

## DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES OF LATVIAN HISTORICAL PARKS. EXAMPLE OF KURZEME

Kristīne Dreija

*Latvia University of Agriculture, Jelgava, Latvia*  
*E-mail: kristine.dreija@gmail.com*

**Abstract.** Nowadays, when thinking about a sustainable development, objects having historical value are the headstones of the environment, economical and social welfare. Selection qualification principles of Kurzeme's manor complexes, structural characteristics of the park landscapes and esthetical quality evaluation give a general overview of the problems and opportunities of the examined object. Historical heritage and body of natural resources are the main park development factors.

**Keywords:** historical park, landscape qualification, landscape structure, landscape aesthetic quality, development factors.

### Introduction

Historical environment is an idea, which more often is used when thinking about the changes ongoing in the Latvian culture. Latvian castle and manor ensembles are the cultural historical witnesses and mouthpieces about the people, traditions and stylistics in higher levels of society of the time, which guarantees the high value and variety of the landscape, architecture and biology of the site. In this research the manor complexes in Kurzeme's region and belonging historic parks are examined. The research was done from the year 2009 to 2011 as a part of the doctorate work "Development Opportunities of the Latvian Historical Parks".

This research is aimed at getting acquainted with the development potential of historical parks of Kurzeme and enabling the revival of their cultural environment, stimulating their sustainable development at the same time. To this end, in order to make the selection classification of Kurzeme's manor ensembles, the structural characterization of the park landscape and aesthetic quality evaluation was put forward, as well as the sustainable development coefficients of the historical parks were defined. The classified historical ensembles sum up the information about the conservation of Latvian national memorials, evaluation of the historical heritage and functional intensity availability of the objects. The selected complexes have a high development potential, which is mainly based on the uniqueness of the cultural environment, heritage and body of resources.

The structural evaluation of historical park landscapes means systematization of the spatial problems and reflection on the opportunities and it is further improved

during the landscape aesthetic quality evaluation, inspecting the territories on the field and updating the cartographic material. In result, such analysis and comparison of historical parks, due to the counting and evaluating structural aspects of the environment, gives a reflection on the park landscape transformation processes in a view of today's conflicts and opportunities.

The coefficients for sustainable development of historical parks are mainly based on the body of resources of the territory and its surroundings, as well as, the historical heritage, which is one of the aspects in relations between a human being and environment realized in a human's interests to provide more qualitative living conditions. The heritage conservation is one of the main factors for the development coefficients of specific territories, which sustains the environment by renewing it and develops it by protecting.

Based on the gained research results, possible park development models will be made in further studies, which can be applied in historically rich and significant parks to renew, conserve and develop them. The worked out procedure helps to understand and analyze successful development directions for a historical park, in which the historical, ecological, biological and social aspects are marked out to the utmost by turning them back to life and social processes.

### Study Area

Kurzeme, the area under research, is located on the western part of Latvia: between the Baltic Sea on the West and the Gulf of Riga. On the East the region is bordering with Zemgale, on the South it is on the border of Lithuania's

region Samogitia. Kurzeme is rich in significant historical areas – there are 30% of all national historical territories (Stratēgiskais... 2006).

From 1561 to 1795 Kurzeme was a part of the Kurzeme and Zemgale’s Duchy. In 1795 the region became the province of Kurzeme in the Russian Empire (Fig. 1) and maintained that status till 1918, when the Republic of Latvia was founded. The present borders of Kurzeme have decreased giving the parts of it to Zemgale and Vidzeme regions (Fig. 2).

At the end of the 16th century, after the dissolution and self-destruction of Livonia Order, buildings of castle and manor centers started to develop in their traditional meaning (Janele 2010).



