

Sacred Objects as Cultural Assets of the Roztocze National Park and Its Buffer Zone

Paweł Pytka

Maria Curie Skłodowska University in Lublin, Poland

Abstract

Cultural landscape is an important element in determining the attractiveness of a given tourist area. Its specific elements are places of worship. Integrated into a unique natural landscape they can become a kind of gem, and their many values can be a significant stimulant to tourism. This article presents the religious buildings and objects located within the Roztocze National Park and its buffer zone: churches, various types of shrines, roadside crosses and statues and cemeteries. These places, besides performing their sacral function, are important for local communities: they are places of meetings, exchanges of views and solving problems. What is also important is the cultural aspect of these sites, together with their historical value. These various qualities of sacred objects can generate an increase in tourism throughout the entire region.

Keywords: sacred object, religion, culture, tourism

Introduction

Sacred objects occupy a special position in the cultural landscape of Poland. They have been integrated in various forms in the scenery of cities, towns, and villages for ages, while performing the role of places of worship. Roztocze is geographical region located in the south-eastern part of Lubelskie Voivodship. It is a unique location for cultural reasons, because this area is at the crossroads of Eastern and Western European cultures. Thanks to that, the region is full of various sacred objects. They remind us of the coexistence of the Christian religion of the Greek and Latin rites, as well as of Judaism. In the central part of this region — i.e., Roztocze Tomaszowskie, within the Roztocze National Park (RPN) and its buffer zone, there are many sacral spaces, mostly Christian. These are both imposing temples and small wayside shrines or figures, so important for the folk piety. Some other valuable objects are necropolises with cemetery chapels and numerous historic gravestones. Chiseled by local artists, stone masons who maintained a specific way of stone cutting or decoration, they are not only of great value to the landscape but also to history. These constitutive places of sacrum are also those which are not related to folk piety or to major events for the local community. These are plague crosses, witnesses of difficult times for the Roztocze inhabitants.

Apart from a variety of form, another value of places of worship is their social function, which quite frequently is neglected in many documents or analyses. Not only are these the places of regular meetings, but also they — i.e., church services and the time afterwards spent together, have a great integrating effect for the local community. These objects, so varied in both the materialistic and spiritual sense, are integrated in the everyday life of the community, they are an element of identity of the region, and create a sentimental atmosphere for Roztocze. This article presents sacred objects located within the Roztocze National Park and its buffer zone as a significant cultural value of the area. Their various forms, histories, and functions make us not only pay attention to them in the sacred-cultural context but also in the context of tourism, as they can be an important stimulants to tourism.

1 The subject matter and the methods of research

The aim of the paper was to try to identify, classify and analyse the functions of various sacred objects situated within the Roztocze National Park and its buffer zone. The term “sacred object” can be analyzed on two levels: *profanum*—as a material object, and *sacrum* as a place of religious worship. On the *profanum* level, these objects are subject to the regulations of the administrative law. According to the definition used in public statistics, a sacred object serves the purpose of religious worship. Taking into account the records of the Building Code,¹ they are qualified as buildings or objects of small architecture.² On the *sacrum* level, regulations connected with these objects can be found in the church doctrine. When it comes to the Catholic Church, one can talk about “sanctuaries”, which are defined by the 1983 Code of Canon Law.³ They are places (objects) “which by consecration or blessing, done according to the regulations of liturgical books, are destined for the worship of God or for funerals.”⁴ The aforementioned Canon Law distinguishes only four independent and freestanding objects-sanctuaries: churches, chapels, altars and cemeteries, as well it describes the rules of their usage, appearance and esthetics.⁵ In the case of small architecture sanctuaries, roadside crosses, various types of shrines, statues, these to officially become places of worship which need to be blessed.⁶ It is recorded in the documents of the Second Vatican Council that not only does the church authority have a right to judge “which work of art conforms to faith, devotion and traditional rules, and whether it qualifies for liturgical use” (*Sobór Watykański II. Konstytucje, dekryty, deklaracje. Tekst polski, nowe tłumaczenie* 2002, 60–75), but it can also decide on its blessing. As interpreted by KroczeK (2012), these works of art can be rejected which “do not conform to faith and good manners, as well as Christian devotion, or offend the true religious sense because of inappropriate form, low level, mediocrity or repetition” (KroczeK 2012, 206). The act of scarifying the object is at the same time the act of official approval by the Catholic Church as a sacred object. It means a lot for the devotion of the people, and becomes a distinction in the local community.

