

GEOMORPHOLOGICAL FEATURES IN THE COMPOSITIONAL CONSTRUCTION OF MANOR PARKS. UPPER LIELUPE RIVER REGION



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Abstract. Cultural heritage is one of the assets that shape a country's image. Latvia's cultural heritage exists regardless of the ambitions of the political powers that have swept over Latvia - the Bolsheviks, the Red Revolution, the two wars and the refugee exodus, collectivisation, land reclamation, biogas plants, wind farms, solar panel fields, etc. Cultural heritage continues to be threatened by the trends of globalisation and each individual's perception of the comfort of their own living space.

The challenge for cultural heritage in the future is to be able to live with the multiplicity of horizontal and vertical legislation at different levels, different hierarchies, without losing the essence of the heritage. The main hope and ambition is that the heritage itself will not be lost behind bureaucratic actions and texts (Dambis). Heritage is everywhere. Seeing it requires professional knowledge and experience. We cannot privatise heritage by planting trees and building where we want. The property may be only a few metres outside the legal protection zone. The visual expression of the rural landscape is very strong, but also fragile. The poorly designed farmstead with its apple orchard, outbuildings, huge sheds, etc. can obscure iconic views to the natural substrate. It is worth mentioning the interdisciplinary assessment involving several specialists. The development of the site in time and space also creates new infrastructure with new functional pressures - traffic, emissions, biological treatment plants, noise, service areas, etc. The focus should therefore be on the cultural landscape as a whole rather than on the individual site. .

Keywords: manor parks, Lielupe river region, cultural heritage

Introduction

The European Landscape Convention identifies landscape as an essential part of human life and as an element of social well-being (Eiropas Paodme, 2012). The formation of values as constructed identities in the perspective of cultural transmission, especially in relation to the role and importance of German-Balts in the culture as a whole (Mikelsone, 2017). The historian and folklorist J. Kursīte (Kundziņš, 1974) and the architect Professor P. Kundziņš (Kursīte, 2014) touch upon the Latvian ethnographic environment, the viewpoints of architects and historians, and explore folk construction - "not only as a way of assembling materials and order, but also as a world-creating activity, viewed through the prism of folklore, mythology and symbolism. Here, several historical layers are synthesised - the Latvian ethnographic and the one generated by the German-Baltic culture (Mikelsone, 2017). In the rural landscape, the scale and compositional style of the buildings in the manor centre are particularly striking, as is the farmstead a few kilometres away, with its different functional and proportional structure of buildings, cattle paddock, root garden and thatched fence.

A cultural landscape based on nature ensures the quality of human habitat. It is based on dialogue between professionals and society. Professionals must be able to apply legislation that creates a positive dialogue with society.

"In the Handbook for the Protection of Monuments published at 1911, Wilhelm Neumann's proposed work programme for the protection of Baltic cultural monuments fully reiterates the objectives of the German Association for the Study of the Homeland (Bund Heimatschutz), founded in Dresden in 1904: to promote the protection and care of monuments, the preservation of historical building traditions in rural and urban areas, the protection of landscapes and urban ruins; the protection of local flora and fauna and geological treasures ..." (Mintaurs, 2016).

The nineteenth century became the "century of history" in more ways than one: it was the time when the science of history was established, but also the time when the cultural presence of Europe's past was felt everywhere; in art, literature, the design of household objects, architecture. The development of the historical consciousness of European peoples and the construction of national cultural identities