Fig. 1. Historical map of the Kurzeme’s province

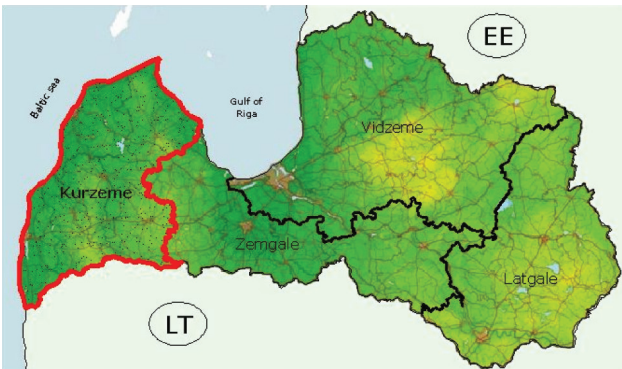


Fig. 2. Map of Latvia. The location of Kurzeme

## Materials and Methods

### Qualification Characterization of the Historical Ensembles

The worked out qualificator is an algorithm that sums up the functions of definite parameters and characterizes historical heritage values of the object by grouping them into

definite types. In the work process, the information was classified based on the available materials kept the following institutions:

- the registers of the Latvian State Cultural Monuments Conservation Inspectorate (further in the text SCMCI), the list of cultural monuments (Latvijas Valsts... 2010);
- the qualification of manor complexes of the Latvian Castle and Manor Association according to contemporary functions of the historical objects (Latvijas piļu... 2010).

A cultural monument’s status within a historical ensemble clearly shows the importance level of the object and site on the national and international scale. Objects included on the lists of SCMCI are historically significant and their maintenance is required for the next generations. Recognition and importance aspect in the society appears as an important element stimulating for the protection and maintenance of these territories to pass successfully the object to the next generations.

Latvian castle and manor ensembles on the list of the Latvian SCMCI are ascribed to the typological group of architectural monuments that is 40% of all listed cultural monuments in Latvia. This category contains buildings, cult buildings, housing, public houses, protective and engineering buildings, folk building objects, cemeteries, gardens and parks. The SCMCI added value groups of cultural monuments are divided into the national cultural monuments and local cultural monuments.

After the summed up information of the SCMCI added value groups of cultural monuments castle and manor ensembles are classified adapting an accepted percentage division. Each of the accepted percentage value has a definite symbol, which are used in the cartographical material clearly showing the value group of the historical ensembles (Fig. 3). Although, apart from the many statuses, every manor ensemble is looked upon as historical heritage and unique site of the Latvian cultural environment, because it is one of the most significant environment resources in a sustainable development stimulation.

The Latvian castle and manor association register has a division of manor ensembles based on their contemporary functions, divided into the state or municipal, instructional, cultural educational, medical, social care institutions, as well as, apartments and tourism business. There are more objects divided separately, which are unused and / or undergoing reconstructions. In the worked out classification methods of this research, the sense of functional intensity was divided into a scale proportions, where the object’s functionality is

significant on a rural municipality, district or regional, and national or international level. Thinking about the results of this work, their demonstrative summarization and analysis of the functional intensity classifier was proportionally divided into the same groups as in the classification of ensembles according to the national cultural monument status. Also the conventional signs in this aspect are with the same color code, but different in the shape, which in the summarized results of the cartographical material clearly shows the problematic objects. The classification principles according to the functionality of historical ensembles are summarized and shown Figure 3.

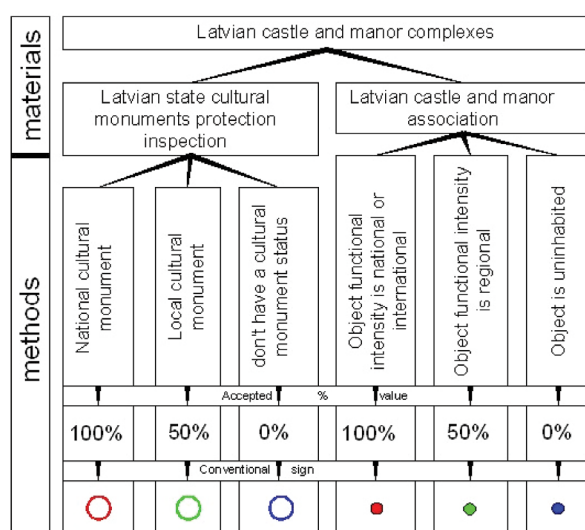


Fig. 3. The selection classification principles of historical complexes

The today's function of historical sites shows the intensity of relations between humans and environment, as well as, how rational and reasonable the resources are used. In cultural heritage conservation, not only the visual aspect and its esthetical understanding of the site is important, but also all the factors, which make up this site. Cultural heritage management is very important for the balanced development of activities.