The situation looks a little different in the Orthodox Church. Here, the basic acts connected with the Church organization and discipline are canon laws established by ecumenical and local councils, as well as by bishops. The documents claim that the most essential element of sacred objects is an icon. Hence, not only are icons treated as pictures, but they also have the value of God’s revelation just as the Gospel does, as claimed by Sosna (2001) referring to the resolutions of the Seventh Ecumenical Council. They are usually housed in Orthodox churches (Sosna 2001), but they are also often met in shrines (fig. 1), which have a form of small Orthodox churches. In the Orthodox Church presenting Salvator Mundi, the Virgin Mary and saints are found in the form of statues. Crosses, similarly to the Roman Rite, are placed at crossroads, ends of villages, or other places essential for the local communities. The lack of the statue of Christ is, apart from eight-armed forms (three vertical logs), a characteristic feature of Orthodox crosses.

In the present work research has been done to analyze sacred objects within the Roztocze National Park and its buffer zone (fig. 2). In terms of administration, the land is situated within the Zamość and Biłgoraj counties, both in Lubelskie Voivodship, in the boundaries of Zamość, Zwierzyniec, Józefów, Szczepieszyn, Tereszpol, and Adamów communes. Taking the physical and geographical issues into consideration, the land is situated in the boundaries of the macroregions of Roztocze Szczepieszynskie and Roztocze Tomaszowskie, as well as Biłgoraj Flatland (Równina Biłgorajska) and Zamość Valley (Kotlina Zamojska) (Reszel and Grądziel 2013). The land is highly precious in terms of its nature, both animate and inanimate.

1. See: Obwieszczenie Marszałka Sejmu Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej z dnia 2 października 2013 r. w sprawie ogłoszenia jednolitego tekstu – Prawo budowlane, DzU z 2013 r. poz. 1409.

2. Ibidem, Art.3 item 2 and 4a.

3. See: Codex Iuris Canonici auctoritate Joannis Pauli PP. II promulgatus (CIC).

4. 1983 CIC, canon 1205.

5. 1983 CIC, canons 1214–1243.

6. 1983 CIC, canon 1205.



Fig. 1. The interior of an Orthodox shrine in Knorydy: icons and cross. Photo by author

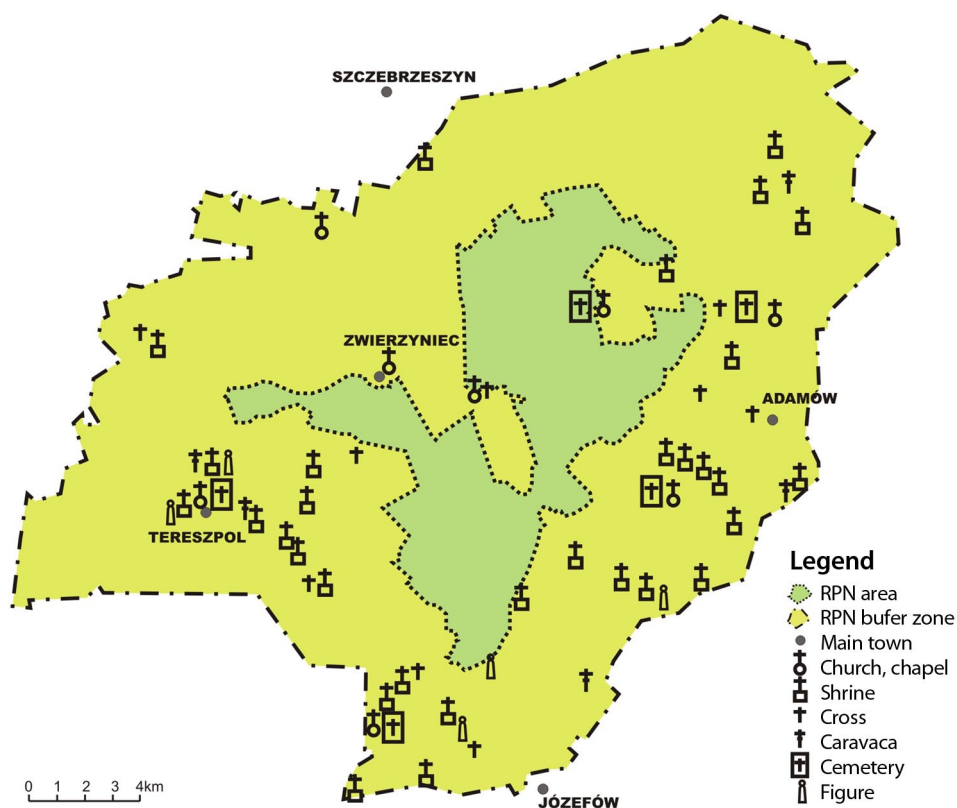


Fig. 2. The research area and location of sacred objects selected for the analysis

The basic method of gaining information were field studies – field inventory. In the process of the research, sacred objects were identified. What is more, photographic documentation was done, and the history of its establishment determined. During desk research, results were formulated and supplied with data coming from the analysis of documents.