Linked to this consciousness was a sentimental, nostalgic attitude towards the individual and collective past, which was embodied in heritage objects.... as tangible evidence of the past (Lowenthal, 2011).. The cultural landscape consists of a set of accumulated resources, inherited from the past, which, regardless of affiliation, are considered to reflect and express values, beliefs, knowledge, traditions, and the environment that has evolved through the interaction of people and places over time (Eiropas padomes ..., 2005). The Latvian Cultural Canon was created as a political project with reference to the National Cultural Policy Guidelines for 2006-2015. The strategic goal is to strengthen national identity and the cohesion of Latvian civil society (Eiropas Padomes ..., 2005). The Latvian Cultural Canon comprises 8 sectors, including architecture and landscape. The canon mentions 7 Latvian landscapes, including the landscape of the Zemgale Plain. The study examines the landscape of the upper Lielupe in more detail, looking at the context of the plain, the valley and the compositional subordination of the manor ensembles to the natural substrate. The study looks at the interaction of cultural and historical values with the characteristics of the natural substrate, which together form a strong image of compositional expression that is easily perceived in the landscape. The study covers 7 landscape areas in the upper Lielupe River valley from Bauska to Tetelminde near Jelgava. In total, about 36 km of the upper Lielupe River valley landscape areas were surveyed. The length of each landscape area varies along the lines of sight from both banks. The geomorphological material used in the study is derived from digital surveys.

The aim of the study is to identify the compositional relationship between the buildings of the historic manor centres and the character of the natural substrate.

Research objectives:

- To identify the geomorphological features and geodetic measurement ramifications of the Lielupe valley landscape;
- To find the context of the compositional structure of the historical buildings with the expression of the Lielupe valley in the main view lines;
- To assess the amount of agricultural landscape or bank

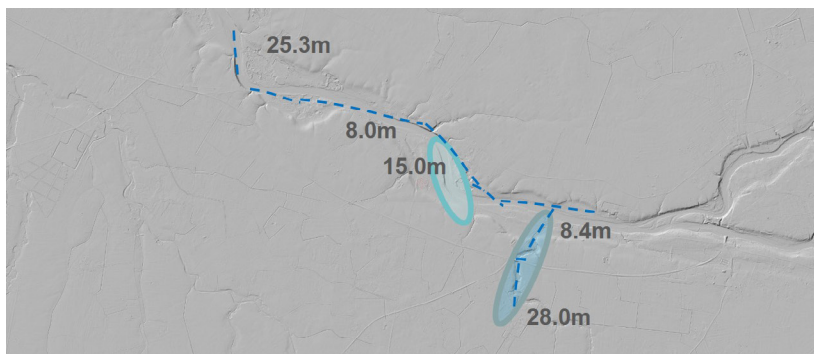


Fig. 1, 2. Elevation marks on the relief at the mouth of the Kauce River. Compositional contexts of nature and space (author's map, 2024)



Fig. 3, 4. Kaucminde Manor by the Kauce River. Parade Yard at the castle (Lancmanis, 1994; photo by the author, 2024)

vegetation in the valley.

Methods used in the study:

- Visual comparison method;
- Secondary analysis of previous studies;
- Graphical processing of the data obtained in the study.

The novelty of the research results - the collected material contributes to the focus on the preservation of the cultural and historical landscape in the development plan of the district. By evaluating the compositional subordination of rural manor ensembles to the expression of the elements of the natural substrate in the 18th/19th centuries, a close connection between architectural values and the values of the natural substrate was established. In the course of the 20th and 21st centuries, the elements of the visual expression of the cultural space were increasingly suppressed and disappeared.

Results and Discussions

The Bauska Nature Park, established 20 years ago, makes an important contribution to the conservation of the landscape of the upper Lielupe valley. The material contained in the study complements a more detailed assessment of the Nature Park area, taking into account the geomorphological features of the valley. The study examines 7 landscape spaces of the Lielupe valley, reflecting the character of the natural base of the Lielupe River and the adjacent manor buildings, which form a compositionally harmonious whole. The landscape spaces are spatially layered one behind the other, starting from the upper reaches of the Lielupe River down both banks:

- The area where the river Kauce flows into the Lielupe;
- The landscape area Bornsminde-Jumpravmuiža
- The context of Mezotne - Mazmežotne - Church Hill;
- The cultural landscape of the Ciernalde estate - Vedgi settlement;
- Īslices estuary - Salgale church;
- Emburga - Stalgene river valley;
- Tetelminde - Dandale Manor landscape.