### Characterization of structure of historical park landscapes

A landscape structure is a division of landscape elements and qualities in time and space. Usually there are reflected all ecological and visual aspects (Vides aizsardzības... 2001). In the examination of landscape structures it is possible to use different ways and methods; in this research work, three main landscape elements with their consequent factors are applied: natural foot, functional typology and infrastructure in order to summarize natural resources, conflicts and historical heritage of the object under analysis (Fig. 4).

The natural foot is made by a geomorphological factor – earth shape and lithological structure of relief shapes, from which specific features of a landscape cover and anthropogenic factors derive: the character of soil use and landscape mosaic (Fig. 4). One of the most important factors, which has an impact on a natural foot, is an anthropogenic load, related degree of employment, space structure, social conditions and infrastructure (Ziemeļniece 1998).

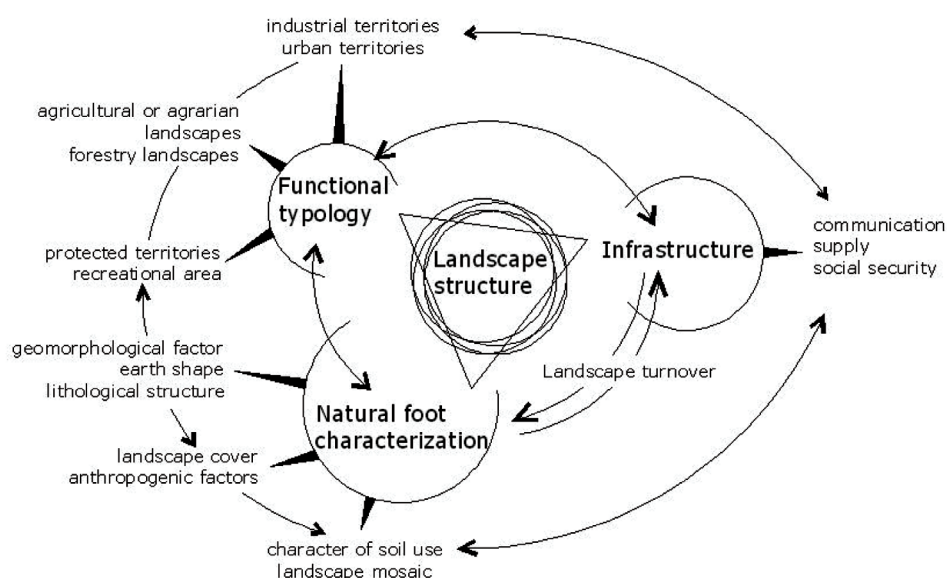


Fig. 4. Characterization of the landscape structure research

According to the relief conditions we can divide three relief platform groups, which largely define landscape variety, high-quality, expressivity, openness and other landscape perception factors. These landscape means of expression are marked out by especially unique landscapes, which are formed by different size water bodies, revive the landscape and allow feeling it with all five human senses. For its part, the intensity of territory cover creates a space compositional fulfillment, contributes to a landscape organization, colorfulness, interestingness and balance. The body of the mentioned geomorphological factors is classified in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Division of landscapes according to a natural foot relief shape and cover intensity

| Nr. | Geomorphological factor |                                     |                 |
|-----|-------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------|
|     | Relief                  | Water storage                       | Vegetation      |
| 1.  | Lowland scenes          | Lake scenes                         | Woodland scenes |
| 2.  | Rippling scenes         | River / river terrace valley scenes | Meadow scenes   |
| 3.  | Hilly scenes            | Swamp / wetland scenes              | Mosaic scenes   |

