

Development planning of church landscapes based on Latgale case study

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Abstract. Aim of the research is to look for the place of church landscape in development planning today and in the future. The contextual background of the church landscapes of Latgale Highland is formed by the church landscape of Latgale as a whole at the regional level. At the regional level the processes of genesis are different, although they are also affected by the changes on larger scale – Latvian, European and global one. Six historical periods can be identified when reviewing the genesis of the church landscapes in Latgale. The key driving force behind the processes of genesis is the changing interaction of politics and religion in different historical periods. The historical processes of genesis of the region have had direct impact on the landscape of the churches, but they also have connection to the main stages of development of the European landscapes – the traditional, the revolutionary and the postmodern.

The processes of the genesis of the landscape and their connection with the architectural elements in the landscape, the religious affiliation of the church landscapes and the development of the site connection are also closely related to the status of these landscapes in legislative documents. Significance of each specific landscape within the national, regional and local context is changing. Protection and development of the church landscapes and their elements in Latvia is undergoing changes both in relation to the ratified European Landscape Convention and other international regulations, which are being introduced in the legislation of Latvia.

When planning the development of church landscape of Latgale today, a comprehensive method for complete evaluation of the nature of the landscape has to be used. The more comprehensive the landscape research method, the more precisely it is possible to plan its development and forecast future processes of genesis. The vision of development of the church landscapes is based on the wholeness of the landscape, basic principles of planning and consideration of the processes affecting modern landscape – the globalization and the Europeanization.

Key words: church landscape, planning, regional.

Introduction

Landscape policy in Latvia is in its initial stage of development and this is the right moment to implement therein not only the terms and basic principles of the European landscape policy but also include the experience and methodology used in the planning. The protection of the landscape should be developed along the landscape policy, creating a complex system where each object of the landscape protection should have maximum possibilities of individual evaluation. Sustainable development is possible if the planning is comprehensive the same as research, since the landscape has a distinctive holistic nature. Not only the economic, political and cultural, but also the social factors are important. The habitat needs to develop not only by preserving the past values, but also considering the modern requirements and incorporating the future wishes and intentions [11]. The current studies on landscape protection already emphasize several specific issues. One of the issues to be solved is accessibility of the cultural historical objects. Visibility related to the public accessibility of the objects is important for church landscapes. Such sector of national economy as sacral tourism is directly facing this issue. Paper is based on literature review of different legislative documents and research materials about church landscape from year 2008 till 2014.

Development planning

Development planning of church landscapes is understood in this paper as a vast sphere, that includes – planning management, protection, planning and legislative documents. General basic principles of planning adopted as the best practice abroad should be used in the planning of church landscapes. Cooperation between the decision-makers, scientists and landscape users is crucial for sustainable planning. One of the ways to achieve successful cooperation is determining the existing possibilities for development of cultural identity. Cooperation among different spheres involved in landscape formation, development and maintenance create the wholeness similar to the church landscape itself.

Different approaches have to be developed as well – preservation within a museum, a multifunctional landscape, combining new functions with the existing ones [15]. The implementation of the identity of the landscape in the physical planning and management must not be forgotten as well [15]. Studying the landscape, recording the current situation, determining the significance is just the first step in planning the development of the landscape. Characterizing and determining the identity of the landscape should be done in close relation to its incorporation in the



Fig. 1. Old believer church in Ludza
[Source: photo by the author, 2011]

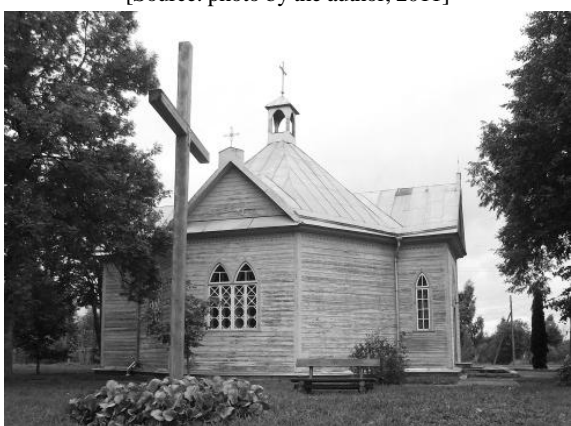


Fig. 2. Catholic church in Dubna
[Source: photo by the author, 2011]



Fig. 3. Orthodox church in Piedruja
[Source: photo by the author, 2011]