One of the most visually striking elements of the natural substrate is the topography and the water edge. In the case of the Zemgale Plain, mentioned in the Latvian Canon, a few metres of elevation create a visually powerful impression. This

is also true of the steep bank at the mouth of the Kauce River, which forms a ravine with a zigzag course.

The bed of the Kauce River from Kaucminde Manor Park to the mouth of the Lielupe River is a steep slope with meadows and trees for about 2 km. The river bed is 28 metres above sea level in the upper reaches near the manor park and 8.4 metres above sea level at the mouth of the Lielupe River. The difference in level in the middle reaches of the river forms a small waterfall zone in this section. The compositional structure of the Manor Park is subordinate to the expression of the relief, seeking a connection with the river gorge.

Bornsminde Manor and Jumpravmuiža.

The courtyard of the manor forms a parallel to the gorge. The lower transverse axis is connected to the gorge. One of the axes of the courtyard culminates in the river to the east and in the outbuilding to the west. The other cross axis is in the park, connecting the central bay to the river. Both axes lead to a ravine on the river bank (Lancmanis, 1994).

The southern part of Bornsminde Manor Park begins 2 km downstream from the mouth of the Kauce River (8.4 m above sea level). The edge of the valley slope (25.0 m above sea level) is about 200 m from the western edge of the park (15.0 m above sea level). The park is situated on a terraced slope leading down to the river, with outcrops of dolomite. The edge of the escarpment, at 8.0 m above sea level, forms a visually spectacular and atypical line of sight for the Zemgale plain to the opposite side of the river, which has an analogous dolomite outcrop on the escarpment. Jumpravmuiža Park (25.3 m above sea level) is located here. The park of Bornsminde Manor is compositionally subordinate to the dolomite escarpment (Brūģis, 2005). The central axis of the park is formed by an avenue of lime trees. It is situated on a wedge-shaped slope towards the shore. The axis coincides with the upper reaches of the Lielupe riverbed, so that the view from the park avenue to the south allows one to observe the course of the river in the valley. The park paths along the riverbank were historically arranged in three terraces Part of the bank has been eroded away over the last hundred years, with the loss of these interesting multi-step paths (Brūģis, 1994). The escarpment has become

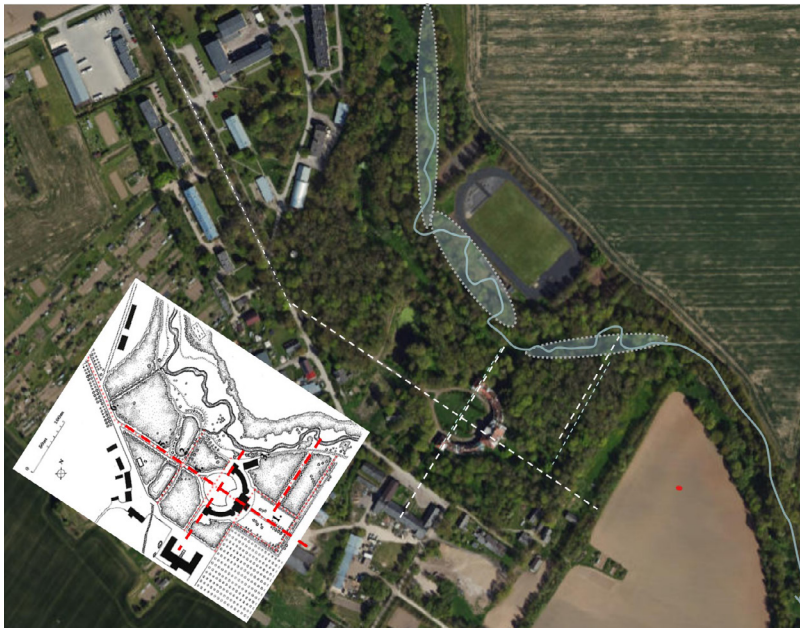


Fig. 5. The compositional structure of Kauces river ravine and Kaucminde manor (author's scheme 2024)



