

Interreg V-A Latvia – Lithuania Programme 2014-2020

**LLI-444 Sustainable Integration of Novel Solutions into Cultural Heritage Sites/
NovelForHeritage****Activity A.T3.2 Gathering, exchange and development of knowledge for the integration of contemporary concepts, forms and content into cultural heritage and nature sites - manor parks****Interaction of nature, cultural heritage, and tourism in the manor parks****Seminar summary****Introduction**

When we speak about manor parks, on the one hand we must consider them as nature sites but at the same time those are sites with valuable heritage. This is a unique combination of factors and these factors invite us to think interdisciplinary where proper attention has to be paid to preservation of valuable heritage sites, exploring uniqueness of tangible and intangible resources and on the other hand to identify possibilities such places offer for place development.

Place or destination development can play an important role in contribution for local communities, places themselves and can boost development of tourism that can lead to awareness and economic benefits for the destination. Tourism is considered to be among influential factors that can stimulate the development of local economies, by developing tourism products, aiming to increase the number of visitors, thus contributing to economy. From this perspective manor parks should be considered as valuable resource that allows doing that. Interaction of nature, cultural heritage and tourism in the manor parks is possible when all stakeholders acquire knowledge and develop their competences. Experts in the field of nature protection and cultural heritage protection have substantial knowledge and have expertise to be transferred to tourism stakeholders – manor park owners, operators and tourism developers.

The structure of the seminar provided insight into theoretical and conceptual understanding of manor parks, development and contemporary examples while practical tourism related workshop was done to provide tourism stakeholders with guidelines in manor park tourism product development, respecting uniqueness, characteristics, cultural and natural heritage.

Park planning, historical research and Kemeris case study

The basics of the English park planning, its main values and characteristics (Kristīne Vugule, docent, PhD).

English park planning, values and characteristics have a remarkable impact on our understanding about manor parks and their management. Originally emerged as English gardens

or English landscape parks, from the 19th century, in England to replace French park. They were developed as idealized view of the nature, aiming to develop them as close as possible to natural forms, landscapes and overall appearance. Usually constructed with free layout, keeping balance of nature and man made parts. It was always important part to integrate landscape playing with light, shapes, and textures to provide excitement of the place. They were developed according to three possible scenarios – either demolishing baroque garden and by creating new landscape, creating parks in a completely new place or developing them as an addition to Baroque garden. These three approaches provides general overview of English park historical development.

Considering specifics of a park as a natural object and time limitations, English manor park development normally took place in several stages. Among main principles were creation of romantic corners, planting trees, integrating natural or artificial sources of water, use of expressive means. They normally had free standing groups of trees throughout the territory. English parks were often created with scenic views.

Palladianism – classic forms, symmetry and strict proportion is also considered an important element of English parks. It appears in architectural elements like Palladian bridges. Inspiration for English landscape park development comes from art and painters (17th century). Painting landscapes reflected fantasies where everybody lived in peace, palaces of nobleman are turned down and all people are living equally.

Creation of new English parks was occurring in various countries, usually designed as modern and artistic. And also approach to transform previous parks as continuation or extension was common approach in different countries. As examples worth to be mentioned are Harewood gardens, Pavlovsk Park, displaying parks of the 18th-19th century and others. Often local tree species and diverse trees became important parts of parks once they were created as extensions of continuations of previous parks.

In spite of three approaches how they were developed all English parks have several common elements. They include water which could be represented either by a lake, pond, river or any natural stream. Water elements also provided opportunities to create smaller and larger bridges. Those were supplemented by lawns and sunny meadows, benches, sculptures and monuments. Artificial ruins, even there are no ruins became important element of the park. They added elements of mystery to the parks. Also a common approach was Ha-ha – or an in depth element that creates vertical barrier.