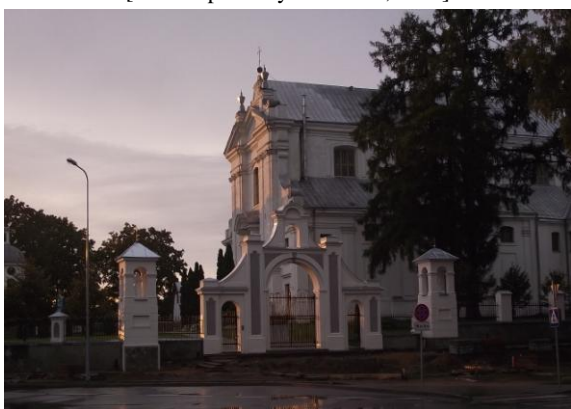


Fig. 4. Catholic church in Kraslava
[Source: photo by the author, 2011]

actual planning and management of the regional landscape.

Destruction or homogenization of individual landscape elements concurrently with the personal replacement with trivial collective symbols represents a threat to us from all sides. The individual identity must not be neglected [3]. After defining the church landscapes of Latgale Highland as a whole and creating cooperation among the parties involved in its development, it is important to implement these principles in the landscape policy. It is important to separate the whole from the unified. Diversity in architecture and different approaches to the formation of the church gardens serve as key elements to the rich regional identity of the church landscapes of Latgale Highland (Fig. 1, 2, 3, 4).

For a long time an important basic principle of environmental development is the aspiration towards sustainability. The sustainability is fundamentally contradicting with the landscape as it is continuously changing under different influences. The changes themselves should be considered as a distinctive nature of the landscape [1, 2]. One principle of creating a sustainable landscape is conservation of specific types of landscape, which may take the form of the maintenance of those processes that are organizing this landscape [2]. The church landscape is typically characterized by religious processes, which cannot be artificially sustained (*the elements in church gardens are not only functional but also symbolic*). The second way is creating sustainable landscapes in the future, taking into account the urbanization and globalization processes [2]. It is expected that in the future the geographical development of the religions will be affected by two processes – globalization and Europeanization [6]. The impact of globalization will manifest itself through the development of migrant religion. People travel, change their place of residence, frequently bringing their religion with them as well.

Europeanization in the religion manifests itself as the preservation of the historical trends of each country notwithstanding the globalization. The historical development is continued by the development of the interaction of the state and the sacral power similar to that of the transformation of the different religious organizations.

Sustainable landscape is associated with observation of specific ecological principles in the landscape design and landscape architecture [13, 2]. Further planning of the development is essential for sustainability of the landscape. Small landscape spaces such as church landscapes often lack a long-term plan and vision. Besides, the development of these small landscape spaces is usually under-controlled. It is a failure to appreciate the different elements. Ecological understanding is increasingly

growing in the design projects, but integration of these projects with cultural and aesthetic elements is still a little-studied matter [4].

Vision of the existing landscape policy development in Europe and Latvia in connection with the church landscape

Foreign experience, which can be used, is available from a rather limited geographical territory – Europe, and not all of it. The European church landscape drastically differs from the traditions of sacred landscape formation found elsewhere in the world. One of the most successful forms of adapting the foreign experience is development of cross-border cooperation. Considering that the territory has historically formed under different impacts, it would be efficient to take that into account in the territory development, including the cross-border influence. For the period from 2007 to the current program regulating cross-border cooperation 2013 at the European level is „Interger IV”. This program includes the whole territory of Latvia. The cooperation is not always productive and efficient due to bureaucracy and legal and regulatory differences between the countries.

Currently the landscape policy in Latvia is developing according to the European Landscape Convention ratified in 2007 contrary to several other countries that had already ratified the European Landscape Convention in 2004, and the development of landscape policy has already progressed quite far. The introduction of the European Landscape Convention in each country is different as it is permitted and intended by the guidelines prepared by the European Union. It is important to primarily remember that the landscape is like a tool and it cannot be perceived only as a binding legislative burden.

The study carried out within the framework of this research – summary of the literature, field studies and experimental work – is important not only for the development of the landscape science but also for that of the landscape policy. One of the main principles of the guidelines for introduction of the European Landscape Convention is knowledge as the foundation stone of the landscape policy development. In this perspective knowledge is viewed as identifying, describing and evaluating the landscape. It is the first step for creating a qualitative landscape policy [9]. The politics does not develop on spot; it is rather like a network, where the main levels are national, regional and local. Besides at each of these levels there is the sectorial division as well. Considering that the church landscape is categorized as a clearly definable cultural landscape, it can be connected to specific spheres. The church landscape forms connection with the spheres of culture, tourism and

spiritual growth. The future development of the church landscape of Latgale Highland, the same as any landscape, has to be formed in accordance with the public involvement, identifying its opinion.