Fig. 6. The architectural compositional structure of Kaucminde Manor.compositional structure of Kauces river ravine and Kaucminde manor positional contexts of nature and space (from A. Ziemeļniece private archive)

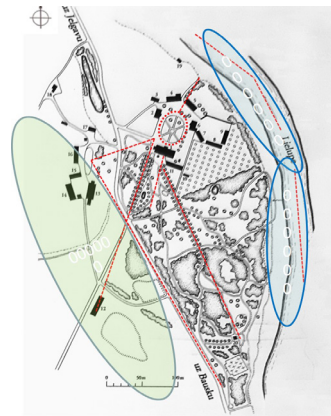


Fig. 7, 8, 9. The Lielupe River valley between Bornsminde Manor and Jumpravmuiža (created by the author)



overgrown with giant trees, forming an impressive canopy and strong root system. The canopy is subject to wind loads and the root system is difficult to maintain in the dolomite layers. This has contributed to the steepness of the coast over the centuries. Impact loads are also generated during the spring ice advance when icebergs move through the tunnel-like dolomite banks.

As the river meanders, the park narrows in the southern part and the paths converge at one point. At this point, the park forms a slope along the historic dirt road to Bauska. Downstream of the manor house, the dolomite escarpment is slowly eroding away, and the dolomite escarpment is no longer visible in the lines of sight of the river valley. The slopes of both banks are covered with fields, forming long, picturesque vistas downstream.

10 km downstream, the slopes of the Bornsminde river valley form a plastic romantic character, complemented by an agricultural landscape with farmsteads and apple orchards on the highest points of the banks (Lancmanis, 1999; Ziemeļniece, Zilgalvis, Burkāne, 2019). When one reaches the Mežotne part of the park, the steep banks expose dolomite layers. In the park part, the elevation is 13.6 m above sea level and the coast 5.5 m above sea level. Compositionally, the long axis and the central field of the Mežotne Park are parallel to the river bed, forming long lines of sight to the valley slope on the left bank, with a 100-200 m wide floodplain and a slope height of approximately 21 m above

sea level. The spectacular landscape of the two banks of the river culminates in the hill, at the foot of which a spring gnaws, bridging the difference in relief from 22.5 m above sea level to 5.5 m above sea level. 400 metres north of the hill, at 22.7 metres above sea level, is the church of Mežotne. 13 km downstream from Mežotne, the valley of the Lielupe River becomes a picturesque left bank slope with an elevation of about 11.0 m above sea level. A little further down the slope is the Ciemalde Manor, which is situated compositionally opposite the steep bank. The longitudinal axis of the composition of the landscape area of the manor extends for 450 m to the opposite bank or steep bank of the river, with an elevation of 13 m above sea level. The steep bank at this point has no outcrop of dolomite layers, the slope of the left bank of the Seine valley is occupied by extensive cereal fields, giving the landscape a particular expression during the seasons. 1.5 km downstream, on the left bank of the Ciemalde, is the historic settlement of Vedgu, where the enemy's rafts (10.7 m above sea level) could be seen from afar coming up the long axis of the river. A very rewarding natural feature that served to strengthen the protection of the ancient settlement of the Semigallians. 1.5 km downstream from the settlement of Vedgi is the Īslīce Manor, with the Īslīce River tributary on the left bank of the Lielupe River, forming a 200-400 m wide valley with elevations of 10 m above sea level at the manor and 6.9 m above sea level at the mouth. As the river bed changes course, both



Fig. 10, 11, 12. The spatial compositional structure of Bornsminde Manor (created by the author; Brūģis, 1994)