The main aim of the functional typology is to mark off the territories with different intensity of human economic activities, special relations within the system “environment–human” and a special complex of natural protection activities (Melluma, Leinetre 1992). The division of landscape functional types can be worked out according to individual features of every examined territory. In this case the functional types of historical complexes and their surrounding environment landscapes can be divided into: protected, agricultural or agrarian landscapes, forestry, recreational, industrial and urban territories. A territory urban level is defined by the location of the examined object: whether it is in a city environment or urban environment, close to an urban environment, or in a rural environment. Within each of type, there can be territories, which can be used as one-sided or many-sided territory, which overlap and interact, thus they disclose the multi-functionality of that site.

After realizing the current situation in functional zoning division of park surroundings, it is possible to evaluate an accessibility of park resources and way of use. Each of the historical objects is special proving a unique environment, space and composition of the landscape elements, which, in its turn, impacts a functionality of a specific territory. Though events during the last century show the opposite – the historical environment had no prior determinative aspects in creating functional types, as a result a dissonance appeared on all landscape levels. The carto-

graphically marked functional types on different scales in historical territories show an identity, density, intensity, variety, planning systems hierarchy, protection level and other structural characterizations of that site. A functionality of a territory is dependent on the existing infrastructure and resources offered to society by specific areas.

An infrastructure is a part of the territorial structure of the national economy, a node of all kinds of communications, it can not always been taken as visually equipollent, but it essentially affects the character of the space shape. Mainly there are communication, supply and social security infrastructures. Two kinds of infrastructure exist in a historical environment: historical present before development of the object and contemporary, which in the course of time have transformed both the esthetically visual and functional environment of the given historical territory. The landscape analysis of historical territories, including parks, clearly shows landscape stratifications under the influence of different infrastructures in the course of time.

#### *Esthetical Quality Evaluation Principles of Landscape in a Historical Park*

Aesthetic preferences for landscape types and qualities are not something natural and have not been consistent through ages. Aesthetic valuation is based on cultural background and aesthetic values change with time. (Skřivanová, Kalivoda 2010). The esthetical quality evaluation of a historical park landscape is closely connected with criteria of human’s perceptive levels, but, although they are subjective, they most precisely describe a successful or unsuccessful interaction between nature and human being. Landscape quality features are determined by a compositional space structure, which has three main factors: interconnection, transformation and distinction. Each of these quality values creates its own compositional micro-environment of criteria, which further affects the space (Ziemeļniece 1998).

According to the theory model by Carl Gustav Jung – factors of perceptive levels divide into thoughts and emotions, and intuition and feelings are based on them. A human perceives the surrounding environment with five natural senses: sight, hearing, touch, taste and smell. In a landscape a viewer is most importantly affected by the visual image. About 85% out of all information we receive being in certain landscape we perceive using our sight.

The high value aesthetic landscape is considered to be a landscape with harmony achieved between the natural and man-made landscape elements, or has a relatively high visual diversity and harmony of the natural landscape.



A crucial point in landscape assessment is the existing view perspectives at certain individual points of view, or moving along a road or trail. Assessment of the landscape character, such as intellectual, emotional, aesthetical and associative, is usually made using human view, interpretations and creative imagination. Overall, the quality of a cultural historical park is determined by obvious landscape space relations, cultural wealth and biodiversity, but the individual human perception characteristics also is of great importance, including choices, as well as stereotyped notions of what is beautiful in nature and the landscape (Krūmiņš *et al.* 2004). The visual criteria of a cultural historical park landscape are described in the Table 2 below.

Visual criteria of the elements listed in the characteristics, with inventory of the retained, irrelevant, interfering or degrading landscape features, territories' functional development perspective and preferred, acceptable and unacceptable landscape (including buildings) feature profiles, highlight the park's values and problems, which in turn promotes its successful development.

The landscape esthetical evaluation gains a serious meaning while looking at the existing perspectives from different angles or moving along the road or path. As a high value esthetical landscape is considered the landscape, in which a harmony between the landscape elements made by nature and humans is kept or a relatively high visual variety and harmony in a natural landscape could be observed (Nikodemus and Rasa 2005).