2 Research results

As a result of the research, information about 83 different sacred objects located within the Roztocze National Park and its buffer zone was gathered. The present work focuses especially on the sacred objects which are the oldest (monumental) or which are essential for the local inhabitants. Furthermore, the *sacellae* which were emphasised are the ones which are beyond the densely built areas, or the main transport tracks—they are jewels of the landscape. The analysis of the sacred

objects was carried out on three levels: specifying the correctness of location of given types of sacred objects, typology of sacred objects, and specifying the current functions and meaning of these objects in the local communities. The location and types of the analyzed sacred objects are shown in the figure 2.

2.1 The location of sacred objects

The location of the sacred objects clearly refers to the current and past settlement and transport network. It can be also stated that every kind of object had its own “typical” place where it was located. There are also some atypical places, especially outside settlements, but they result from unusual events which took place there, and which commemorate them. Within the borders of the settlements the largest, and constitutive at the same time, objects are located. These are: churches, shrines and cemeteries. This has to do with their basic sacral function. These used to be located in the centers of settlements.

The variation of location is clearly visible in the case of cemeteries. When it comes to parishes established a long time ago, especially in smaller settlements, cemeteries were located close to the parish church (e.g., in Tereszpol, Górecko Kościelne, Topólczka). In new parishes, founded at the end of the 20th century, the location of cemeteries is regulated by order of the Ministry of Municipal Economy from 1959, especially § 1.2.⁷ According to the order, cemeteries were established at a distance from a settlement (e.g., in Bondyż or Kosobudy).

Small architecture sacred objects were usually erected opposite the founder’s residence. These are crosses and different forms of shrines with a statue of the Virgin Mary or saints (fig. 3).



Fig. 3. House shrine and a votive inscription. Trzepieciny. Photo by author

Within the settlement’s borders one can also find crosses, both at the crossroads as well as the settlement borders, where they functioned as a farewell sign to travelers (fig. 4). A special version of the cross were plague crosses. A rare element of the landscape are freestanding figures erected as votive or propitiatory offerings to a saint or the Virgin Mary.



Fig. 4. A cross at the crossroads in Sochy (A) and at the border of Stara Huta (B). Photo by author

7. See: Rozporządzenie Ministra Gospodarki Komunalnej z dnia 25 sierpnia 1959 r. w sprawie określenia, jakie tereny pod względem sanitarnym są odpowiednie na cmentarze, DzU z 1959 r. nr 52 poz. 315.

Objects which were located outside settlements are, first of all, roadside crosses. Usually erected at the crossroads, they had a navigational function (i.e., they pointed directions). In other places, they were usually used to commemorate important events or to give thanks for received graces. Crosses were erected to commemorate someone's sudden death resulting from an accident, murder or lightning strike (Górecki 1999), as well as to commemorate the dead in the places of war martyrology. Outside settlements one can find field shrines, often crowned with stone crosses. They were erected in fields near roads by field owners (fig. 5), usually as propitiatory votos or ex-votos.

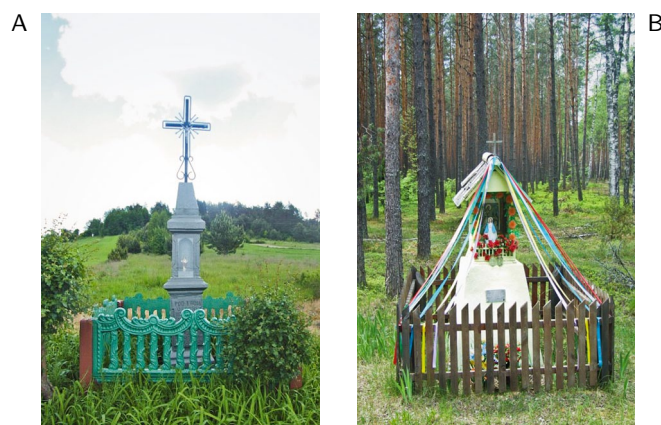


Fig. 5. Field shrine near Tereszpol (A) and forest shrine on the way to Józefów (B). Photo by author

Forest shrines are special shrines. Erected near forest roads by foresters, sometimes in the middle of forests, as votive or propitiatory offerings, they are a charming element of the forests of Roztocze (fig. 5).

Inside and outside settlements one can meet tree sculptures. The tradition of hanging crosses or shrines in different forms in trees comes from Lithuanian tradition. The Lithuanians especially worshipped old trees, perceiving them as places where deities lived (Seweryn 1958). Therefore, there is a belief in Poland that a tree with some religious object cannot be cut down. According to the tradition, a person raising a hand against such a tree casts a bad spell on himself/herself. This was a form of protecting trees which were valuable for the inhabitants. In the area of analysis, tree shrines can be found, among others, in Górecko Stare and in the regions of Florianka (fig. 12).

An esthetic aspect of the surroundings could be observed in the location of small sacred objects. These objects were usually established near old trees or, post factum, were decorated by flowers (fig. 3, 4, 10). Flower arrangements were carefully selected in order to emphasize the value of the cross, and centuries-old trees referred to the strength and solidity of faith (Paczos 2011; Seweryn 1958).

