

Tendencies of the elements of modern art and architecture in the historical centers of towns in Zemgale

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Abstract. Today, it is impossible to view architecture, art and landscape space in isolation. Together they create a definite town planning environment with its inherent scale and proportion.

Historically changing as the attitude and requirements of the society towards architecture are changing, architecture also changes on the whole. New technologies and 3D-designing at present opens up unprecedented opportunities, which are vividly marked in the works by the 21 century architects-architecture evolves as an art, in its expressions using various ways of form creation [1]. Experiments in the field of synthesis of arts have become the main driving force due to the growing desire of the society for a new, qualitative, artistic and also sustainable architecture. Also, synthesis of arts is a novel instrument for promotion of competition among architects, since qualitative design proposals, which strive to tear down borders between different kinds of art, can be competitive as the demand in the general public grows for a particularly qualitative urban environment [1]. Today, it is impossible to view architecture, art and landscape space in isolation. Together they create a definite town planning environment with its inherent scale and proportion. The city is a seamless and complex form, which, at the same time, is changing and chaotic. Ready system, structured in levels, is not characteristic to it. Urban environment becomes a noticeable and recognizable place if it is designed clear and understandable for the users, so that they can give their own meaning and connection to the surrounding to it [2].

Key words: Urban landscape space, cultural historical landscape, synthesis, aesthetic quality, historic centre of town.

Introduction

The development of the cultural landscape and the planning environment of the Lielupe river basin of Zemgale region is brightly described by the structure, scale and form of the natural base of the historical building of Bauska, Dobele and Jelgava. The growth of the region's three towns has been facilitated by the strong agricultural farming which is more attributable to the period of time from 80s of the 19th century when the economic boom wave from Western Europe contributed to the rapid growth of towns and manors in Zemgale. By contrast, the devastating years of the war and the post-socialist period in the second half of 20th century hit this region in the hardest way by changing the building structure of the towns' historic centers.

The review of the *research problem* is associated with the transformation processes of the 60s-80s of the 20th century which brought rapid changes in the cultural historical part of the town. During this

period of time, a very small part of the old building was renewed in the part of the historical center which during the war years had gone to rack and ruin. In place of the burnt construction volume there were introduced new tree plantations or courtyards with a large garden zone where the length of tree branches with years increased and hid expressiveness of the old building. The trends of town planning over the last decade creates a new direction, affecting both the historical building recovery and a sound preservation of some green zones. Consequently, in the design of the historical center of the town, great attention is paid to the searches of synthesis of the art elements and green structure. The purpose of the article is to study the historical centers of separate towns in Zemgale region and evaluate the results, describing the collaboration of town planners and landscape architects through the principles of visual modeling.

Methodology of the research

The modern design technologies allow to look at the development of the urban environment and forecast its architectural spatial scale, proportion and form. Nevertheless, visual representation in urban planning is predominantly a modelling tool, which shows the mode of structuring information and allows the tracking of the development of architectural thinking. Therefore, the inquiry of

visual aspects in urban planning is based on the cross-disciplinary research, as well as on the theoretical assumptions and on the examination of practical examples of urban planning itself [3]. The tendencies that set the trends of research design methodologies in art disciplines, architecture and urban planning indicate that the prevailing course is integration of artistic and scientifically analytic

approaches. This integrated research design mode is known as research by design methodology [4].

In particular, it is important in evaluating the language and scale of architectural forms of the green plantations or new construction volumes next to the old building. After completion of reconstruction works in the historical centers of Dobele and Bauska, it is evident that in the projects there are evaluated not only the searches of elements of the architectural artistic composition of the historical elements of the urban space but there are

also highlighted view lines with elements of the base of nature--individual trees, the church park, opening the landscape of the river bank in the view points, wedge-type sectors of paving, so intensifying the presence of the river's landscape space. Extensive glazing, tints of the facade paint, design of the architectural details, roof pitches and lining tints, street paving materials, colors, flower boxes, window shutters, small sculptures, etc. -that together creates semantics of the urban space which enriches perception of the historical center.