Landscape's character can be intellectual, emotional, esthetical, associative and scientific arising in a human's thoughts, interpretations and creative imagination. The history of gardens also confirms that aesthetic preferences as regards nature and landscape change with the development of knowledge, philosophy, ideas and culture (Vorel 2006). In general, cultural historical garden quality is defined by visible landscape environment relations, cultural environment richness, and biological variety. Principles of Landscape quality evaluations are: the unity of the landscape, variety, scale and aura, which helps to define the level of landscape harmony, complicity and secrecy.

**Table 2.** Visual criteria of a cultural historical park (landscape elements)

| No. | Criteria                           | Characteristics  |
|-----|------------------------------------|--|
| 1.  | Accessibility                      | Proximity of a country road, road surface quality, traffic intensity, accessibility aesthetic evaluation, distance in km and the time to the regional-level cities.  |
| 2.  | Visibility                         | View points and panoramic characteristics, their existence (watchtowers, view lines, corridors, etc.) Distance, visibility.  |
| 3.  | Distinctness                       | The park historical development distinctness. Park planning, stylistic, rhythm and zoning clarity. Park aura existence (an ancient breath).  |
| 4.  | The current situation              | Park order, quality, uniqueness. Current use of the park.  |
| 5.  | Connection to other objects        | Significant, equivalent to the value of heritage sites and natural sites proximity (distance in km and time). Inclusion in the environment, the overall landscape.   |
| 6.  | Current popularity                 | Visitor characteristics (domestic, foreign), the current amount of tourists, the public interest.  |
| 7.  | Access to information              | Available information on the park's formation, development (plans, articles, various other historical materials). The existing situation in materials, information stands, references (maps, reconstruction projects, photographs, biodiversity inventory, dendrology marks). Access to information via the internet.  |
| 8.  | Heritage                           | Religious sites (protected trees, rocks). Small architectural forms (fountains, bridges, benches, vases, etc.), which have been preserved, restored. Track, track way coverage. Park typical style features (parterres, covering plantations, avenues). Interesting park elements, imprescriptibly components (pavilions, arborees, tea houses, sheds, hunter, gardener's houses, etc.) The archaeological excavations, findings from the previous cultures. |
| 9.  | Park landscape element interaction | Historical and modern landscape elements interaction. Renovated greenery and historic plantations interaction, clarity of compositions. If the historic elements dominate into modern, and vice versa.   |
| 10. | Degrading factors                  | The facts, which visually and ecologically degrade the park's landscape.   |
| 11. | Functional perspective             | The desired direction of the park's development. Educational, recreational, possible sport activities. Tourist attraction. Park restoration, etc.  |

## Results

The network of manors in Latvia is one of the development factors of the Latvian cultural environment particularity. The classification of historical ensembles gives information about high – valued and historical landscapes on the scale of Latvia that shows a uniqueness, richness and historical heritage singularity of the environment.

According to the data kept in the register of Latvian castle and manor association, there are 534 manor complexes in Latvia. In the region of Kurzeme there are marked 127 manor complexes, that is 24% put of the total amount of Latvian manor complexes (Fig. 5). After examining and comparing the statuses of all national cultural monuments, it was found out that historical ensembles without a cultural monument status and manor complexes with functional intensity of rural municipality or regional meaning form the major part in Kurzeme's manor complexes (Fig. 6).