2.2 Types of sacred objects located in the area of analysis

The typology of sacred objects can be analyzed on the sacral level, that is the functional form of the object, and on the level of genesis (the founder's motivation). Functional forms of the objects result from their worship function, and these are: parish and filial churches, chapels, parish and war cemeteries, as well as small architecture objects: crosses, roadside and field shrines, plague crosses and statues. Motivational typology mainly refers to objects of small architecture. There are objects of different genesis: propitiatory, expiation and ex-votos, as well as memorial and faith ones (see: Adamowski 2011).

While the classification of constitutive worship places is not a problem, it is difficult to briefly classify small sacred objects, crosses and shrines. T. Seweryn, the pioneer of classification of sacred objects, claims that their richness and variety results from the inside need of the creator who, by his/her work, tried to show his/her individual feelings, experience and soul worshipping God (Seweryn 1958). In part of the analysis, sacred objects are shown due to the classification of form, with special attention paid to given typologies presented by different authors, and referred to in different parts of the analysis.

2.2.1. Parish churches and filial churches, chapels

Six parishes are located within the Roztocze National Park and its buffer zone: in Terespol, Górecko Kościelne, Topólca, Kosbudy, Zwierzyniec, and Bondyrz. In those areas, there are, apart from parish churches as the basic place of worship, chapels and filial churches, the latter ones being often called “commute chapels.”

Parish churches, apart from the church in Bondyrz and the parish church in Zwierzyniec, are objects of at least 100-year history. Among them the oldest churches are the ones in Górecko Kościelne and Topólca. The current wooden church in Górecko Kościelne (fig. 6) was erected in 1768 (the previous one — an 18th century church — was demolished by the Swedes), and the parish itself is almost 100 years older. Interestingly, certificates written as early as 1694, as well as books of canonical visits written since 1928, have survived in the archives of the parish (Sochan, n.d.). The brick church in Topólca from the beginning of the 20th century was originally an Orthodox temple, however in 1917 it was handed over by the Austrians to the Catholic Church. The renovation of the object was performed in 1917 by the decision of Bishop Fulman who also had a Roman Catholic parish erected (Poznański 2009).⁸ The brick church in Terespol was also erected thanks to the efforts of the landowner of Zamość in 1851. The brick-built church bell-tower also comes from that time. St John Nepomucene’s church (the church on the water) is a unique case. Erected at the beginning of the 18th century, it served as a chapel for the Zamojskis, and later on as the parish church. Currently, it is a real tourist attraction in Zwierzyniec, mainly because of its location on an island. Its baroque interior presents polychrome by Łukasz Smuglewicz and 4 organs dating back to 1905 (Matławska 1991).⁹

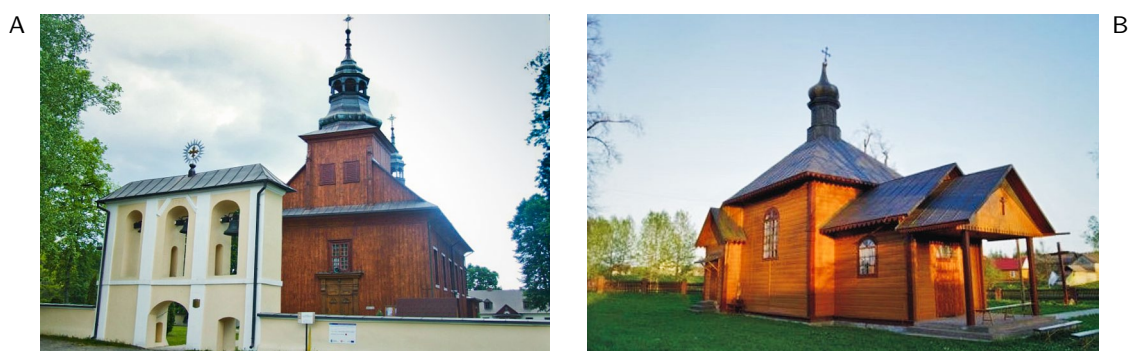


Fig. 6. The church in Górecko Kościelne (A) and the filial chapel in Szewnia Dolna (B). Photo by author

Filial churches are normal temples built in regionally spread out parishes so that the faithful could take part in liturgy just like in the parish church, without the need to commute to the remote parish church. The observable difference in the fittings of a filial church is a lack of baptismal font, which can be only used at the request of the local parish priest and with the consent of the bishop. In the analyzed region, the filial churches are located in Hucisko, Kaczórki (the parish of Bondyrz), Szewnia Dolna, Bliżów, Wychody (the parish of Kosobudy), Obroc, Sochy (the parish of Zwierzyniec), and in Lipowiec (the parish of Terespol).