Results

The historical center of Bauska has evolved along the left bank of the Mēmele river and in the composition of its building there dominates an approximately three kilometers long network of parallel streets (Rīga, Plūdoņa and Kalēju) which within 200 m in width along the river forms the so-called backbone with street connections. In the southern part, the building space is concluded by a relief rise with castle ruins. Each of the streets creates its own architectural spatial expression which, in the context with the natural base peculiarities (nature of the riverside, street width and its rise or fall in the relief, tree planting sites) characterizes trends of the end of the 19th century town planning style. Comparing the current situation with historical research materials of the town, in the part of the old town, a new tree and shrub cover network has been formed. It is favored by the disappearance of the old building and without starting its restoration, instead of the building, it is replaced by tree seedling zones, allotment sites or extensive lawns with flower beds in courtyards. It brings a new structure in the part of the historical center and gaps of the old one-piece building in the streets that interchange with random trees, shrubs or orchards. A visual pollution is created in the room where individual trees hide the architectural nature of buildings and interferes with the overall expression. The value of each object individually is not highlighted but the value is the building in its entirety and mood. In the overall character of the environment, the sheds and patios are also valuable. If they are pulled down, repainted or rebuilt, their value is lost [5]. Closest to the river there is spaced Rīga street with one-storey and two-storey building. For the building of the north side of the street, the green courtyard space is the most impressive as it is complemented by the picturesqueness of the river's dolomite bluff and water bed.

One of the town's greenest areas is the Memele bank upstream the castle ruins where Rīga and Dambja streets meet. In this place, around 1870, a watermill was built on the side-branch of the left



Fig 1. Bauska. Green holiday recreation space in Brīvības bulvāris /Liberty Boulevard/ [landscape architect I. Karpiča, project, 2011]



Fig 2. Bauska. The reconstruction proposal of the old mill construction volume and the canal [landscape architect I. Karpiča, 2011]



Fig. 3. Bauska. The reconstruction of the historic wooden building and the street cover [Source: photo by the author, 2012]

bank of the Mēmele which served the needs of the townspeople. In the post-war years, the building lost its functional significance and it was adapted to the needs of the production. After rebuilding, it got another scale and proportion that visually sharply competed with the adjacent castle ruins. Today, the ruins of the abandoned production zone remind about the reconstruction periods of the historical heritage. A narrow stretched area of approximately 400 m along the river with its side-branch is a picturesque natural base where in springs there may be observed the force of the river bed but in the summer its refreshment is enjoyable. The watercourse with flood-land meadow and slope of the old castle ruins creates recreationally rich landscape space which closes the western part of the town's historical center. The research of the cultural-historical heritage has contributed to a new project proposal, by adapting the old mill site for a wide recreational space with the mill lock and building reconstruction, rebuilding it into a hotel. In the project there is offered (landscape architect I. Karpiča, 2011) the left bank improvement zone with viewing platforms on which you may get from the side of Brīvības street, so using the difference in the existing levels with the flood-land meadow. Below the platform covering there is designed a glazed construction volume with exhibition and music halls that visually is linked to the both coasts of the river landscape and the sight lines to see the castle ruins. Along the river there is expected a walking path that connects the castle ruins with the historical center of the town. By synthesizing together ruins of the old building, glazed facades, viewing platforms, difference in the existing relief and street tree plantings' line, there is recovered the landscape space where the synthesis of expressiveness of the geo-morphological structure, historical heritage and architectural artistic elements gives a compositional completeness to the historical urban space.

Modernism trends of the 21st century in the historical building center of Bauska are sought in close context with the conditions of the detailed plan of the town. As one of the most important areas of the old town is the Town Hall square where there has begun reconstruction of the square and the Town Hall. In the 60's of the 20th century around the square along Kalna, Rīga, Pasta and Plūdoņa streets, there were formed regular linden tree plantations which not only reduced the size of the old Town Hall square but also hid and spatially separated the perimeter building of the historic center, so creating a new scale of the urban space with a separate pedestrian zone. In order to recover the historical face of the urban environment, trees around the square were sawed away which caused a sharp public debate as a half century with the green plantings in the town's center had created to the town's residents a habit and myth of truthfulness of their location.



