

Reflection of archaeologized landscape elements in ethnographic resources

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Abstract:

This thesis discusses contemporary folklore interpretations of meanings of abandoned and decaying buildings and other types of artificial immovable monuments. Mutual relations between these interpretations and modes of place usage are also being observed. The research is based on ethnographic survey focused on Czech republic and including primarily interviews with various respondents and critical analysis of written, electronic and audiovisual resources. Aside from general part of the research, several sites were chosen as a more in-depth example of formation of meanings belonging to an archaeologizing place, a complex proces influenced by the history of the site, its physical appearance and other attributes. An attached catalogue includes collected contemporary legends related to abandoned places and a system of categorization of their motifs is offered. This collection is further discussed, especially with regard to ways how character of a location and activities that take place here influence appearance of various motifs. In general, it can be said that different abandoned places are also perceived differently and there are groups of motifs that are more characteristic for certain categories of places. Similarity to purely natural environment, former usage of a place as a home or its optical surveyability seem to be among most influential factors that affect folklore interpretation of an abandoned location. The way how contemporary society perceives ruins is also strongly affected by romantic aesthetic paradigm which can accentuate mysterious, old age or even danger as values that can be sometimes and at some types of places perceived as aesthetically pleasing.

Keywords: abandoned places – contemporary legends – folklore archaeology – phenomenology of landscape – lived space – tourism – ruins – Czech republic