Among the filial churches, only the one in Szewnia is a pre-war object. The currently existing building (fig. 6) was built in 1905 as an Orthodox temple, given to the Catholics in 1918, and again changed into an Orthodox temple during the war. In 1945, the Byzantine congregation, leaving the temple, burnt its fittings. The renovation of the church was done in 1946.

Górecko Kościelne can also boast two monumental wooden chapels, the only ones in the region of analysis. Similarly to the parish church, they are under St. Stanisław’s patronage. These are: the chapel “On water” from 1881, located by the bank of the Szumka, and the chapel “Under oaks” from the middle of the 19th century, located near the church (Garbacz 2009). Moreover, within

8. See also: <http://www.diecezja.zamojskolubaczowska.pl/parafia,135>.

9. See also: <http://www.diecezja.zamojskolubaczowska.pl/parafia,137>.

the area of the cemetery in Górecko Kościelne there is a wooden building of the former cemetery chapel dating back to 1910,¹⁰ now serving as a pre-funeral chapel.

2.2.2 Cemeteries

The places of burial, apart from their basic function, are at the same time witnesses of the history of a given settlement and, in many cases, objects with monumental tombstones. Through the grave inscriptions, especially in older parts of the necropolis, one can “read” its history or find out about the nationalities inhabiting the region. The architecture of tombstones also points to the wealth of a buried person, as well as to the stonemasonry centre that the monument comes from. The oldest cemeteries functioning in the area of analysis are in Górecko Kościelne from the beginnings of the 19th century, Tereszpol from 1851 (fig. 7), Zwierzyniec from 1907 and Topólcza from the 19th century. Furthermore, there are inactive Uniate and Orthodox cemeteries in Topólcza and Szewnia Dolna, the latter one being poorly maintained (Kawałko 1994). Both in the whole country, as well as in the area of analysis, there are a lot of tombs of those who fought and died for Poland. These are uprising cemeteries from 1863 in Panasówka and Zwierzyniec, the cemetery of pacification victims in Sochy from 1943, and other memorial places in the form of plaques, obelisks and crosses.



Fig. 7. The cemetery in Górecko Kościelne (A) and in Tereszpol (B).

Source: (A) author's archive, (B) photo by Z. Czernik

2.2.3 Roadside crosses

The cross, as a symbol of Christianity, is the most common public act of faith that can be encountered both in Poland as well as in other countries of Christian origins. Just like some other objects of small sacral architecture, it is the testimony and heritage of faith of the local people. They are the places where people meet to pray. They also pointed to the borders of a given place or to the possible destinations, functioning as road signs found at the crossroads. Initially, they were made of wood and were very tall. According to Z. Gloger, “crosses were made of wood in nearby villages, roads, and crossroads, and they were very tall so that they could be placed into the ground for a few times and be still visible. The placing and supporting of the old crosses was usually performed a day after All Saints’ Day.” (Gloger and Krzyżanowski 1974, 108). Quite frequently one can come across small crosses, leaning towards the ground and in a poor condition. These, however, are the remnants of the former tall crosses (e.g., plague cross in Szewnia Dolna, fig. 9).

Crosses were also made of stone, and such crosses were raised on pedestals, or more frequently, were used as decoration of shrines (fig. 8). In the course of time, crosses were made of iron (fig 5A). Both stone and iron crosses, richly decorated, were often works of art made by stonemasons and blacksmiths. Simple wooden crosses were still used, however, they were treated as a community voto related to canonical visits, holy places, or some other important events for the parish life.

Within the area of the Roztocze National Park, there are many roadside crosses, both wooden and stone ones. They are in various states, yet the majority of them are taken care of by the local people (fig. 4 and 8).

10. See: Plan rozwoju miejscowości Górecko Kościelne na lata 2006–2008 [Development plan for Górecko Kościelne for 2006–2008], [a:] <http://bip-archiwum.ejzefow.pl/jozefow-m/dokp/786.pdf>.



Fig. 8. Stone cross in Górecko Stare on the pedestal (A) and in Szozdy as a decoration of a shrine (B). Photo by author

2.2.4 Caravaca crosses

A specific form of the cross is a caravaca cross, a plague cross, also known as a cholera cross. It is a four-armed cross, sometimes six-armed, where the upper beam is usually shorter than the lower one, even though in Poland they are often of the same length. The name “caravaca” is derived from the town of Caravaca de la Cruz in Spain. This is where the relics of the Holy Cross are kept in a reliquary in the shape of a four-armed cross, where the upper beam is shorter (fig. 9). The reliquary appeared in Caravaca in the 12th century and became known for doing wonders. The local community believed that it protected from accidents, sudden deaths, curses, thefts, storms, and lightning strikes. It came to Poland in the middle of the 16th century and became popular in the 17th century as a protection against plague air. The cross was erected as a ritual, it was supposed to be erected at two borders of a village, made of one piece of wood in one night, and raised on the same night.¹¹ A third beam, equal to the longest one, functioned as a place of praying inscription. The distances between the beams were equal.

