and others come with the term natural potential, urbanization potential, agricultural potential, etc.

E. Neef et al. (1973) defines the natural-spatial potential as follows: „The efficient capacity of the natural space in relationship with the requirements, which result from the social reproduction process. As a result of requirements of the society for the natural space, which are determined by various needs and objectives of use, several part natural-spatial potentials are delineated, e. g. raw materials, building materials, biologically gainful, self-cleaning potential), recreational, etc. The natural-spatial potentials precise and differentiate the generally descriptive expression „natural richnesses“. They are a category of the landscape natural sciences research.

The conception was elaborated in detail by G. Haase (1978). The author uses the term „natural potential“. In its notion he starts from the present tasks of geography, which consist of solving the rational and effective use

of all possibilities, which are offered to the society by the natural space. The conception of natural potential he defines as follows: „Natural space, which with its substance properties, latent energies and processes, i. e. with its structure and dynamics has the capacity to satisfy the needs of the society. This capacity relates to the production of material goods, their circulation and consumption and recreation of the society as a whole and as an individual. It is indicated as a utility potential of the natural space, or potential of utilization“. The natural potential can be described from the standpoint of a certain human need, which requires certain properties of the natural space. It is distinguished by the following properties:

1. The natural potentials are groups of natural properties, which are valid only in a certain time interval.
2. The use of substances and processes in the natural space does not refer in most cases to the natural space as a whole, but only to one component. Selective use of the natural potential, however, is accompanied by the integration entire reaction of the natural space.
3. The natural space has a regenerative capacity, which is conditioned by its processes. Even the natural potentials are constantly renewed by these processes, or changed gradually.

According to this author the realized potentials represent material resources of the social reproduction process“.

K. Mannsfeld (1980) analyzed before all the water, selfcleaning, biologically gainful and covering potential. The water potential relates to the renewal of groundwaters, surface run off and infiltration conditions of the natural space. The self-cleaning potential is a capacity of the natural space to receive, or to liquidate the soluble harmful substances and relates to permeability and filtration capacity of the soil. The covering potential, which was dealt with in detail by D. Jäger (1978) and K. Hrabowski (1978) relates to various properties of the relief and foundation soils. K. Barsch (1979) analyzed a natural potential from the standpoint of fruit-growing, which he tested on the basis of analyses mainly of soil and climatic properties.

The problem of the natural potential in the literature of the DDR relates to the properties of the natural space, which are evaluated from the standpoint of individual socio-economic activities. The approach is similar to that of natural resources which according to E. Neef et al. (1973) are a category of the economic geography in contrast to potentials.

The conception of the landscape potential was developed in the czechoslovak geography. The landscape potential is not limited solely to the landscape natural properties, but the socio-economic elements belong also to it. The landscape suitability for use by man therefore is not given solely by the landscape natural structure, but also by the structure of the socio-economic sphere. This may be determining in a whole series of cases. The principle of the landscape potential represents the core of the research trend of landscape syntheses (E. Mazúr, J. Drdoš, J. Urbánek 1980).

The conception of the landscape potential could be prepared in our geography above all thanks to the timely orientation to a complex systems geographical research, whose beginnings were formulated in 1964 by the task Geographical Zoning of the ČSSR and after 1970 within the task „Regional Evaluation of the Landscape from the Standpoint of its Potential for

Economic and Environment" and mainly in the Atlas of the SSR (E. Mazúr 1972, 1978). The first concrete results in this sense is represented by the collective work of the Slovak Karst from 1971 and the work Use of the landscape Units from their potential standpoint. Bratislava and its hinterland, manuscript of the Geographical Institute of the Slovak Academy of Sciences, 1975 (E. Mazúr et al. 1971, 1975). Still more concrete outlines acquired the conception of the landscape potential in the Atlas of the SSR (1980) mainly in chapter XV of this Atlas (Environment and Landscape Potential) in the form of numerous maps on scales 1:1 000 000, 1:500 000, 1:200 000.

The conception of the landscape potential in the czechoslovak geography starts from 3 fundamental aspects. They are:

1. organic unit of the landscape potential and the socioeconomic development of the society, i. e. the harmony of ecology and economy,
2. the standpoint of the all-social efficiency placed before by local, branch and other part interests,
3. the standpoint of preserving the landscape reproduction potential for the future. (E. Mazúr 1977).

The above indicated idea enables the realization of the anthropocentric approach to the landscape as a permanent home of the society.

The landscape potential results from the synergic bonds in the landscape, as well as from its choric structures. It is conditioned not only by local characteristics, but it comprises also the relationships with the neighbouring structures, which are connected to the evaluated place by systems relationships.

The preparation of the landscape potential conception in our geography was carried out firstly by preparing the part potentials, which were realized as indicated above mainly in the Atlas of the SSR (A. Porubský et al.) Water management landscape potential, Relief potential for economic use — E. Mazúr, Landscape potential for the settlement structure — E. Mazúr, Potential of the agricultural landscape — K. Zelenský]. By the map of synthesis in the Atlas the Functional delimitation of the landscape is according to the potential from E. Mazúr. In 1981 there appeared a special work devoted to the relief potential for economic use (for agricultural production, for the construction of settlements, for the construction of communications, for travelling and for an entire economic use — E. Mazúr et al. (1981).