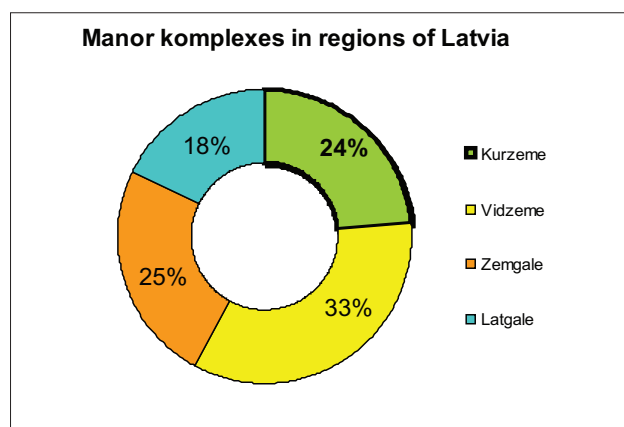


Fig. 5. Proportional division of manor complexes

By the literature studies examining each of the objects separately, taking into account their individual features, which describe a singularity, particularity and uniqueness of the site, 5 complexes with a national cultural monument status and 8 complexes without a cultural monument status were marked out as historical objects having high development potential. In the further research park landscapes of manor complexes will be evaluated and analyzed according to the worked out criteria.

After analysis of information on historically significant manor complexes at present and in the future and compilation of the classification results including the literature sources, the network of Kurzeme's manor complexes is studied and marked in the cartographical material (Fig. 7) and compared in schematic diagrams (Fig. 6). The data collected in the process of the classification provides information about functionality of Kurzeme's historical com-

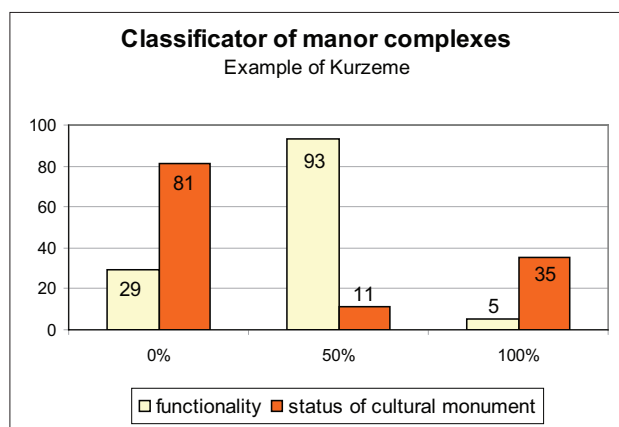
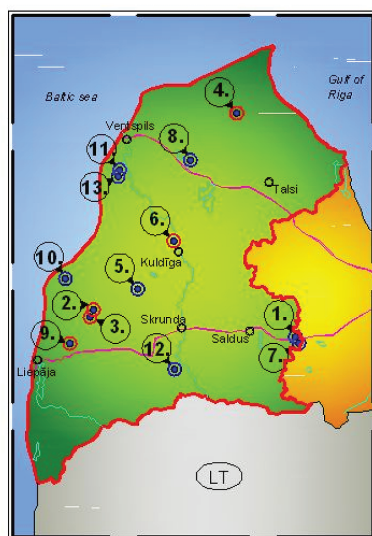


Fig. 6. The classifier of manor complexes in different regions of Latvia



1. **Blidenes manor**  
National property
2. **Ciravas manor**  
National meaning manor buildings. Nr. 6397
3. **Dunalkas Diza manor**  
National and local meaning manor buildings.Nr.-
4. **Dundagas manor**  
National meaning house and park. Nr. 6737
5. **Jamaiku manor**  
Privat property. Interesting park.
6. **Padures manor**  
National meaning manor buildings. Nr. 6367
7. **Pilsblidenes manor**  
Privat property. Park in national protecting
8. **Puzeniekus manor**  
Privat property
9. **Tasu manor**  
National meaning manor buildings. Nr. 6426
10. **Upes manor**  
Don't have a cultural monument status. Interesting park
11. **Varves manor**  
Privat property
12. **Vormsates manor**  
Beautiful landscape park in very poor condition
13. **Zuru manor**  
Privat property

Fig. 7. Manor complexes selected in the process of classification

plexes and their status of the national cultural monument. The classification also resulted in defining the nationally significant historical complexes, which nowadays are in critical condition – both functionally and esthetically degraded. An outstanding scientific, historical or educational importance of manor ensembles is defined by the national cultural monument status, while non-functionality of the site shows the object's problems and unused potential. These results are necessary for the further research.

According to the worked out landscape structure evaluation and landscape esthetical quality characterization, sustainable development coefficients of historical parks in Table 3 were marked out.