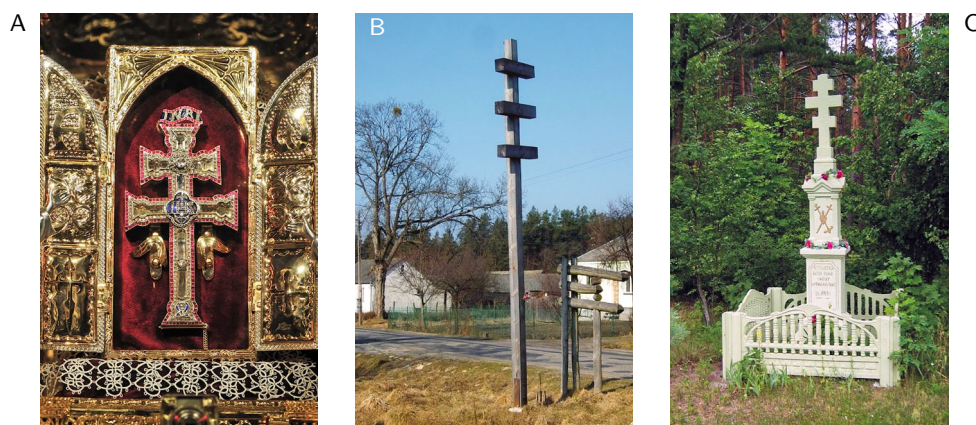


Fig. 9. Caravaca cross: reliquary of Caravaca de la Cruz in Spain (a), Caravaca crosses in, Jacnia (b), Szopowe (c).
Source: (A) Photo by Joaquin Zamora, (B) Photo by Tomasz Kawalko, (C) Photo by „Piott”

Another name for a Caravaca cross is a cholera cross. It refers to the times of cholera in which the crosses were erected. The disease was probably brought by the Russian army fighting in the November Uprising (epidemic of 1831) and its remissions were noted in the Congress Poland (years 1853–1855, 1866–1873, 1893–1895). Poland witnessed the last epidemic of cholera in 1915. Probably it is from this year that the cholera crosses found in Szewnia Dolna, Jacnia, and Tereszpól come from (fig. 9). According to its inscription, the Caravaca cross in Szopowe comes from 1899. Quite frequently, when beams fell off the wooden cross, the cross remained two-armed, and the holes were covered with wood. This makes Caravaca crosses difficult to identify.¹²

11. See: <http://kapliczki.org.pl/mediawiki-1.19.1/index.php?title=Karawaka>.

12. Ibid.

2.2.5 Shrines

Shrines, together with roadside crosses, are a part and parcel of the Polish landscape. Within the area of analysis there are 30 such objects, of various forms and age. These are both wooden, stone, and brick shrines, dating back to the 19th century as well as the time of the past several years. According to J. Petera's classification (1981, 2001), there are three types of shrines located within the area of the Roztocze National Park and its buffer zone: wooden shrines made of blocks, as well as house, longcase, pole, recess and brick shrines.

Wooden shrines made of blocks

It is one of the oldest forms of shrines, especially characteristic of the south of the Lublin and Roztocze region (Admin et al. 2013). They were made of a single block of wood in which a recess was created for a figure of Christ, Mary, or a saint. Such shrines could be found, among others, in Tereszpól-Kukielki or Górecko Kościelne, where 5 such objects are located (fig. 10). Some of the discovered block shrines are quite old. The one in Górecko Kościelne, situated at the crossroads of the powiat road with the voivodship road no. 835 (fig. 10B), was erected in 1850 as a gift of Wawrzyniec Paluch of Aleksandrowo (according to the inscription). Of a considerable age, dating back to the beginning of the 20th century, is also the shrine at the border of Tereszpól-Kukielki at the monumental oak (fig. 10A). A contemporary block shrine is the one "on the oak" in Górecko Kościelne.



Fig. 10. Block shrines in Tereszpól-Kukielki (A) and Górecko Kościelne (B, C). Photo by author

House shrines

This kind of shrine is a specific church miniature. They are built in the form of houses of a square plan, with the side of at least 1-meter length, and with glass front door. The interior is richly decorated, with a painting or a figure of Christ or Holy Mary, a cross, and a candle in the central part. There are also other sacred objects, and in some bigger shrines also kneelers and benches can be found (fig. 11), which help the faithful to pray longer, irrespective of the weather. Such shrines are situated in Malewsczyzna, Tereszpól (fig. 11), Bliżów (off the Wojda village) and in the area of Szewnia Dolna.