#### *Comparison of the conception of resources and of the conception of the landscape potential.*

In the process of the scientific-technical revolution the science changes into the immediate production force. In this period there occur simultaneously complicated conflicting situations in the relationships of man with the natural environment. It is required from the science to solve the important social problems. Geography applies here by the evaluation of the landscape from standpoint of needs of the reproduction process and of society from the standpoint of the environmental approach (called also anthropocentric). The preservation of the landscape qualities of the society's home that matters.

The conception of landscape potential requires a comparison with the used conception of (natural) resource, since the question arises whether this

conception is sufficiently suitable and it is necessary to form a new one. Starting from the literature, these conceptions can be generally characterized as follows. The conception of resources is above all the conception of the social practice, from where it gained access to the science. Mainly the science spheres, which deal with the environment and its use, took over this conception to deepen the knowledge of resources and to enable their tracing (e. g. geology of deposits, hydrogeology, soil science, forest and agricultural sciences, economic sciences, planning, etc.). The consequences of using the natural resources — interventions in the landscape natural subsystem stood outside the interest of the science, or only on its margin.

The conception of resources starts from the traditional, branch and exploitation aimed use of the landscape. The conception took origin in the period, when the conflicting situations in the relationship man-nature, manifest in the ecological crises, were local. Biosphere was preserved on extensive surfaces of the dry land and oceans in the original, or natural state with not a little endangering of the genofond. On our planet there was „sufficient“ room for man and for the animal and vegetal realm.

The conception of {natural} resources is in substance based on the aggregation approach to the landscape, which predominated in the natural sciences in the first half of our century. The entire, systems relationships between the elements were not the object of interest (see in more detail J. Urbánek, E. Mazúr, J. Drdoš 1980), so neither the user of the resource was interested in the consequence of use on the other landscape elements.

During the last decades, in connection with the global anthropogenization of natural systems on the whole surface of our planet, arose the state that man begins to live not in coexistence with the biosphere, but at its detriment. This fact begins to threaten the man's very biological existence.

The conception of {natural} resources adapts itself to the new situation by developing the idea of protection. However, this is being drained of force in therapeutical measures, but it does not make possible the prevention.

The disproportions between the incoordinate realization of man's requirements for resources lead to negative consequences either on the landscape (one-sided exploitation of resources regardless of the natural systems), or on the society (slowing down the economic development by a one-sided stress on the conservation protection of nature).

The landscape potential, compared with the natural resource, is a larger, more general spectre of the landscape capacity to satisfy the needs of the society. On the other hand the potential comprises only that part of the resource, whose use is not of a long-term destructive affect on landscape. The landscape potential is simultaneously a synthetic conception expressing an entire understanding of the landscape utility properties inclusive the admissible intensity of their use on the basis of the anthropocentric approach to landscape (landscape as a system and as man's home). The natural resource is more or less an analytical conception, expressing the capacity of one or several landscape components to satisfy someone of the society's needs. The landscape potential comprises a natural resource or its part, dependently on its useability in accordance with the landscape synthesis approach principles.

The basic distinguishing mark of the landscape potential against the prin-

principle of resource, beside preventing the occurrence of irreversible negative marks in the natural system, is also that which, beside the suitability of the natural subsystem, comprises also the suitability of the socio-economic subsystem. The landscape suitability for use is given by the natural properties, but also by the capacities of the population and by his economic possibilities. The socio-economic suitability is frequently decisive.

The second important and equivalent approach of this conception is environmental (called in part of the czechoslovak literature also anthropocentric). According to this approach the landscape is not only the object of man's work, his use, but above all his home. Man has several relations to the landscape. Man, as a biological being, took origin and developed in the natural system, he is linked to it by the exchange of substances and energy. He cannot exist without it and as far as he leaves it (space, sea bottom, Earth's depths) inavoidably he must simulate the conditions of his life, because he is subject to biological laws. Man is simultaneously the landscape inhabitant, it is his home. Both these aspects of relationship man-landscape are closely united, because they result from the biological requirements of man's organism. Inevitably they require from man to protect the landscape, to take care of it, not to damage it, but to improve it.

Man, however, is simultaneously a social being and a producer, who is subjected to social laws, by which he delimits himself from the biosphere. The landscape is the object of his work, he uses and exploits. The social laws force man to intensify the use and that it should be effective to the maximum.

The conception of landscape potentials tries to contribute to solve the problem of harmonizing the above indicated aspects in the relationship man-landscape, i. e. it tries to solve the rational use of the landscape on a scientific basis.

The landscape use must acquire such a form that would ensure the economic requirements of the society on the one hand and on the other that would not perturb the conditions of the biosphere development and the reproduction of individual natural elements at all. The environmental approach to landscape express that we approach and evaluate it from the standpoint of man — user, inhabitant and as its part. By this view on the landscape system properties are synthesized to the landscape potential, i. e. precondition for use. This precondition expresses the suitability for a certain socio-economic activity, but at the same time to what measure the given area can be used, to prevent the irreversible destruction of its natural subsystem.