The realisation, that for the church landscapes their protection is the most important of the European Landscape Convention objectives, comes into the foreground of the research. If the church landscapes continue to disappear, the related management and planning tools will not be required in the future.

The paper includes a distribution of potential use of the characterization of the landscape and the evaluation of the landscape based on the existing planning levels in Latvia, the existing landscape policy and its functions, as well as the international experience in the use of the evaluation of the landscape policy. The planning levels at which the characterization of the church landscape of Latgale Highland and the evaluation of the nature of the landscape should be included are the Latgale planning region and the national level.

The process of introducing the European Landscape Convention in Latvia has progressed since adopting the Basic principles of landscape policy 2013-2019 by the Cabinet of Ministers on August 7 2013 (order No 361 (minutes No 41, 77§) „On the Basic Principles of Landscape Policy 2013 – 2019”). In the coming years the landscape policy in Latgale will be managed in connection with the “Sustainable development strategy of the planning region of Latgale 2030”. According to the Basic principles of landscape policy 2013-2019 the management of the landscapes should be implemented, besides the national and the regional level, at the local level as well. Currently, in order not to overload the municipalities and considering the limited availability of the human resources and lack of qualification, the landscape policy is implemented and the management is performed at the regional and national level.

The most comprehensive document of the planning region of Latgale is the “Spatial plan of the planning region of Latgale 2006–2026”. Supplementing it with the evaluation of the nature of the landscape would significantly improve its quality and potential. The description of the spatial structure of the region currently includes such information as description of the existing situation, comments, list of the biggest companies, specially protected natural territories, distribution of forest areas, description of the rural villages of the region and the cities of the region, maps, summary of the development program, description of the current environmental state, current use of the territory, description of unemployment, farm lands, descriptions of the process of elaborating the plan and descriptions of health care [7]. Considering the fact that the

landscape is also a resource that affects the development of the territory, describing of its current state, mapping and describing the special local landscapes as well as characterising the landscape should be included in this section of the document.

The next section of the Spatial plan of the planning region of Latgale 2006–2026 is the perspective of the spatial development of the planning region of Latgale, which should also include the perspective record of the landscape characteristics and development guidelines at the regional level. It would coincide with the guidelines of the spatial planning of Latgale region.

Public involvement is a sphere where it is important to explain the current processes in an understandable, maximally clear way. Not only should the public be informed on the current situation and the possible development directions, but it is also important to listen to its opinion. The characterization of the landscape may serve as an auxiliary aid of explaining the current processes of the cultural landscape.

The spatial plan of the planning region of Latgale, the spatial development perspective of which emphasizes that Latgale has to preserve its identity and cultivate the diverse cultural heritage [7], demonstrates the awareness of the diversity of the cultural environment. As far as the landscape is concerned, these mentions of diversity are still to be considered intuitive so far, not being fully aware of the diversity of the landscape. Characterization of the landscape and identification of individual phenotypes define the diversity of the church landscapes, and similarly the identification of these phenotypes should be used for studying the landscape of Latgale in a broader perspective, as well as for characterization of the landscape Latvia.

The identification of landscape roads and the use of guidelines for their development both at the regional level of Latgale and in the spatial plan of Rēzekne region – at the local level, is considered to be a positive tendency. The potential of the landscape as a value and as a resource has not yet been fully identified and the range of the cultural landscapes included and evaluated in the spatial development documents should be expanded. Preserving the identity and diversity of the landscape is not possible by including individual elements of the landscape in spatial planning.