Examples of English parks can be found also in Latvia. Among them should be mentioned Mežotne Manor Park with typical landscape elements. However, there were elements that are not existing nowadays, for example luxurious pavilion. Preili Manor Park with chapel of Preili manor and gothic gates, Alūksne Manor Park which is architectural monument with species-rich dendrological parks, including 25 protected trees, designed as French style and planted oaks, later transformed castle garden to English style garden.

But there were also factors that made park management difficult. Need to create proximity to natural environment and landscape, having variety of trees, landscape scale, maintaining visual focuses and providing surprises with water elements and fauna was often a difficult task. Besides,

in the transformation process park developers had to plant large trees and that was expensive. For existing parks large areas of meadow required regular maintenance.

How to carry out research on the history of the park and recognize the historical structure of the park in nature (Madara Markova, docent, Dr.Arch.).

Research of the history of the park is an important task before deciding on further activities in the park, also defining possible park development scenarios. It required careful understanding on what exactly has been researched and how to understand what is researched. It can be said that the research of the history of the park is a reflection of passion that changes through generation. At the same time conservation as we know it now is an aspect of modern culture. In the process of research we are addressing the fact that every park reflects best thoughts at a present time.

The process of research covers various aspects. In particular natural qualities, relation of ecology, bio diversity, geology. Benefits of physical and intellectual public access. Cultural qualities – that changes are dynamic. Landscapes are related to associations. This lead to an approach defined as single-moment end-point – we do not take back to one specific time, as different times in the course of history also reflect different values. Historic park researchers are interested in different parts of the history, therefore, research interest covers different times of the history with different values. Research is a clear, understandable, outcome driven, audience focused (understand what is client interest), society interests lead, scalable, collaborative and accessible. Researching parks is often not about acquiring new knowledge about specific place (park) but developing understandable information and knowledge for society as a whole, reflecting values of a certain historic period. Results could be defined in different ways. For those who are responsible for management or in close collaboration with departments who manage place. Research also aims to provide a long term plan for conservation. And we are showing stages and priorities, what needs to be done first, what second and what future perspectives are.

Detailed historical research enables restore historical design and introduce appropriate historic plants. Research is not only about defining historical and modern boundaries. Research methods involves using all of different methods as different materials can be found in each of the step. Documentary and archive research, looking at different times and historic periods usually identifying starting point form the moment when landscape appeared. Research quality also depends on available materials. If a picture is considered to be good evidence then a sketch could be only an interpretation. If painting – even more of a representation. Georeferenced and different maps allowing understand different stages, elements. See where pathways were as they often provide unique and valuable information about access to various areas of the park, navigation through it and can provide hints about habits during specific historic periods.

The first step usually includes identifying available maps and researching them, to acquire overall understanding of the place. Research continues with a field walking to identify surviving and lost historical features. This is done only after maps are done. Following that is evaluation which materials can be used.

And when it comes to future perspectives there is the question about possible Research also leads to the question about application of research results and future scenarios of historic parks.

Although virtual reality is still in infancy and only starting to be applied in various aspects and forms it has great potential to imagine various historical and development phases of a place. If reconstruction of different times simultaneously is not possible it is we can do it virtually. Different points of history can be presented.

When it comes to restoration, then the aim is to identify earlier state known. There is always a need to have evidence how landscape looked before and research requires collecting all possible evidence. At the same time, it is always emphasized to respect also previous forms of the place. Restoration also involves evaluation of previous restoration work and respecting it in the research. Maintenance of the place has to be sustainable. Restoration itself also includes various challenges and it can be blurry if different elements damaged.

There are also examples, when instead of restoration places are built. And this is case of Konstantin Palace (2003), located near Gulf of Finland, Russia, operating as The National Congress Palace.

In the process of restoration of parks, it is important to admit that lost functions and new functions might be different. It is obvious that often we are not able to restore lost functions of manor parks and probably it is wiser to use them according to nowadays needs. This approach provides possibilities for park development and assigning new importance to historic manor parks.

Preservation of historical evidence in parks as the structure and function of the park changes. Kemeru park reconstruction example in Latvia (Natalija Nitavska, professor, Dr.Arch.).

