

## THE PRESERVATIONS PROBLEMS OF CULTURAL HISTORICAL HERITAGE AND LANDSCAPE IN LATVIA

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### ABSTRACT

*Exaggerated scale and proportions destroy the historical spatial context of the buildings of estates and their landscape. Little by little the national identity and intimacy of Latvian rural landscape having an essential role for attaching the tourism infrastructure toward rural cultural landscape have been lost. The method of industrial management creates the process of the scale transformation. The attachment of tourism infrastructure is too less for studying a separate historical object without taking into consideration the context of the historical landscape. A purposeful preservation of the cultural landscape valuable both artistically and architectonically may provide the creation of long time commercial activity of rural tourism in Latvia.*

**Key words:** Cultural historical landscape, restoration, context, sight lines, landscape space of estate parks

### INTRODUCTION

The old estate parks in Latvia are often developed in such a way that their oblong axis or some of their cross axis melt with the forest landscape in their more distant composition or pass over with the field landscape in a slow connection, too. A particularly pictorial compositional solution of Zemgale estate parks is the inclusion of the relief or river flow-as the moments of surprise in distant sight lines, or as a culmination element while (*Old Jelgava..., 2010*) estimating the landscape of the river banks.

The perception of rural landscape relating to the history of civilization in the principal sight lines or sight points is often from the roads. The expression of the visually esthetic quality of the landscape space is influenced by the length of the sight line, the width of the sight angle and the side wings of a specific sight point. The sight lines or the perspectives are visually very susceptible and fragile where this expressiveness may be lost particularly quickly by including new building scales and proportions in the landscape or by developing new groups of tree and bush plantations (Janelis, 2010).

Although in the territorial planning of rural municipalities there are defined the places of the monuments relating to the cultural history as well as their protection zones it is often only a formal presumption. The formulated length of the protection zone in the law (100m or 500m) is often too small. This problem is discussed for a rather long time and it is found that the value of an architectural monument must not be divided from the total context of the landscape space. Often a situation is created when the historical landscape may soon be covered up by new buildings usually connected with the production load of agriculture or industry in the territories of rural municipalities.



**Figure 1.** In the main sight points from the park not the elements of the building architecture, but the romanticism of the park is dominant



**Figure 2.** The house of the farm – hands of the estate with the coach house. The coach house with a splendid window of palladio type.

### MATERIAL AND METHODS

The methods of the industrial management create the transformation process of the landscape scale. Particularly it may be referred to the attachment of international finances to the intensification of

agriculture. Its fast use in building has created a new scale sight lines and conclusion in the landscape space, so that some changes should be done in the territorial planning of the municipalities as regards the protection zones around the cultural historical space. In order to attach the tourism infrastructure the investigation of a separate historical object is not ensonce if it is not connected with the context of the historical landscape. The large scale of the agrolandscape and in contrast to it the compositionally fragile historical environment having the fragility of scale and forms of the building of parks and estates, often create the disharmony in the main sight points from the roads. An example is the locations of the building ensembles of Zemgale historical estate, where next to them the fertile arable lands of Latvia are concentrated.

The main axis of Grosswurzau estate is marked by a long lane of oaks which is to end at the parade courtyard of the master house (Brūgis, 1997). In some years new grain bunkers and a drying - kiln located next to the existing one have been built at the end of the lane. Next to the part of the park – huge metal hangars for storage of agricultural production.

One of the summer residences of Kurland dukedom (Lancmanis, 2003) - Swethof estate palace has been compositionally disarranged, the same way it can be said about the part of its park divided by the motor road, but in the park zone not only production of a building firm, but also building of new detached houses have been formed.

The park and the planting zone of its old trees having a historical land dam and a small water canal along the perimeter-even today mark the territory of the old park. Altauz estate palace may by perceived in a spacially wider scale where in the sight lines from the side of the Tukums road the expressive of panorama has been lost as regards the landscape, because the production building of biogas having a huge cattle stand has covered up the main sight points. The ensemble of Wilzenhof estate having the old road bed, lane, a little bridge, ponds, front courtyard and a picturesque park may be perceived approximately in the distance of half kilometer. But the southern and eastern part of the park and the estate building in the dense building zone is covered up by the living block, kinder garden and a sport hall. The regulations about the protection zone of 500 m around the cultural historical monuments adopted prove again that the condition given may not be used in all cases equally. It may be used not only as regards the historical buildings, but also to the cultural landscape space in total, where the distance of the sight lines is not larges than 500m in the territories of plains. In the territorial planning of municipalities a clear zone of building regulation and protection of landscape is not found for each of the cultural historical locations.