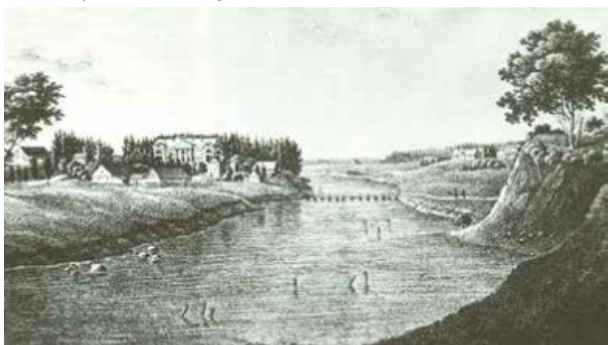


Fig. 13. The ancient valley of the Lielupe River near Mezotne castle Engraving, 19th century (Lancmanis, 1999)



Fig. 14, 15, 16. Lielupe escarpment at Mezotne (created by the author, Ziemeļniece, Zilgalvis, Burkāne, 2019)

upstream and downstream can be seen from the manor house. The historic site is now heavily overgrown, but the compositional position of the buildings is understandable. The very wide agricultural landscape without overgrowth also allows the bell tower of the Salgale church to be seen in long lines of sight 1.5km away on the right bank of the river, at the highest point of the valley at 6.9 m above sea level. 4 km downstream from Salgale church, the Lielupe retains its wide valley character and reaches the Emburga castle mound and the Stalgene manor. At this point, the right bank is high, while the left bank forms a wide floodplain for about 6 km. The right bank high, while the left bank forms a has long views, which is why the ancient Emburga mound was built here. At this point, the lower reaches of the river are clearly visible, as enemy rafts come up to Bauska.

As the River Lielupe approaches Jelgava, it forms a narrow valley with steep banks at Tetelminde and Dandale Manor. Both manor houses were destroyed during the mining era, and parts of the park were lost in the post-war years. Only the steep banks and an old engraving remain of the



Fig. 17, 18. ev. luth. Mezotne Church and Castle (Lancmanis, 1999)



Fig. 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24. Lielupe dolomite bed in the ancient valley near Mezotne (photo's by the author, 2021)

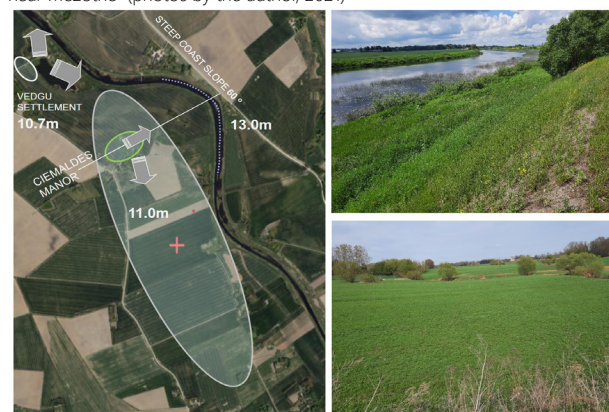


Fig. 25, 26, 27. Vedgas settlement and Ciemalde manor. Left bank of the Lielupe ancient valley (created by the author, photo's by the author, 2021)

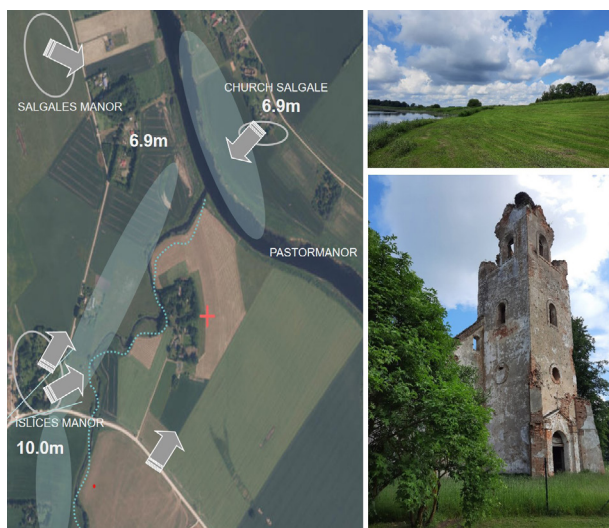


Fig. 28, 29, 30. The ancient valleys of Islice and Lielupe ancient valley near the ev.luth.church Salgale (created by the author, photo's by the author, 2022)