Churches along with the church gardens, as it is clarified within the framework of the research, should be considered as a complex element

Therefore, the church and the church garden as a single element is to be allocated to social infrastructure and, according to the Spatial Development Planning Law, is a part of public

infrastructure [12]. According to the Spatial Development Planning Law the public infrastructure and its development should be defined in the spatial plans of the local municipality. Considering the competence of the local municipality, which is defined within the framework of the aforementioned law, defining the borders of the special landscapes and identifying and characterising the special landscapes should be settled at the municipality level. The local municipalities are those that are competent to provide recommendations for the elaboration of development planning documents at the national and regional level. Future vision of the church landscapes is unclear and their importance is jeopardized, although the paradigms of the historical culture are most vividly reflected in the architectural monuments [10]. Unfortunately the Western culture has never had such tolerance to the reflections of these paradigms as the Eastern culture. For instance in Japan there are monuments of sacred architecture, which have remained unaltered since the 7th century [10]. The intolerance of the Western culture serves as grounds for the assumption that the currently abandoned monuments of sacred architecture and architecture could just disappear or get drastically altered. In this context, the information gathered in the research on the results of the inventory of the church landscapes and church gardens could serve as a proof of the passing diversity in the future.

The three components of the cultural value model defined by the Stephenson are nowadays undergoing changes or transformation – the relationships in the context of the significance of the church landscapes are decreasing, the forms due to the abandonment of the landscapes are changing or disappearing as well, the practice in the context of people's activities is also decreasing. Therefore the whole model of cultural value is drastically changing. The external values, expression and significance are closely related to the public and its processes and activities.

The church – the dominant of the church landscape – is considered to be the most stable and unchanging element of the church landscape. Whereas, the enclosing garden is considered to be a fragile frame, the form of which reflects the processes of the genesis of contemporary architectural formation language and creates the transfer of cultural values from the individual to the public.

The boundaries of the church landscape are defined in the research as a set of individual church landscape borders. In turn, the boundaries of the church gardens are identified as being clearly defined, including the landscape context, the historical genesis and the significance of the social section of the location in the evaluation. When assessing the church landscapes, not only the

identification of their borders and the significant elements, but also the level of importance of the church landscape is essential.

Nowadays the level of the church landscape significance is decreasing. One of the causes is the religious indifference [14] or alienation from the significance of rituals in the cultural value model. The religious indifference develops because the system of Christian values often becomes formal within the society, therefore religious apathy can be observed. This formal perception of the processes that take place under the impact of the globalization processes transforms into the destruction of the formation language diversity of the church landscapes.

The level of significance of the church landscape is considered to be variable and lacking a clear definition. Officially, the church landscapes represent an important reflection of the historical and cultural traditions. In reality, not implementing the specific management of the church landscapes, leaves these public ones running on their own accord.

The church landscape is a unique landscape and the church gardens too drastically differ from other gardens, including historical gardens. Considering the landscape and its components and the uniqueness and fragility of the church garden at the time when the traditions are changing and the territories are facing abandonment, it is especially important to use the right approaches of development planning. The current documents of long-term and medium-term development planning of the planning region of Latgale have considered several international development planning documents. The European Spatial Development Perspective is to be mentioned as the main one [5], as well as the national planning documents and previous development planning documents of the planning region of Latgale that were considered in the planning documents. One of the most important strategies – LLDS 2030

(Latvian Long-term Development Strategy 2030) [8], which was mentioned as being important for the planning region of Latgale in the “Latgale program 2017”, is the spatial development perspective [7]. The main courses of spatial development perspective are improvement of accessibility, population and national interest spaces. The areas of the cultural historical and landscape territories are included in the national interest spaces.

Conclusion

Such factors as globalization and Europeanization should also be taken into account when planning on the local scale. One should be aware that along with the protection of visual aspects, management and planning in planning and development, church landscapes should be perceived as a usable resource. But it is difficult to be aware of the church building as not the only resource but include the church landscape and its elements as well.

Landscape characterization is a method which can well integrate and evaluate elements of a small-scale landscape ensuring in that way the principles of succession in landscape planning. When protecting, managing and planning church landscapes one should remember that all of these activities should be focused, firstly, on increasing the quality of life of local residents. It would provide the feedback for the overall regional development.

In addition, the protection consciousness of the collective traditions is connected with the social phenomenon – tourism that is dedicated not only to the attendance of churches but also to the church gardens and landscapes. In this way church gardens and everyday landscapes serve as a linking point for the individual with the collective and a wider society. These areas become not only a tourist attraction point but also a stimulating factor and resource for the development of the region and society.

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Kopsavilkums. Ainavas ģenēzes procesi un to sasaiste ar arhitektūras elementiem ainavā, dievnamu ainavu konfesionālo piederību un vietas piesaistes attīstību ir cieši saistīta arī ar šo ainavu statusu likumdošanas dokumentos. Katras konkrētās ainavas nozīmīgums nacionālā, reģionālā un lokālā kontekstā ir mainīgs. Dievnamu ainavu un tās elementu aizsardzība un attīstība Latvijā ir pārmaiņu procesā gan saistībā ar ratificēto Eiropas ainavu konvenciju, gan citiem starptautiskajiem normatīvajiem aktiem, kuri pašlaik ir ieviešanas procesā Latvijas likumdošanā.