**Figure 3.** Sweethof palace in the sight line from the old road. The main facade with the stage bank of the river.



**Figure 4.** Sight from the palace to the river and the water meadow location of the historical road and bridge.



**Figure 5.** Friedrichlust palace. Architect Severin Jensen.1780. The park and place of the old pond.

It is particularly important as regards the elaboration of the tourism routes in which the main sight points from the roads characterize the identity marks of Latvian cultural landscape. The so-called “golden circle” is around Jelgava (Mitau), the former capital of Kurland dukedom. There are several summer residences of the dukedom around Jelgava – the place of the winter palace. The circle begins with the ensemble of Swethof palace making its way along the right bank of Swete river.

At present the old road bed has been forgotten and is not used, but the sight points towards the historical building ensemble with the former place of the bridge have remained. The sight lines are longer than 1 km and such protection zone is not included in the municipal territorial planning. If in such a zone the transformation of the land used in agriculture has been foreseen as a building territory, it will cover up the historical landscape.

The next place of the summer residence of the golden circle is situated 10 km from the building ensemble of Swethof – Grunhof palace having an expressive play of the relief and the road bed. Already at present the protective zone there is a dense village building with many-storied dwelling houses and detached houses breaking the expressive sight lines.

The territorial planning does not mention the possibilities of transformation of the competing building or those of regulation of the building in sides to clear the sight lines to the historical space. Quite contrary, the investments are being attached to the infrastructure in order to reconstruct the building of the after war period.

In the apposite side of the park farm labourers' and servants' house as well as their landscape space with courtyards and farm buildings are located. At present the after war detached buildings have broken in a mixed structure. While privatizing the land, the detailed planning did not take into consideration the protection line even in the distance of 100m.

After the calamity of two world wars one of the 5 summer residences of the dukedom – the splendid Lust castle has been lost completely. But Ruhental – as the most splendid of them has regained its glitter. It is nice too, that for the tourists stream coming from Riga direction to Ruhental the square of the old Bauska town council and the town council house are being restored (Lancmanis, 2001).

The historical zone of Wurzau palace is the the last one of the circle of summer residences around Jelgava (Janelis, 2010).



**Figure 6.** Friedrichlust palace. Old trees of the park gradually vanish and the new ones appear in their place.

The old estate road in the northern part has kept its bed and today it is encircled by the detached houses of the village which do not suppress the scale of the historical building on the left bank of Wurzau river. The estate park is situated on the right bank of the river and its marks of altitude are lower than the left bank of the river where the palace is situated. The different mark altitude of the river banks made the sight lines of the landscape more expressive from the windows of the palace. The perimeters of the parks end with a dam and canal. In the western side next to the canal and dam the historical road with the bridge is located. The dam and canal as the last elements of the park are similar in their development to the development line of the Swethof estate park which may be seen even today in the south-west side.

The compositional building of the Wurzau estate park is disarranged by the bed of the new road, crossing the longitudinal axis of the park. The historical road and the bridge of the estate were dismantled in the 20- and 30-ties of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Now in the southern part of the park there is agrolandscape with arable lands.

The municipal territorial planning does not mention prohibition about the possible transformation of agricultural lands for the building territory. The protection zone is necessary to be approximately 2 km long from the southern side of the park including the picturesque sight of the landscape in the direction from Oglaine estate road. From this road in the western direction on cloudless days the steeple of Wurzau church may be seen.



**Figure 7.** The ruin of the Wurzau palace. Architect Severin Jensen.1781. Composition axis of the palace ensemble with the park and river.

The inclusion of the cultural landscape protection zones in the territorial planning is rather difficult because the immovable properties are registered in the land book in which the protection lines are not mentioned.

Therefore, the information is to be included in the architectural planning task for every land plot separately.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The cultural heritage is made of the resources accumulated in total and taken as the heritage from the past and which there is a value for the whole society independently from the possession of the property (Bruģis, 2005). During the last years the main values in Europe are the human ones in the conception of cultural heritage.

In the continuous development of the society and the special environment, the cultural heritage is not used enough as the potential for a long term development as well as for the preservation of the identity of the landscape space. Everybody must take into consideration the mutual regulations of game creating and preserving the quality of the space.



**Figure 8.** The park of Wurzau palace. The old road as a dam and a borderline of the park.

The owners would not be allowed to obtain the land in a valuable cultural historical environment if they do not wish to take part in the preservation of the cultural landscape. The protection zone of the cultural heritage does not belong only to its owner but to the whole society.

A qualitative historical landscape space is a well-cultivated and restored cultural heritage the preservation policy of which should be included in the development conception of the rural municipal territory. It influences the possibilities of tourism infrastructure development.

## CONCLUSIONS

Separate buildings cannot be loved upon from the mutual landscape space or the green grass concept included in the beginning of the formation of the historical building (relief, sight lines, old road bed etc.).

It is true that in the new socio economical conditions, the fragile historical landscape space structure meets significant changes of the property relations carrying different interests of property management which sometimes obtains the character of an elemental development in the rural municipal territories. The transformation processes of the cultural landscape should be detailed evaluating them by the specialists of the state cultural monument protection.

While searching the synthesis and harmony for the historical and modern things one must try to restore the identity of the landscape space characteristic to the cultural historical environment.

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