Kemeru park reconstruction provides unique opportunity to explore a recent case-study of a manor park reconstruction and revitalization process. Kemeru example is a unique value of Latvia with its sulphur springs and their use in medical treatment. Impressive territory that has 12 bridges and a small river goes through, defining characteristics of the landscape.

Kemeru case study also disclose diversity of challenges manor park restoration process can face. In the case of Kemeru it was ground water and collection of rain water. Although not directly related to park functions itself, it demonstrated the need of joined all stakeholder cooperation and understanding of restoration priorities when it comes to manor park. The role of municipality involvement and recognition of the importance of manor park restoration can be crucial and needed. Solving issued related to ground water and rain water collection indicated on the need to understand various macro problems and micro problems as they define further possible actions. These are among just few of factors to be considered when deciding on park restoration.

Restoration process itself is worth exploring starting from the preparation stage. Preparation's stage is when it is defined which is the period to put reference. Is everything included in the process or there are aspects to be skipped. Started with research of history, biodiversity and melioration and all this information gathered was analysed from different aspects. Separate activity

but not with less importance has been architectural artistic research. Based on conclusions, developed during preparation stage, park territory was arranged in 4 different zones where a part of it was defined as very historical with all symmetry lines, others for activities that are needed now and disclosing functions of a manor park in current times. Finally, area for park forest and forest park were allocated. Based on clear identification of zones and their functions 4 zones determined design of park.

It is also worth mentioning that historic park restauration may involve a large number of authorities in charge of various aspects and functions of a park. Kemeris park was no exception and restauration process required coordination of regulations and conditions with 30 different institutions.

Also the process of construction should be considered as a challenging task as it may need simultaneous activities with high level of coordination related to various ongoing tasks. In case of Kemeris it was territory and road constriction, work related to architectural park, power supply solution development and assuring voltages, solving water supply and sewerage system issued, designing new watering system. It requires instant dialogue and negotiation in order to minimize impacts of challenges related to construction itself.

At the same time, successful outcome of reconstruction provides new opportunities for destination development, it recreates a tourism destination and offers well maintained place for visitors.

Practical workshop

Linking manor parks as nature and culture heritage sites with tourism requires clear understanding of possible tourism product development scenarios in manor parks. It requires identification of tangible and intangible resources and identification of limitations when planning possible activities in manor parks.

Product marketing strategies and external communication requires understanding about values and park identity in order to target various customer segments. Tourism product development heavily relies on the need to create visitor experience. Considering unique character of manor parks, representing nature and culture values, visitor experience can be managed through different channels, involving creation of emotional connection, providing possibilities of participatory, it has to be thought provoking and provide information from multiple perspectives.

Workshop exercise was performed with an aim to provide heritage park stakeholders' guidance for tourism product development and positioning. It is important to stress out that practical workshop primary concentrates on manor parks, its resources and only summary of results can be interpreted as recommendations for further work in tourism industry by tourism stakeholders.

(1) Surroundings, place and destination (physical) – elements that define the	Tangible resources	Intangible resources
	Architectural design, dendrological elements,	Sense of place, aura, smells, sounds, details of all senses.