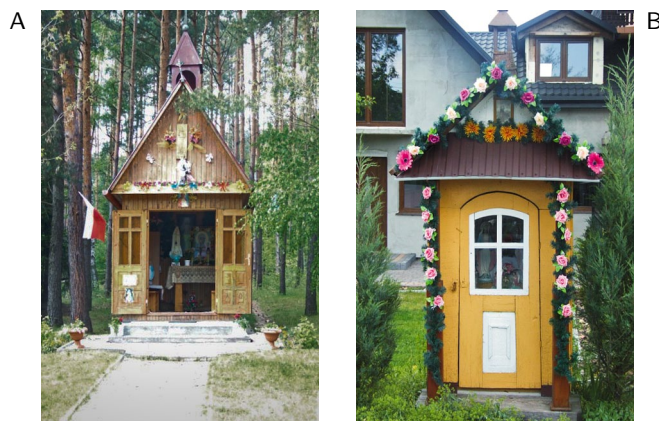


Fig. 11. House shrines in Malewsczyzna (A) and Tereszpól (B). Photo by author

Box shrines

Box shrines have forms of small boxes hanging on poles, trees, as well as house and church facades. The front part is often glazed and lockable. Inside there is a figure of Christ, Holy Mary, and a saint. A small cross often decorates the roof. Such shrines are located within the area of the Roztocze National Park and its buffer zone, especially in the vicinity of Florianka and Trzepieciny (fig. 12).



Fig. 12. Box shrines. Area of Górecko Stare and Florianka. Photo by author

Recess shrines

Recess shrines are probably the most popular types of shrines found within the area of analysis. The most common one is a small recess with a bas-relief of Holy Mary on a stone or brick solid pole being the cross pedestal (fig 5A and 8B). Such recess shrines could be found (e.g., in Trzepieciny (fig. 3A)). A specific type of recess shrines are the shrines located in tree hollows. The shrine in Górecko Kościelne with a figure of Holy Mary is an example of such a shrine.

2.2.6 Figures

Wayside sacred figures are not a common element of the Roztocze National Park and its buffer zone. Two such figures were identified in this study (i.e., in Brzeziny and Hucisko).

In Brzeziny, between Górecko Stare and Józefów, there is a rare figure of St Nicolas (fig. 13). The figure dates back to 1900, according to the inscription. Even though it is not a masterpiece, it surprises with the story of its creation. The document testifying to its creation was found during some construction works. According to (Słoniewski, n.d.), the story behind the figure is related to Mikołaj Kowal, an inhabitant of Brzeziny, who died eaten by wolves. After his death, local inhabitants experienced extraordinary phenomena: visitation by mysterious creatures, hearing of voices, and howling of wolves. They did not stop until grandson of Mikołaj Kowal raised a figure of St Nicolas.

The other figure located in Hucisko is the one of St John Nepomucen (fig. 13). The figure does not have any inscription that would enable its precise location in time, and there are no documents that would describe the story of its erection.



Fig. 13. Figures: St Nicolas in Brzeziny (A) and St John Nepomucen in Hucisk (B).

Source: (A) Photo by Edward Słoniewski (originally published at http://www.zamosc.pttk.pl/wordpress/?page_id=492&page=2, courtesy of E. Słoniewski), (B) author's archive

2.3. The meaning of the sacred objects for the local community

Sacred objects, regardless of their form or size, have a function of worship. They are the places where church service is performed, where people gather to pray, both with a priest or on their own. Monumental churches as well as simple roadside crosses are symbols of faith of the people who erected them. Faith is also manifested by gestures, stopping by *sacellum*, a sigh addressed to God, or even taking off of the hat. Even though Christian traditions and customs disappear from everyday life, many people still cultivate them together with moral principles, which could be still found in gestures and behavior, being the foundation of our civilization and culture. This is epitomized in taking care of even the smallest sacred roadside objects.

Places of worship are also places of starting and cultivating community values and relationships between community members. Of great importance are parish communities under the guidance of local parish priests. Both the whole community gathered at a liturgy as well as actions taken by particular groups unite the people, encourage them to help each other, and solve local problems together. Unity can be also observed in small communities gathering at the roadside shrines or crosses for May, or June service, or October rosary service, where after praying there comes the time of socializing, with discussions of problems, sharing of joys, and making plans for future actions.

Historic shrines, figures, or crosses are all witnesses of history. History, in turn, is passed on from generation to generation during history lessons or during renovation of the objects by the older generation together with their grandchildren or great-grandchildren. Numerous sacred objects are the pride and joy of the local community. This particularly applies to the objects known not only locally but also in a macro scale (e.g., Church in Górecko Kościelne or the Chapel “on the water” in Zwierzyniec). This all helps to boost the appreciation for the place where one lives, and as a result, leads to the integration of the local people. The circulating information of the sacral gems of the region also helps to boost tourism. The ever-growing number of pilgrims and tourists generates a demand for tourism services, which in many cases translates into a considerable cash flow to the home and self-government budgets. Finally, it also helps to develop infrastructure, increase standards of living, and stop emigration.