Fig. 31, 32. Tetelminde Manor.
 The old building. Parade ground at the end of the avenue of trees next to the steep bank (created by the author; photo's by the author, 2023)



Fig. 33, 34. Dandāle Manor.
 Engraving from 1868
 (JVMM archive; photo by the author, 2023)



Fig. 35, 36. The banks of Lielupe floodplain and meadows near Stalgene Manory (Lancmanis, 1999; photo by the author, 2023)

picturesque landscape.

The old engraving of Dandāle Manor shows that its buildings were built close to the steep bank – the manor house, the cottages, the stables. From an agricultural point of view, the closer to the water, the easier it is to farm. The Lielupe floodplain extends downstream from Dandāle, where the mouth of the Sesava River is located, creating very large flood areas in spring.

On the right bank is the manor house of the historic Tetelminde manor, with a parade courtyard, which compositionally forms a longitudinal axis parallel to the steep bank. The avenue of trees leading to the parade ground formed a perpendicular to the river bank, providing a visually striking vantage point over the river valley.

Conclusions

The subordination of the geomorphological features of the Lielupe River and the compositional structure of the farmsteads to the characteristics of the natural substrate, which are discussed in the study, clearly draws attention not only to the respect of the river protection zone in the legislation, but also to the detailed criteria that are missing in the documents. The 7 most picturesque landscape areas of the Lielupe valley are united by several factors.

- The variable width of the river valley and the different gradients of the two courses create a peculiar sense of scale in small sections of the river. This contrast is particularly pronounced in the Zemgale plain, where the landscape can be read for several kilometres at the viewpoints;
- The agricultural landscapes of the Lielupe valley must be preserved, avoiding the formation of overgrowth that would obscure the slopes of the banks; failure to comply with this condition would create a problem similar to the one we are currently facing in the Abava valley, with the disappearance of outstanding vantage points;
- Further work is needed to remove the rushes in the river opposite Mežotne, which is part of the Bauska Nature Park; the river is shallow in hot summers and the water level is very low, which encourages the proliferation of rushes;
- On the basis of the sites in the river valley covered by the study, the possibility of creating viewing platforms at the highest points, to be determined by geodetic measurements, should be explored.
- The overgrowth of large trees and their root systems, which have penetrated the dolomitic layers of the

river bank, should be removed as a matter of urgency. The effect of wind loads on the tree canopy increases the likelihood of cracking in the dolomite bank. The situation of the park at Bornsminde Manor can be used as a comparison by assessing the location of the historic paths in the park on the 1884 plan;

- The seedlings or saplings, whose chaotic rooting disrupts the historic compositional structure of the park, should be carefully monitored. The lack of specialists and the occasional maintenance of the park, known as 'clean-ups', contribute to misconceptions about the historical appearance of the heritage.

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Kopsavilkums

Kultūras mantojums ir viena no vērtībām, kas veido valsts tēlu. Latvijas kultūrainavas mantojums pastāv neatkarīgi no politisko varu ambiciozitātes, kas brāzusies pāri Latvijai.

Vietas attīstība laikā un telpā papildus veido jaunu infrastruktūru ar jaunu funkcionālo slodzi: transports, bioloģiskās attīrīšanas iekārtas, apkalpes zonas utt. Līdz ar to uzmanība jāvelta nevis atsevišķam objektam, bet kultūrainavai kopumā. Kultūras mantojumu joprojām apdraud globalizācijas tendences un katra indivīda izpratne par savu dzīves telpas komfortu.