<p>value of historic parks (resource listing). Tangible and intangible resources with value for creation of tourism related services in manor parks.</p>	<p>buildings, water elements, relief (landscape). Nearest places (locations in proximity). Natural resources that are nearby. Transport infrastructure (road, rail etc.). Manor houses (history).</p>	<p>Stories, spoken message from the past. Songs about place. Very popular personalities from the area. Historical feeling of the place.</p>
<p>(2) Activities, actions, possibilities (audial, visual, kinesthetic), possible in manor parks.</p>	<p>Basic activities walking with views, sounds of nature and emotions. Drawing (inspiring activity). Water activities, boat rides (to use water elements). Education in different ways (dendrological, historical elements (goose shooting, horses)). If transformation happens (functions change) – ways to use. Chance to experiment with nature (workshops in gardening) – anything up to imagination. Team work, including limited sporting activities. Cultural activities, concerts, theaters (open air events). Open area lectures and discussions (educational activities). Modern technologies, scanning QR code to play game (interaction). Activities with animals (mini zoo). Birds, bird watching as activity. Nature watching. Thematic markets, traditional festivities. Young visitor experience management. Thematic quests for young visitors. Festivals (medieval festivals). Master classes – gardening, how to design historical park in the park (practical classes), why this tree is in that place, playing instruments, drawing, tea drinking, food festivals (gastronomic experiences), connected with destination (manor, if available), degustation classes. Destination planning master classes (how was done and take tools doing nowadays). Application of symmetrical lines. Arborist approach and care of old trees. Tree maintenance, good and bad examples in the park. Biological classes for flora and fauna. Wedding ceremonies in historical parks. Movie filming with live decorations. Photo sessions where park is like a decoration.</p>	
<p>(3) Possibilities manor park can offer as a tourism destination.</p>	<p>Inspiration from visit – design of a park as a source. Inspiration from nature. Therapy aspect, cure by the nature. Mental and physical health effects on personal wellbeing, including local community wellbeing. Historical knowledge, awareness. Discovering of new information, culture or traditions. Feeling of belonging to the place, in particular when from the location. Developing association with the place.</p>	

	<p>HORECA stimulation, economic benefits from visitor management.</p> <p>Involvement of local people in park activities. Promoting production of local good, handicraft.</p>
<p>(4) Values of a manor park (possible values) The importance of a manor park (or park) in an urban environment, defined geographical area, natural area or any other place.</p>	<p>Economical value: human health. Parks increase real estate value (even with new parks). Rooms with a view for hotels, restaurants (Increasing service supplier value). Place for infrastructure, boosting local business opportunities.</p> <p>Non economical value: sustainability and preservation of nature. Recognition of a place and promote stronger identity. Responsibility (historical and dendrological). Continuation (gone through transformation but it continues and we care about it). Communication (different segments). Resilience (escape in the nature). Creativity and source of inspiration, transferring experience and application it to own park/garden. Good practice transfer and knowledge sharing. Recognition of important “things” to take care of. Available locations providing equal accessibility possibilities.</p>
<p>(5) Defining parks’ identity.</p>	<p>Combination of architecture, history, structure, composition, mental, cognitive (nature (trees, nature elements) as well as architecture and historical (structure of park) and cognitive (intangible, mental values) elements. (Even one single listed element can create identity, disclosing diverse character of manor parks).</p> <p>One object can define sense of a place (1 manor or palace or large tree).</p> <p>Specific plants, specific, geographical location defined. Natural diversity, concentrated in specific geographical area.</p> <p>Specific tradition related to the place define identify of related community.</p> <p>Presence of nature, entertainment, leisure possibilities and exploration opportunities to disclose diverse values of a park.</p>
<p>(6) Mission – what is a deliverable message after a visit to a heritage park (concentrate on common possible missions, considering descriptions of previous levels).</p>	<p>Harmonized way of preserving values and develop territory economically, promote place for activities. Balancing preservation and promoting economically.</p> <p>Involving modern technologies, finding way to connect with younger generation. Keeping history alive (e.g. Zagare VR room).</p> <p>Diversification for repeated visitors minimizing negative impact of seasonality in visitor economy.</p>

Concluding remarks

It can be concluded that there is substantial ground for synergies among nature sites, historical objects, including manor parks and tourism. Manor parks can provide remarkable and

important nature based, historical, recreational resources for the product development. Diversity of manor parks, elements and possible activities, provides possibilities for tourism product diversification responding to market and customer segment changes.

At the same time once connecting manor parks with tourism it is important to consider various aspects to manage visitor expectations respecting unique value of the park but also providing opportunities to engage with the destination, increase awareness and acquire new experiences through knowledge manor parks can provide.

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