

ABSTRACT OF THE DOCTORAL DISSERTATION.

Author: Joanna Kołodziej, *Panoramas of the Historic City. Cracow as a Laboratory of Urban Change.*

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For centuries Cracow has been creating its image by furnishing with significance successive places in the human-organized space. The historic urban complex is characterized by its consciously designed three-dimensional spatial composition strictly related to the surrounding landscape. The contemporary changes of that image reflect an uncontrolled introduction of commercial structures and related to them trademarks into the historic urban landscape. The changes of 1989 brought to Cracow a multitude of possibilities, at the same time making the city historic heritage vulnerable to a great number of global hazards. I have started my research with the situation of 1994, when changes in the political system influenced both the legislation adapted to the new conditions and the space, reaching my conclusions in 2014 when the determinants of a successive *Studies of Conditions and Directions of the City Space Management* met with arguments and controversies as to the preferred vision of the City. During the discussed period Cracow became a peculiar testing ground for experiments interfering into the landscape. Those were the following: demolition of some monuments, constructions of new cubatures, changes in the character of some important outdoor rooms as well as building within the most important urban edges such as Planty or the first building line along the Vistula boulevards. On the top of it in the dominant of Cracow Panorama the planning has been limited to the investor's site only. Due to the lack of control on visual relations in a further perspective, especially when referring to the city silhouette some structures either too high or too wide, too extensive or of too broad projection, or simply of makeshift character have appeared in front or in the background of the historic panoramas. I have referred my studies to the records of legal acts of common and local laws as well as to international documents concerning the historic urban landscape, the latter being an important point of reference in my thesis. I have been drawing attention to the unfavourable phenomena within the panorama of Cracow caused both by the changeability and incompleteness of legal regulations and the difficulty to indentify the heritage reserves; that has sometimes led to their sale or appropriation by private subjects. The marking of the city panoramas with commercial investments as well as the logging of monuments during some playful events – a spontaneous invasion of signs into the world of meanings created for ages – have very often endangered both the panoramas integrity and their immaterial communiqué, thus Cracow uniqueness and identity.

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