Fig. 4. Pasta street in Bauska has preserved the scale and expressiveness of the historical building
[Source: photo by the author, 2012]



Fig. 5. The perimeter building of the Town Hall Square of Bauska is reflected in the glazing of the gate opening, so synthesizing a visually unified historical part of the town
[Source: photo by the author, 2012]



Fig. 6. Reconstruction of the Town Hall Square and the character of its perimeter building
[Source: photo by the author, 2012]

In the southern and eastern parts of the Town Hall square along Pasta and Plūdoņa streets, the remaining rows of linden trees have been saved for the time being as they partially hide the low-value not yet dismantled two-storey building at the back of the Town Hall. Unfortunately, the temporary nature of the linden tree line and thujas also hide expressiveness of the reconstructed historical wooden building in Plūdoņa street adjacent to the Town Hall. With restoration of the Town Hall, the town has regained the old tower spike in its silhouette.

After the reconstruction, the individual parts of the Town Hall are restored-the tints of walls and openings, wooden veneer of the gate, the entrance portal, the view tower. Inside the gate opening, there are embedded glass cases which provide not only energy efficiency of the building but serves as a giant mirror that reflects the historical building in the opposite side of the square. The same gate with glass leaves is intended for the opposite building's facade in the next construction phase. The Town Hall facade is intended to be supplemented with artistic decorative elements, emphasizing the entrance portal with a small water bowl and a lion's mask cast in copper.

In the northern part of the square there has survived one of the trees, the canopy coloring of which adds to the color of the facades of the perimeter building. In the eastern side of the square, there is intended a space for a fountain and flower plantings. The position of the fountain symbolically marks the place where the old market water well was located and the direction in which from the adjacent Mēmele river rapids boats stopped and the goods were unloaded to take them to the marketplace or the Town Hall Square.

The town's historic center has regained not only its own architecturally spatial dominant but also functionally there are brought new activities into the urban environment which is particularly important for the infrastructure of tourism attraction as the adjacent Kalna street to the Town Hall square is VIA Baltic Road that takes tourists to Rundāle as well. The investments attracted for implementation of the project have enabled the municipality to organize folklore performances, artisans' festivities, etc., in the center of the town. Adjacent to the Town Hall square, the wooden building in Plūdoņa and Pasta streets has regained its old facade form where there is carefully thought out tonality of facades, apertures and shutters. The street cover is also renewed, constructing different zones in color, texture and cover material for pedestrians, traffic and street rainwater storage facility. The variety of color and shape of the streets brings specificity and distinctiveness in the old city centre which is characteristic of the late pre-war years.

Like in Bauska, in the historic center of Dobele, there is illustrated the form creation synthesis of architecture and art elements which is enriched by the green structure of the urban space. As the compositional dominant of the historical center must be mentioned the Dobele Evangelical Lutheran Church with a park. Both in the north and the southern part of the park, open or free town planning spaces adjoin the park. In the southern part-the Old Market Square with an ashlar cover but in the northern part-an extensive lawn zone which was formed when the old building was burnt down in the



Fig. 7. Reconstruction of the Church Square in Dobele. The synthesis of the historical building and modernism elements of the square connection point with Krasta street [Source: photo by the author, 2012]



Fig. 8. The Dobele Crafts House. The searches of the historical building scale and form creation, in evaluating the present green plantation zones [Source: photo by the author, 2012]

war years. Like the Bauska Town Hall Square, the Old Town Square of Dobele has also regained its proportion of the historical building after reconstruction (bureau of architect Ivars Šļivka, 2011) as the row of the linden trees planted in the post-war years has been removed which not only reduced the size of the square but also hid the building character of its southern side (90s of the 19th century). In the eastern part of the square there has been designed a plastic footstep line that continues picturesqueness of the church park and transfers it to the opposite side of the square building where in the summer there is met color brightness of street cafes, you hear people talking, music and church bell tolls. Success in the composition is the idea of the architectural artistic solution with a small level difference which not only concludes the eastern part of the square but also creates a harmoniously unified transition to the historical building of Baznīcas street. A small visual dissonance after reconstruction of the square brings in the heavily-formed water well. Its scale also makes dissonance with the fragility of the adjacent fountain line which is built in parallel to the longitudinal axis of the church, so symbolically intensifying the importance of this site for the historical center. The western part of the square is concluded by Viestura street which continues the