Summary

Shrines, roadside crosses, monumental churches or simple chapels are all important elements of the Polish landscape. The area of the Roztocze National Park and its buffer zone, even though it is mostly a forest area, and scarcely populated, offers a lot of sacrum space. The number of forms, uniqueness of history, and variety of functions of sacred objects are all assets of the area. They are significant elements not only for the local piety, but also for the traditions and culture cultivated by the local people. This helps to maintain the cultural continuity of the region, both on the material and landscape levels. Valuable sacred objects should be treated with care and supported by legal forms of protection, as they oppose the process of “extermination of the Polish landscape” (Kistowski 2010) and elimination of Christian signs of our heritage in the public space.

The presented value of sacred objects is also significant for the development of tourism. The objects enrich the attractions for tourists for the whole region of Roztocze, attracting not only tourists but also pilgrims. Boosted tourism creates perspectives of infrastructure development, new places of work, and offers chances to increase quality of life. This in turn could lead to less emigration from the region. Promotion of historic objects of small sacred architecture is an important step to preserve the material and non-material values of sacrum, an element of the local identity. Research on the significance of sacred objects as places of special significance for the local community is a key element of this process. This article should be treated as an introduction to some further planned analyses of this kind.

References

- ADAMOWSKI, J. 2011. "Motywacje stawiania krzyży i kapliczek przydrożnych." In *Krzyże i kapliczki przydrożne jako znaki społecznej, kulturowej i religijnej pamięci*, edited by J. Adamowski and M. Wójcicka, 28–29. Lublin: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Marii Curie-Skłodowskiej.
- ADMIN, P. LASOTA, Ł. OŚ, and M. ŚLIWIŃSKA. 2013. Etnografia Lubelszczyzny – kapliczki w krajobrazie kulturowym. http://teatrnn.pl/leksykon/node/1671/kapliczki_w_krajobrazie_kulturowym.
- GARBACZ, K. 2009. *Na szlaku bilgorajskich kapliczek i krzyży przydrożnych*. Zielona Góra: Agencja Wydawnicza „PDN”.
- GLOGER, Z., and J. KRZYŻANOWSKI. 1974. *Encyklopedia staropolska ilustrowana. T. 3, (K–P)*. 3rd ed. Warszawa: „Wiedza Powszechna”.
- GÓRECKI, J. 1999. *Przydrożne Krzyże i kapliczki w pejzażu górnośląskim*. Katowice, Instytut Górnośląski.
- KAWAŁKO, D. 1994. *Cmentarze województwa zamojskiego*. Zamość: Państwowa Służba Ochrony Zabytków, Oddział Wojewódzki.
- KISTOWSKI, M. 2010. "Eksterminacja krajobrazu Polski jako skutek wadliwej transformacji społeczno-gospodarczej państwa." In *Studia krajobrazowe a ginące krajobrazy*, edited by D. Chylińska and J. Łach, 9–20. Wrocław: Uniwersytet Wrocławski. Instytut Geografii i Rozwoju Regionalnego.
- KROCZEK, P. 2012. "Mała architektura sakralna w optyce prawa polskiego i kanonicznego." *Polonia Sacra. Kwartalnik teologiczny* no. 16 (30):199–212. doi: 10.15633/ps.542.
- MATŁAWSKA, H. 1991. *Zwierzyniec*. Zwierzyniec: Rada Miejska; Roztoczański Park Narodowy.
- PACZOS, J. 2011. "Floralne otoczenie przydrożnych krzyży." In *Krzyże i kapliczki przydrożne jako znaki społecznej, kulturowej i religijnej pamięci*, edited by J. Adamowski and M. Wójcicka, 57–67. Lublin: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Marii Curie-Skłodowskiej.
- POZNAŃSKI, J. 2009. *Historia parafii rzymskokatolickiej w Topólczy 1919–2005*. Zwierzyniec: Wydawnictwo Lipiec.
- RESZEL, R., and T. GRĄDZIEL. 2013. *Roztoczański Park Narodowy. Przyroda i człowiek*. Zwierzyniec: Roztoczański Park Narodowy.
- SEWERYN, T. 1958. *Kapliczki i krzyże przydrożne w Polsce*. Warszawa: Pax.
- Słoniewski, E. Mikołaj z Brzezin. http://www.roztocze.org.pl/roztoczanskie-legendy/articles/Miko%C5%82aj_z_Brzezin.html.
- Sobór Watykański II. Konstytucje, dekryty, deklaracje. Tekst polski, nowe tłumaczenie*. 2002. Poznań: „Pallottinum”.
- Sochan, T. Dzieje Parafii [Górecko Kościelne]. http://www.gorecko.pl/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=44&Itemid=52.
- SOSNA, G. 2001. *Święte miejsca i cudowne ikony. Prawosławne sanktuaria na Białostocczyźnie*. Białystok: „Orthdruk”.