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PROGRAMMING BURIAL LANDSCAPES: AN ANALYSIS OF LANDSCAPE REGULATIONS IN LITHUANIA AND THEIR POTENTIAL OUTCOMES

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Abstract. This study explores the regulatory frameworks and landscape designs of burial grounds in Lithuania, focusing on the legal documents and municipal regulations governing cemetery maintenance and development. Analysis reveals a dichotomy between the Law of Burial of Human Remains and the Law of Greenery, with the former emphasizing burial practices and memorial protection while the latter prioritizes ecological considerations and biodiversity in the green areas. Municipal regulations vary in their approach to tree planting and maintenance, with some prohibiting certain species or arbitrary planting. The absence of specific guidelines for designers and administrators grants them flexibility in shaping burial landscapes, leading to diverse approaches across municipalities. Case studies of recently expanded Nemajūnai, Ginkūnai, Daušiškės, and Ivoniškės graveyards illustrate different approaches to tree preservation and landscape design. The findings suggest a need for greater integration of ecological concerns in cemetery planning and maintenance practices.

Keywords: cemetery management, municipal regulations, laws, graveyards, design, legal frameworks, green spaces, ecology.

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1. Introduction

“Cemeteries are exceptional parts of the Lithuanian landscape,” asserts social science researcher Darius Liutikas at the outset of his article dedicated to the geographical survey of burial grounds in Lithuania (2017b, p. 61). He further contends that the architecture of graves, the topography of cemeteries (including their location on hills), and the presence of trees and plantings collectively shape a unique landscape (Liutikas, 2017a, pp. 60, 62). However, numerous reports in the media highlight the cutting down of trees in burial grounds, with little to no mention of tree planting activities except in cases of new cemetery projects or expansions.

While trees are not the sole components of graveyard landscapes or landscapes in general, they have historically been integral to Lithuanian burial landscapes. The serene majesty of cemetery trees has complemented chapels, gateways, and enclosures (Bazaraite, 2023, pp. 194–278). Yet, significant changes in cemetery landscapes in recent decades suggest a shift in user perceptions and practices. Factors such as changing mentalities, financial accessibility to building materials, and regulatory laws governing burial ground maintenance play roles in shaping these landscapes. While regulations address essential maintenance

aspects like grave rest periods and tombstone heights, they often lack principles for guiding the development of burial ground projects and expansions, leaving this responsibility to municipalities.

This article adopts a landscape perspective on burial grounds and seeks to ascertain whether the values and features appreciated in landscapes and green spaces are also recognized or programmed in cemeteries.

2. Methodology

This study undertakes an examination of burial ground and landscape regulations in Lithuania through a multi-faceted approach. Firstly, a legal analysis is conducted, delving into key legal documents such as the Law of Burial of Human Remains (Lietuvos Respublikos Seimas [LRS], 2007b) and the Law of Greenery (LRS, 2007a), as well as municipal regulations governing cemetery maintenance and development. The study analyses the most recent updates of the legal regulations, while referencing the original date of law enactment. This analysis reveals a dichotomy between legal frameworks, with the former prioritizing memorial protection and burial practices, while the latter emphasizes ecological considerations and biodiversity.

Additionally, a comparative analysis is undertaken to compare and contrast the approaches taken by different legal documents and municipal regulations. By identifying similarities, differences, and trends across municipalities, this analysis sheds light on the landscape management practices within burial grounds.

Moreover, the study incorporates case studies of recently established or expanded graveyards, namely Nemajūnai, Ginkūnai, Daušiškės, and Ivoniškės, to offer specific examples of various approaches to tree preservation and landscape design. These case studies are chosen due to their recent expansion status, thereby providing insight into the current state of spatial development within graveyards in Lithuania. They serve as valuable illustrations of how burial ground regulations are implemented and their practical implications on landscape design.

Furthermore, content analysis is employed to examine the language and content of legal documents and municipal regulations, identifying key themes, provisions, and priorities within the documents. This analysis helps in understanding the implications of burial ground regulations on landscape management practices.

Lastly, qualitative analysis is conducted to interpret the finding of the legal analysis, comparative analysis, and case studies. By synthesizing information from different sources, this analysis enables the drawing of conclusions and making recommendations for future burial ground management practices.

3. Legal regulations regarding landscape

The Law of Architecture (LRS, 2017) delineates architecture as the functional, spatial, and visually comprehensible artistic configuration of buildings, urban structures, and landscapes. While this document acknowledges two categories of landscapes – natural and urban – it fails to elucidate the distinction between them. The natural landscape (liet. *gamtinis kraštovaizdis*), as expounded in the Lithuanian Encyclopedia by the Lithuanian geographer and regional expert Paulius Kavaliauskas, is defined as a landscape that evolves under the influence of natural processes, with human activities exerting minimal impact (Kavaliauskas, n.d.-a). Kavaliauskas identifies cultural or anthropogenic landscape (liet. *kultūrinis kraštovaizdis*) as the second type, resulting from human activities and their coexistence. He suggests that in geographical terms, the cultural landscape exhibits varying degrees of acculturation and is further subdivided into rural and urban landscapes (Kavaliauskas, n.d.-b).

