

# Style and Harmony of Urban Green Space Landscape

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## Abstract

The urban space as a united spatial organism is dynamic and finds itself in continuous process of changes. According to the growth of the economic basis and following the development stages of the urban space, it is clear that the urban space has its specific structures of plan and dimension with artistic compositional images. They also are subjected to some changes.

Moreover, the architect is to evaluate definite regularities of urban space both in the composition of urban space and in the organizational art of the general space. While using new functional and compositional solutions, the context of forms and synthesis based on the scale and harmony of the cultural historical urban space should be sought. Especially it is to refer to the present new science of construction style, which in the language expression is rather similar, but often the preservation of the national identity is forgotten as regards to the introduction of green landscape space elements in the new building.

**Key words:** *urban space, cultural historical landscape, history as space.*

## Anotacija

Miesto erdvė, kaip vieningas erdvinis organizmas yra dinamiška, ji yra nenutrūkstamame pokyčių procese. Pagal ekonomikos augimą ir miesto erdvės vystymosi etapus yra aišku, kad miesto erdvė turi savo specifinį struktūrinį planą su vaizdų meninio komponavimo dimensija. Čia taip pat vyksta pokyčiai. Architektas turėtų įvertinti konkrečius miesto erdvės dėsningumus, tiek miesto erdvės kompozicijos, tiek ir organizacinio meno bendroje erdvėje atžvilgiu. Naudojant naujus funkcinius ir kompozicinius sprendimus, turėtų būti siekiama konteksto formų ir sintezės, pagrįstos kultūrinė-istorine miesto erdvės harmonija. Ypač tai siejama su nauju statybos stiliaus mokslu, kai dažnai pamirštama apie tautinio identiteto išsaugojimą, susijusį su žalios kraštovaizdžio erdvės elementų įvedimo į naująsias statybas.

**Reikšminiai žodžiai:** *miesto erdvė, kultūrinis istorinis kraštovaizdis, istorija kaip erdvė.*

## Introduction

In the artistically compositional and balanced environment, the special subject environment is a united while both ideologically and artistically in which each element (buildings, trees, covering road, lawn, small forms of architecture) is important. In the composition of town space the building and zones of green plantation are prevailing. In the visual perception of the urban space, separate sight points have a critical meaning, but it is the perception space as a whole. The cultural historical heritage, the architectural science of buildings, the forms of nuances of national identity, green landscape space, and the infrastructure of attendance reflect in the urban space image.

The basis of the outer space formation in the coexistence of architecture and the green space starting ages ago. The present tendencies of art, architecture and garden space are more satiated with nationalism and commercialism.

At present the task of city planning is to raise the visually emotional potential of the urban planning space. This condition is the basis of the investigation actuality too, connected with the possibility to increase the wedge-shaped or ring-formed territories in the city (parks, gardens, forest parks, squares, separate tree group, row plantings of streets, tree lanes, green hedge protection zones against noises etc.). Especially, it refers to the plantings along the new street lines, territories of inside courtyards in the living blocks, etc.

Noise protecting walls of concrete or glass are not characteristic for the fragile architectonic language and scale of the city in Latvia. Historically, this role was played by the tree planting, choosing dendrologically proper species of frees, corresponding to the vegetative features and having expressive forms. There conditions form the so important language of rational identity.

## **Methods of research**

The methods used for studying the green landscape of the city space are connected with the functional meaning of separate urban planning space:

- searching the context of cultural historical building and green plantings;
- studying the inside courtyard territories of many storied living blocks;
- studying the compositional building of planting zones of public outer space;
- green space of streets, parks and squares.

The cultural historical space of the urban planning space keeps to emotionally very strong influence from the architectural languages of the building facade and the compositional image of the outer space – green plantings, path system, sculpture works, etc. One of the best examples is Valdeka castle in Jelgava which is encircled by a high building density of many – storied living houses, sport activity centre and perspective university building, main transport line, zones of pedestrians and cyclists, as well as the historical park territory.

While the restoration of the castle building, the reconstruction of the landscape space next to it has been elaborated. In the courtyard of the castle-planting squares of linear form, in which the compositional basis consists of the regular historical garden elements. The composition preserves the cross axis of the castle size with wide recreation zone divided in small sectors colored in different forms of low plantings, by taking into consideration the dendrological features of the plants. The garden ends with a row of tree plantings, behind which the parking place is planned. In the eastern part of the garden or in the part of the castle courtyard. The stable building will be situated; the arch line apertures will enrich the expressiveness of the garden. In the southern part of the garden the new study building will be planned.