character of the old building. One of the buildings next to the square is reconstructed, it is built as a public character 3-storey construction volume (architect J. Kazlovskis). A successful architectural solution is the constructive part of the roof of the building which is concluded by a wooden element of a flat semi-circle shape, so providing a good dominant point which emphasizes the axis of symmetry of Skolas street and creates a compositional link of the street building with the Market Square. The building character of the intersection of Skolas street and Viestura street serves as a turning point for the street network that successfully connects the historical town center with the landscape space of the Bērze river. Its expressiveness is supplemented by the bank line of the river, the tree cover and the silhouette of the castle ruins. Like the Old Town Hall Square of Bauska, the Dobele Market Square has a characteristic common link of the historical building and the wedge-type “blue-green” base of nature. It is possible to intensify the visual expression of this site by a large glazed building at the level of the 1st floor of the building at 5 Viestura street (70s of the 20th century), so providing unity in the view lines for the landscape of the river bank with the Market Square.

After reconstruction the Church square, reconstruction of courtyards of the adjacent historical building is begun. One of the implemented projects is the reconstructed Crafts House (architect J. Kukša, 2011) which is located opposite the altar part of the Evangelical Lutheran Church and the entrance to the garden- the entrance to the church-in the patio on the opposite side of Baznīcas street. The longitudinal axis of its composition is designed as a continuation of the longitudinal axis of the church and it connects the Market Square with the adjacent Catholic Church. The author of the project of the building has given a philosophically strong continuation for the development historical center of the town which symbolizes the mythical in the Latvian style-*God, Nature, Work*. The wooden building form and material synthesis is illustrated not only in facades but it is also continued indoors where the compositional unity of the open and indoor space is achieved with an extensive showcases glazing. It allows to capture a continuation of the exposition from the open space to the indoor one (looms, spools, woven colorful canvas, spinning-wheels, a stove with an inglenook, onion strings, wooden benches, etc.). Today's modern technology in construction (in particular, provision of thermal efficiency) brightly highlights the fact that the building's historically functional importance is visually well linked with application of its architecturally historical elements.

The house of Crafts is located adjacent to the park part with a walking promenade that connects the Lutheran Church (the Church square) with the new Catholic Church. On the approximately 100 m long walk path in the historic part of the town there is obtained architecturally landscaped and philosophically rich space that maintains information about development of the urban environment over centuries. Dobele, as the center of the fertile Zemgale center, where there are connected Tērvete, Pokaini, Īle, Annenieki and Glūda areas, forms a place where the countryside values of Latvia focus from the Lilac Garden of Upītis to fruit and berry varieties from breeders gardens. Consequently, the Crafts center with the market zone has functionally convincingly found its place in the historical part of the town.

The Pārlielupe area in Jelgava - in approximately 1.5 km long strip of land along the right bank of the Lielupe river from Cukurfabrika /Sugar Refinery/ (1937-2011) to the Zorgenfrey Garden (80s of the 19th century--1945) has repeatedly changed both functionally and in composition. The manufacturing buildings of the sugar refinery with the huge chimney alongside with the old locomotive depot construction volumes and the metal constructions of the railway bridge-even a couple of years ago-in the city's silhouette marked a clear industrial landscape space. At present, after the factory's dismantling (2011), the meadows are restored. The former location of the sugar-beet piles is just indicated by the preserved row of linden trees that impersonally end in the meadow and create emotionally powerful feelings of the passing of time. The idea of the cultural historical heritage and creation of the industrial park was categorically denied by the international investment fund. By disappearing of the production zone and the shrub cover areas around it, the embankment has gained a new promenade place and a beach with view lines to the palace of Jelgava and the bridge. Next to the promenade, a new silhouette of Pārlielupe starts to highlight a public building (business and innovation center, a place for sporting activities –2008).