In order to stimulate the historical environment development, there is a need to draw social attention and membership supporting the activities of the local community. Elements including explanatory information symbols inviting the society must be placed in the historical territory and its surroundings. Local artists must be maximally supported with local art projects and informative exhibitions in historical buildings reflecting different opinions and experience. In support of environmental education the programs and materials about the environment, history and people must be worked out for schools.

## Conclusions

1. Unconsidered maintaining and managing of historical environment can be even more dangerous than a complete desertion and degradation of the site. The inhabited territories managed by different municipal

institutions occupy the biggest part in Kurzeme; according to the object's functional intensity, unfortunately, a great part of these cultural objects are managed inadequately without any estimation of historical heritage values. The status of the national cultural monument doesn't change and support revival and development of the site.

2. The landscape structural characterization is first of all aimed at analyzing the transformation processes of the site by different influence aspects. Firstly, it is considered why those structural changes, stratifications, thickenings or, on the contrary, declines have stimulated desertion of the object and, secondly, how those structural changes would support revival and sustainable development of the objects. Theoretically, landscape structural principles are turned into development stimulating factors, but in practical analysis of cartographical data of each object, the correction on the field will follow.
3. Landscape esthetical quality evaluation concretizes landscape structural aspects. After analysis on the field, apart from visual views, we can evaluate landscape by feeling, hearing, touching and tasting, which, although is subjective, in its inmost essence defines the level of landscape originality. The table of landscape visual evaluation reflects both, separate small elements and the total landscape visual view, the park territories of manor complexes, to be more precise. In reality, it is important to evaluate historical development of the site before landscape esthetical quality evaluation.

**Table 3.** The description of sustainable development coefficients of historical parks

| Nr. | The sustainable development factors of historical parks |   |  |   |
|-----|---|---|--|---|
|     | Resources   |   | Potential use of resources                     |   |
| 1.  | Architectural values                                    | houses, building construction principles, small architectural forms, including monuments      | Environmental education, research              | architecture, design, history, culture, tradition, ecology, biology, dendrology, design, etc. |
| 2.  | Landscape design  | garden and park planning style, composition, scale, significance                              | Recreation                                     | recreational opportunities in nature, health and spiritual significance                       |
| 3.  | History, culture and traditions                         | archaeological and ethnic elements, land-use structure, religious sites, literature, identity | Environmental plasticity and expressiveness    | site representative role – the silhouette of clarity, visibility                              |
| 4.  | Ecosystem   | Ecological richness   | Economy  | business, tourism, infrastructure, jobs increase – the local community raising prosperity     |
| 5.  |   | Biological diversity  | Background and context for creative expression | environmental art and related activities  |

4. Kurzeme's historical complexes, including park landscapes, do not contain any landscape destructing transformation signs, due to the historical events. The listing and analysis of conflicting factors of several similar situations reflect the dissonance problems of the historical heritage and the existing situation, as a result creating possible development scenarios for the site. A successful synthesis of aspects of the current situation is the main condition for sustainable development and revival of the historic ensembles and parks.

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## LATVIJOS ISTORINIŲ PARKŲ RAIDOS GALIMYBĒS. KURŽEMĒS PAVYZDYS

### K. Dreija

Santrauka

Šiandien, galvojant apie tvarią raidą, tik objektai, turintys istorinę vertę, yra kertiniai aplinkos gerinimo, ekonominio vystymosi ir visuomenės gerovės akmenys. Kuržemės dvarų kompleksų atrankos sąlyginiai principai, struktūriniai parko kraštovaizdžio bruožai ir estetinės kokybės įvertinimas leidžia išsamiai nustatyti analizuojamo objekto problemas ir galimybes. Istorinis paveldas ir gamtiniai ištekliai yra pagrindinės parko raidos aplinkybės.

**Reikšminiai žodžiai:** istorinis parkas, kraštovaizdžio parengimas, kraštovaizdžio struktūra, kraštovaizdžio estetinė kokybė, raidos aplinkybės.