In such way the castle garden is formed as partly closed inside courtyard space from which the sight lines are to the western side small square.

The cultural historical zones in urban space have different scales where the largest one usually is that belonging to town council square or the square of church often used as a market square or the zone of activities.

In the town council square in Bauska or the market square there was the line tree row growing perimetrically during the postwar years. The city council building was burned down during the war years and its ruins were removed, in its place public building having an architectonic language to the town space was built. Thanks to the line tree rows, the visually low aesthetic quality of the building was suppressed. Thus the town received a new green planting or the zone of the square having flower plantings and recreation places. When the restoration of the town council building began, the conception for going the historical town council square was developed. The project planned to see the row plantings of the street, in such a way both to open the sight lines towards the town council building, as well as the perimetrical building of the square with the architectonically expressive building of the second part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. During a half century the green landscape territory structure has changed by quick changes of the visual image of the central part of the town.

The transformation processes of the town space refers also to the many-storied living house building of the 60-80ties having a low emotionally aesthetic quality existing at present without considered green planting and recreation zones in micro districts. The green territories of the inside courtyards have been created chaotically and some trees of the courtyards have been created chaotically and some trees of the courtyards have been planted without taking into consideration the insulation requirements and the length of the overshadow. It may refer to the requirements to ensure the shelter in the children play zones, to avoid the drought zones. The pedestrian paths have been made with the transit character within the limits of the inside courtyard (Fig. 1.).



**Fig.1.** The new composition of Valdeka castle  
*1 pav. Naujasis Valdeka pilies teritorijos sutvarkymo planas*

While realizing the projects from 2004 the entry roads for the transport having one-way Any spatial formation whether it is a city, a separate building, dendrological elements or architectonically sculptural ensemble, is visually conjoined in an inseparable unit with the spatial surrounding that encompasses perimetric movement and having the possibility to drive down in the underground parking or many storied parking have been built to ensure:

- to free the inside courtyards from the auto parking places;
- to develop a short-time transport stop on the cover of eco-pavement;
- plantings of blooming shrubs and covering plants in their creation zones;
- groups of tree plantings or location of separate trees;
- pergolas and terraces in the recreation zones.

By help of the language of composition elements, it is possible to create the expressiveness of rooms both in linear and plastic compositions.

In the latent projects of many storied dwelling houses not only the language of visual architecture and its synthesis in the landscape but also compositionally searching a visual connection with the town space elements-sight from the terrace to the river, to bank slope, to church spike, to water meadows, to children play zone, etc., have been estimated.

## Results

Inhabited localities that have no planning or old districts are visually more attractive than newly projected city parts. There are many individual objects that were built in nowadays and can be characterized as aesthetically qualitative, but there are no cities which have visually qualitative, completed space (Fig. 2 and 3). Many urban complexes are not in harmony with their surroundings because of their location, planning and design (Liepa-Zemesa, 2010). Human assesses the space around him, intuitively looking for an ailment that could stabilize his internal environment mental and physical comfort (Strautmanis, 1977).



**Fig. 2.** Proposals of figurative compositional solutions of many – storied dwelling house courtyard  
**2 pav.** Siūlomas laisvas kompozicijos sprendimas – daugiaaukščio gyvenamojo namo kiemas



**Fig. 3.** Proposals of linear compositional solutions of many-storied dwelling house courtyard  
**3 pav.** Siūlomas linijinis kompozicijos sprendimas – daugiaaukščio gyvenamojo namo kiemas

Any spatial formation whether it is a city, a separate building, dendrological elements or architectonically sculptural ensemble, is visually conjoined in an inseparable unit with the spatial surrounding that encompasses (Lynch, 1982; Strautmanis, 1977).

Architect prof. I. Strautmanis has defined principal options of the coexistence of architecture and the environment:

- Integration-the green landscape is not destroyed, but converted to interact with the new spatial structure to achieve the highest degree of harmonious unit.
- Subordination-when the dendrological elements are subjected to characteristics of the new building structure;
- Integration-integrating all urban space factors and elements (Strautmanis, 1977).