300 m away from the river, in 1937 the Zemgale National Economy Exhibition was opened, the area of which occupied 12 ha of land. From the seven exhibition pavilions there has stayed only one-the Bank of Latvia Pavilion (architect P. Kundziņš). After reconstruction its facade has regained its historical glass showcase with height of 5.0 m. During the war years, the pavilions were used as the location for the repressed, deporting them later to Siberia. In the 50's-60's of the 20th century, the exhibition's building is dismantled and in the area there is built a hospital, residential buildings and a prison. In the distance of 200 m between the hospital and prison, in the 70's planted linden alley

marks a longitudinal axis to the former exhibition pavilion for the Bank, so creating a successful divisional green area between the functionally and psychologically very different building spaces. Thanks to the linden tree plantations, it is possible to perceive the small philosophical historical space in which there is also placed a commemorative sign to the repressed, compositionally not disturbing the sight line to the former exhibition pavilion for the Bank. In the relatively small part of the urban space, there focuses an informatively dense historical “presentation” in the architectural, artistic form and green planting harmony.

In the urban space part, occupying only 2 ha of land, for approximately 40 years the out-of-town pasture area has been transformed several times, concentrating a dense informative historical layer in the architecture compositional and green plantation terms-the Bank of Latvia Pavilion (1937), the prison area (50s of the 20th century and the Cultural Center (2011) -as a bright example of the change of three different political powers. In 2011, the prison was closed and in its place there is being created a detailed plan for a new development of this area.

The transformation of the culturally historical landscape space 1.5 km in length for the right bank of the Lielupe river is concluded by the green recreational zone-the Zorgenfrey Park (90s of the 20th century) which was created by Count von Medem 250 m away from his summer residence-Valdeka Palace. In the post-war years, the park has lost the monument to Kurzeme Governor, General V. Driessen (1797), tea houses, walking paths and fountains, retaining only individual trees. After the park's reconstruction in the 90s of the 20th century, it is created as a memorial site for the repressed inhabitants of the city. The location of the area of the park at the intersection of the streets made it possible to create a diagonal axis of symmetry of the composition as a central promenade that connects the historic entrance to the park with the memorial stone to the repressed people.

Behind it, there is maintained an oak which was planted by K. Ulmanis in the 30's of the 20th century, so symbolically telling about the fate of the nation. For the compositional emphasis of the park's axis, there is introduced a new sculptural work that imitates a railway track and eternity where are taken the town's residents. A polished granite, metal and concrete (sculptor G. Svikulis) in an inclined plane emotionally powerfully work as an accent at the beginning of the promenade and it is a message to the town about the 20th century tragedy there. Double line tree plantations of Kalnciems street and Vecais road as a green frame protects the cultural-historic space of the park on a daily basis. The emotional increase walking or driving along these streets every day is not noticeable but



Fig. 9. The Bank of Latvia Pavilion (1937), buffer plantations of the row of linden trees (1965) and a monument to the repressed people (1999) in Jelgava, vivid example of layering of the architecturally scenic expression forms of three different political powers in the urban space [Source: photo by the author, 2012]



Fig. 10. The memorial sign in Svētbiņze/Holy Grove in Jelgava [sculptor G. Svikulis, photo by the author, 2012]



Fig. 11. Oak alley between the street and the Memorial area [Source: photo by the author, 2012]



Fig. 12. The searches of synthesis of elements of architecture and art and the green plantations for reconstruction of the historical center of Jelgava [architects A. Beļikovs, M. Geidāne-Ozoliņa, A. Ziemeļniece, 2007]



Fig. 13. The searches of synthesis of elements of architecture and art and the green plantations for reconstruction of the historical center of Jelgava [architects A. Beļikovs, M. Geidāne-Ozoliņa, A. Ziemeļniece, 2007]



Fig. 14. The searches of visual modeling for the historic center of Jelgava [landscape architect A. Beļikovs, 2007]

when entering the area of the park which is surrounded by dense tree lines, there is a feeling of coming into the “green” monumental art space that philosophically powerfully affects the viewer. An important role plays the current height of the trees which should not be lowered. There is possible only side branch sawing away in order not to reduce the traffic safety in the autumn leaves’ fall or during heavy snowfalls.

The diagonal of the compositional structure of the park, crossing Kalnciema street, visually gives

connection with the landscape space of the Lielupe river and the silhouette of the palace. The given urban space over more than a century has changed from a picturesque recreation spot to a monumental memorial zone with strong linear positioning elements of composition and character of the tree plantations. The historical green zone between Valdeka Palace and the given park has disappeared, there is created a place for large-scale commercial construction volumes and a hotel with a place for sporting activities.