The main priority of the conception landscape potential is the fact that it is not overburdened by the branch approach to the landscape use. It is overcoming also the landscape notion as a limitless exploitable space. The static conception of the landscape space is compensated by the conception dynamic system, limited by the reproduction cycles, sensitive structure, limited stability and bearing capacity. The branch character is compensated by the entire approach, the exploitation-production approach by the productive-protective one, the short-term view by the perspective-predictive one, the relationship of isolated magnitudes of the society (branch interests) and nature by the system of relationships society-nature, the landscape conception as a limitless resource by the conception of the landscape as society's home (E. Mazúr, J. Drdoš, M. Huba 1983).

The indicated conception of the landscape potential corresponds to the development stage of the actual science in a mutual union with its social conditions, reflecting the problems of the present humanity (scientific-technical development, accelerating the anthropogenizing process in nature, global economic crises, threatening of the biosphere development and of man's existence itself).

### Conclusion

In replying the question, whether a new approach is necessary to the evaluation of the landscape suitability, we must start from the present state of the scientific knowledge, of the landscape, and from the present needs of the society. The analysis of these three basic factors, which determine the decision of the reply shows that it is necessary to look for a new approach to the evaluation of the landscape suitability for use. It is given by global unbearable anthropogeneous transformations of the biosphere, by the society's necessity to solve this state by scientific means and by the capability of the present geography to solve the problem. From this viewpoint, which in certain sense comprises the man's existential interests, in the landscape research against the conception (natural) resource the conception of landscape potential appears more suitable, which synthesizes the landscape use and protection.

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#### KONCEPCIA ZDROJOV ALEBO KRAJINNÉHO POTENCIÁLU V GEOGRAFICKOM VÝSKUME?

Pri hodnotení vlastností krajiny z hľadiska možností rôzneho hospodárskeho využitia sa vo výskume krajiny najčastejšie operuje dvoma základnými pojmami — prírodný zdroj a prírodný, resp. krajinný potenciál. Oba pojmy vyjadrujú v istom zmysle dva prístupy k vhodnosti krajiny. Prírodným zdrojom sa najčastejšie označujú matérie a sily rôznych fyzickogeografických zložiek. Otázky ochrany krajiny sú predmetom terapie. Pojem prírodného potenciálu (zaužívaný v geoekológii NDR) je komplexnejší. Vztahuje sa na prírodné vlastnosti krajiny.

V krajinskej syntéze sa rozvinul pojem krajinného potenciálu, ktorý vyjadruje vhodnosť krajinného systému (hybridného), na rôzne hospodárske využívanie, ale zároveň aj mieru tohto využitia, ktorá vyplýva z poznania stability prírodného subsystému krajiny. Tento pojem zahŕňa prevenciu pred deštrukciou krajiny a vyjadruje environmentálny (antropocentrický) prístup ku krajine ako k domovu človeka. Pojem krajinného potenciálu je vo výskume krajiny vhodnejší, čo zdôvodňuje aj súčasné spoločenské poslanie geografie — riešiť na vedeckom základe vzťah človeka k životnému prostrediu.

Možno tiež uviesť, že pojem prírodného zdroja odpovedá staršej agregáčnej koncepcii syntézy vo výskume krajiny, kým krajinný potenciál odpovedá súčasnej, systémovej koncepcii syntézy vo výskume krajiny.

## КОНЦЕПЦИЯ РЕСУРСОВ ИЛИ ЖЕ КОНЦЕПЦИЯ ЛАНДШАФТНОГО ПОТЕНЦИАЛА В ГЕОГРАФИЧЕСКИХ ИССЛЕДОВАНИЯХ?

При оценивании свойств ландшафта с аспектов возможностей его разного хозяйственного использования, в процессе исследования ландшафта чаще всего принимаются во внимание два основных понятия: — природные ресурсы и природный или же ландшафтный потенциал. Под природными ресурсами чаще всего подразумеваются матери и силы разных физико-географических компонентов. Вопросы охраны ландшафта являются предметом терапии. Понятие природного потенциала (применяется в геоэкологии ГДР) является более комплексным. Относится к природным свойствам ландшафта.

В ландшафтном синтезе развилось понятие ландшафтного потенциала, выражающего степень подхождимости ландшафтной системы (гибридной) для разных видов хозяйственной деятельности и, одновременно, также меру этого использования, которая исходит из познания устойчивости природной подсистемы ландшафта. Это понятие содержит в себе превенцию перед деструкцией ландшафта и выражает энвайронментальный (антропоцентрический) подход к ландшафту как среде обитания человека. Понятие ландшафтного потенциала при исследованиях ландшафта является более подходящим, что в свою очередь подтверждает также современная общественная целенаправленность географии — решать на научной основе отношение человека к окружающей среде.

Можно также подчеркнуть, что понятие природных ресурсов отвечает прежней, агрегационной концепции синтеза при исследовании ландшафта, тем временем как ландшафтный потенциал отвечает современной, системной концепции синтеза при исследовании ландшафта.

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