What makes small city attractive? Scale is an important feature in urban landscape building. Large scale object is not necessarily physically large, but it is constructed with elements that are often large and highlighted in comparison to human body or objects near it, such as other buildings, separate tree group, row plantings of streets etc. (Liepa-Zemesa, 2010).

In towns and sites with short distances, narrow streets and small squares, buildings, art works, dendrological elements and people that are there act in close collaboration and are surprisingly intense. These towns and places are perceived as intimate, warm and personal. By contrast, projects with large rooms, big streets and high buildings are often perceived as cold and impersonal (Lynch, 1982). Intimacy is associated with city squares and streets, which remain the reality of personal contacts, the possibility of closer look at details, tree group, color, facture and nuances. By contrast, the urban space that makes impossible visual contacts between people is usually perceived as disproportionate (Liepa-Zemesa, 2010).

According to the cultural historical development and functional features of the urban space, the transformation process of each town green space differs.

In order to gain its historical silhouette and panorama of the town, the locations of tree planting should be thought over. Wrong place of them makes it difficult to recognize the cultural historical identity of the town demanding to saw out the existing trees (Bauska town council building, Jelgava castle bank of the Lielupe where the building is screened by huge chest-nut trees, Dobele castle ruins at Berze river and sawing out of trees at the river bank) (Fig. 4.).



**Fig.4.** The town council place in Bauska  
*4 pav. Bauskės miesto tarybos aikštė*

While summing up the results of the investigation, it is clear that the expressiveness of green landscape space is possible by morass of different compositional arrangement in the town building scale. The visual aesthetic quality is characterized by the principal criteria-regularity of tree plantings (rhythm, form, dimensions, dendrological amorist), sizes and colors of the squares of flower plantings, by taking into consideration the compositional conditions-linearity, rhythm of planting in dynamic expression etc.

## Discussion

While studying the landscape space in the town building context it is not possible to look at it from the town architectonic compositional image model. The unity of the special form and function of the town is determined by (Brinkis, Buka, 2010):

- Geographic environment;
- Economical function ;
- Building composition;
- Architectonic structure.

Thus, in order to insure a balanced proportion of the green landscape space against the building density, the structural building of the town is to be estimated on level of detail planning. It is made totally by (Brinkis, Buka, 2010):

- Interaction of functional zones;
- Building character or its hierarchy;
- Green land factors (relief, water sources, zones of green plantings);
- Building architectonical composition image;
- Elements of artistic information (commercials, sculptures etc.).

## Conclusions

The urban space as a united spatial organism is dynamic and finds itself in continues process of changes. According to the growth of the economic basis and following the development stages of the urban space, it is clear that the urban space has its specific structures of plan and dimension with artistic compositional images. They also are subjected to some changes.

Moreover, the architect is to evaluate the definite regularities of urban space both in the composition of urban space and in the organizational art of the general space. While using new functional and compositional solutions, the context of forms and synthesis based on the scale and harmony of the cultural historical urban space should be sought. Especially, it is to refer to the present new science of construction style, which in the language expression is rather similar, but often the preservation of the national identity has been forgotten as regards to the introduction of green landscape space elements in the new building.

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## Miestų žaliųjų erdvių kraštovaizdžio stilius ir harmonija

(Gauta 2012 m. sausio mėn.; atiduota spaudai 2012 m. kovo mėn.; prieiga internete nuo 2012 m. balandžio 23 d.)

## Santrauka

Miesto erdvė, kaip vieningas erdvinis organizmas yra dinamiška, ji yra nenutrūkstamame pokyčių procese. Pagal ekonomikos augimą ir miesto erdvės vystymosi etapus yra aišku, kad miesto erdvė turi savo specifinį struktūrinį planą su vaizdų meninio komponavimo dimensija. Čia taip pat vyksta pokyčiai. Architektas turėtų įvertinti konkrečius miesto erdvės dėsningumus tiek miesto erdvės kompozicijos, tiek ir organizacinio meno bendroje erdvėje atžvilgiu. Naudojant naujus funkcinius ir kompozicinius sprendimus, turėtų būti siekiama konteksto formų ir sintezės, pagrįstos kultūrine-istorine miesto erdvės harmonija. Ypač tai siejama su nauju statybos stiliaus mokslu, kai dažnai pamirštama apie tautinio identiteto išsaugojimą, susijusį su žalios kraštovaizdžio erdvės elementų įvedimo į naujas statybas