Conclusions

The intensive changes of the culturally historical landscape space of the towns in the Zemgale region over the last century have been influenced by a number of factors-the presence of a highly developed agricultural production, a good road infrastructure, the geographical location of the towns around Riga and fluctuations of the post-socialism economic policy. Conversely, a rapid attraction of investments by local governments of the Zemgale region over the last decade has contributed to the tendencies to renew and preserve the historical building parts of towns. It has enabled architects to seek new architectural artistic values and a functional balance in the culturally historical part of the urban space.

Looking at the implemented projects and development proposals, as well transformation processes of the historical part of the city, in the detailed plans there are developed criteria that determine the necessary to retain or not to retain the

present green structure by analyzing its context in the building zone. The evaluation of the dendrological peculiarities of plantations in designs (width of tree branches, the root system, the nature of the canopy) is just as important as building height of the building, the tint of the facade paint, the compositional compatibility of the roof landscape in the street building.

In the current volatile conditions of the economic and social processes, there is quite often simplified an important urban knowledge, giving priority to short-term businesses and tax attraction by the local government rather than the inputs of values in the perspective.

The cultural and historical heritage is attributable not only to the preservation of individual objects but also to the totality of several elements-space, landscape, view lines, intellectual fulfillment, etc. It is also a greater responsibility of architects and landscape architects.

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Kopsavilkums. Zemgales reģiona Lielupes baseinam piederošās kultūrainavas un pilsēt būvnieciskās telpas attīstību spilgti raksturo Bauskas, Dobeles un Jelgavas vēsturiskās apbūves struktūra, mērogs un dabas pamatnes veidols. Reģiona minēto trīs pilsētu izaugsmi ir sekmējusi līdzās esošā spēcīgā lauksaimnieciskā saimniekošana, kas visspilgtāk ir attiecināms uz laika posmu no 19. gs. 80. g., kad ekonomikas uzplaukuma vilnis no Rietumeiropas deva pienesumu arī Zemgales pilsētu un muižu straujai izaugsmei. Savukārt, postošie kara gadi un postsociālisma laiks 20. gs. otrajā pusē šo reģionu skāra vissmagāk, izmainot pilsētu vēsturisko centru apbūves struktūru. Pētījuma problēmas apskats ir saistīts ar 20. gs. 60.-80. g. transformācijas procesiem, kas ienesa straujas pilsētas kultūrvēsturiskās daļas izmaiņas. Šajā laika posmā rūpīga vēsturiskā centra atjaunošanai uzmanība tika pievērsta mazāk. Pēdējo desmit gadu pilsētplānošanas tendences veido jaunu ievirzi, kas skar gan vēsturiskās apbūves atgūšanu, gan pārdomātu atsevišķu esošo zaļo zonu saglabāšanu, kas sekmē arhitektūras, mākslas elementu un zaļās struktūras sintēzi vecās apbūves teritorijā. Tas ir devis iespēju arhitektiem meklēt jaunas arhitektoniski mākslinieciskās vērtības un funkcionālo sabalansētību kultūrvēsturiskajā pilsēttelpas daļā.

Aplūkojot realizētos projektus un attīstības priekšlikumus, kā arī vēsturiskās pilsētas daļas transformācijas procesus, detālplānojumos tiek iestrādāti kritēriji, kas nosaka nepieciešamu saglabāt vai nesaglabāt esošo zaļo struktūru, analizējot tās kontekstu apbūves zonā. Patreizējos svārstīgās ekonomikas un sabiedrisko procesu apstākļos nereti tiek vienkāršotas pilsētplānošanas atziņas, priekšroku dodot īstermiņa uzņēmējdarbības apgriezieniem un nodokļu piesaistei pašvaldībā, nevis perspektīvē ieguldāmajām vērtībām. Kultūrvēsturiskais mantojums ir attiecināms ne tikai uz atsevišķu objektu saglabāšanu, bet uz vairāku kompozicionālo elementu kopumu - telpa, ainava, skatu līnijas, intelektuālais piepildījums utt. Tas uzliek arī lielāku atbildību arhitektu, ainavu arhitektu un mākslinieku kopsadarbībai.