Dievnamu ainavu plānošanā izmantojami vispārīgie plānošanas pamatprincipi, kas pieņemti kā labas prakses piemēri ārvalstīs. Ilgtspējīgai plānošanai būtiska ir sadarbības veidošana starp lēmējiem, zinātniekiem un ainavas lietotājiem. Viens no veidiem, kā panākt veiksmīgu sadarbību, ir esošo iespēju apzināšanās kultūras identitātes attīstīšanai. Sadarbība starp dažādām sfērām, kas ir iesaistītas ainavas veidošanā, attīstībā un uzturēšanā, veido līdzīgu veselumu kā pati dievnamu ainava.

Ārvalstu pieredze, ko iespējams izmantot, ir ņemama no visai ierobežotas ģeogrāfiskās teritorijas – Eiropas, un arī ne visas. Eiropas dievnamu ainava krasi atšķiras no citur pasaulē sastopamajām sakrālo ainavu veidošanas tradīcijām. Viens no veiksmīgākajiem ārvalstu pieredzes adaptācijs veidiem ir pārrobežu sadarbības attīstība. Ņemot vērā, ka teritorija vēsturiski veidojusies dažādu ietekmju rezultātā, lietderīgi būtu teritorijas attīstībā ņemt to vērā, tai skaitā pārrobežu ietekmi. Eiropas līmenī pašreizējā programma, kas regulē pārrobežu sadarbību, ir „Interger IV”, periodam no 2007. līdz 2013. gadam. Šajā programmā iekļauta visa Latvijas teritorija. Birokrātijas un likumisko, normatīvo atšķirību dēļ starp valstīm sadarbība ne vienmēr ir auglīga un efektīva.

Kontekstuālo Latgales augstienes dievnamu ainavas fonu veido Latgales dievnamu ainava kā vienots veselums reģionālā mērogā. Ģenēzes procesi reģionālā mērogā veidojas atšķirīgi, lai arī tos ietekmē pārmaiņas lielā mērogā – Latvijas, Eiropas, pasaules. Aplūkojot dievnamu ainavas ģenēzi Latgalē, izdalāmi seši vēsturiskie periodi. Noteicošais ģenēzes procesu virzītājspēks ir politikas un reliģijas mainīgā mijiedarbība dažādos vēsturiskos periodos. Reģiona vēsturiskie ģenēzes procesi tiešā veidā ir ietekmējuši dievnamu ainavu, bet sasaiste veidojas arī ar Eiropas ainavu attīstības galvenajiem posmiem – tradicionālo, revolucionāro un postmoderno.

Plānojot Latgales augstienes dievnamu ainavas attīstību mūsdienās, nepieciešams izmantot visaptverošu metodi ainavas rakstura pilnīgai novērtēšanai. Jo visaptverošāka ir ainavas pētīšanas metode, jo precīzāk iespējams plānot tās attīstību un prognozēt turpmākos ģenēzes procesus. Dievnamu ainavas attīstības redzējums balstīts ainavas veselumā, plānošanas pamatprincipos un ievērtējot mūsdienu ainavu ietekmējošos procesus – globalizāciju un Eiropizāciju.

Pašlaik izstrādāto Latgales plānošanas reģiona ilgtermiņa un vidēja termiņa attīstības plānošanas dokumentos ir ņemti vērā vairāki starptautiski attīstības plānošanas dokumenti. Kā galvenais minams Eiropas Teritoriālās attīstības perspektīva, kā arī plānošanas dokumentos ņemti vērā nacionālie plānošanas dokumenti un līdzšinējie Latgales plānošanas reģiona attīstības plānošanas dokumenti. Kā viena no nozīmīgākajām LIAS 2030 (Latvijas ilgtspējīgas attīstības stratēģija līdz 2030. gadam), kura „Latgales programmā 2017” minēta kā nozīmīga Latgales plānošanas reģionam, ir telpiskās attīstības perspektīva. Telpiskās attīstības perspektīvas galvenie virzieni ir sasniedzamības uzlabošana, apdzīvojamība un nacionālo interešu telpas. Kultūrvēsturisko un ainavu teritoriju areāli ietilpst nacionālo interešu telpās.