In the architectural dictionary compiled by architect and architectural historian James Stevens Curl (b. 1937), the concept of architecture is initially elucidated through the words of English academic and critic John Ruskin (1819–1900) as the “art which disposes and adorns the edifices raised by man,” with the additional notion that “the sight of them contributes to his mental health, power, and pleasure” (Curl, 2000, pp. 32–33). Curl further draws upon the insights of Vitruvius, as paraphrased by subsequent

authors, to expound on architecture as being “concerned with the creation of order out of chaos, a respect for organization, the manipulation of geometry, and the creation of a work in which aesthetics plays a far greater role than anything likely to be found in a humdrum building” (Curl, 2000, p. 32). Notably, the 2000 edition (initially published in 1999) does not feature entries for either “landscape” or “landscape architecture.” However, an updated edition in 2006 incorporates “Landscape Architecture” into the title of the book.

In conclusion regarding the Law of Architecture (LRS, 2017), it appears that landscape and landscape architecture are considered constituents of the architectural domain, encompassing even natural landscapes. While natural features of landscapes may occasionally be perceived as architecture, this classification tends to confine dynamic landscape systems, shaped by both human intervention and natural forces, within a more static realm primarily influenced by human activity (architecture). The absence of distinct definitions for landscape and landscape architecture in the legal regulation may suggest a lack of precise delineation and comprehension of these concepts. Additionally, the omission of rural landscape further underscores the potential vagueness in the understanding and definition of landscape within legal frameworks.

The Law of Protection of Immovable Heritage (LRS, 1994a) addresses landscape solely in the context of anthropogenic or cultural landscapes (liet. *sukultūrinti kraštovaizdžiai*), which are encompassed within the description of areas (liet. *vietovės*) that lack specific definitions in the glossary. Areas are delineated as historical or cultural topographical territories and places. The cultural values and significances pertinent to all types of immovable heritage encompass archaeological, anthropological, ethnological, mythological, memorial, religious, architectural, technical, technological, urban, and other historical, artistic, or scientific dimensions. While a distinct description of cultural landscape is absent, as immovable heritage, it must embody one or more of the aforementioned values. Article 14 mandates the protection of immovable cultural heritage while also stipulating the necessity for their maintenance, care, and utilization. Permissible forms of usage include reservation, restricted use, or unrestricted use, denoted as universal. Furthermore, the legal regulation underscores the importance of maintaining the physical stability of protected objects. Such objects, like other forms of immovable heritage, are safeguarded following evaluation processes and requisite legislation. To obtain immovable heritage status, they must possess cultural value and social significance.

The Law of Protected Territories (LRS, 1993) underscores a heightened focus on landscape. Within its glossary, landscape is characterized as a territorial amalgamation encompassing natural elements present on the Earth’s surface (such as rocks, troposphere, surface and groundwater, soil, and living organisms) and/or anthropogenic components (including archaeological remnants, constructed structures, engineering installations, land use

patterns, and informational fields), interconnected through material, energy, and informational linkages. A distinct delineation is provided for cultural landscape, articulated in congruence with the definition found in encyclopaedic sources, portraying it as an outcome of human activities.

In the Law of Territorial Planning (LRS, 1995), landscape is not explicitly defined in the glossary; however, it is referenced multiple times in the text, distinguished from natural and immovable heritage but encompassed within the broader term of “cultural landscape.”

The Law of Plantings (LRS, 2007a) focuses on plantings or plantations, without explicitly addressing green areas in a broader sense, although the term “želdynai” in European Union documents refers to green areas. The term itself implies human intervention. Landscape architect Regimantas Pilkauskas, in the Lithuanian Encyclopedia, defines it as a system of plantings and infrastructure within a specific territory, citing examples such as parks, gardens, small urban gardens (liet. *skverai*), homesteads (liet. *sodybos*), cemeteries, and botanical gardens (Pilkauskas, n.d.). Consequently, the legal regulation pertains solely to human-made elements of landscape. Its objectives include the preservation of natural and cultural landscapes, emphasizing the aesthetic, ecological, historical, and cultural significance in the principles of protection, while clarifying that plantings constitute elements of landscapes (Article 3). Thus, these qualities are applicable to both natural and cultural landscapes.

The objective of establishing a greenery system is to preserve the structure of landscapes, their biological diversity, and historical significance, while also enhancing the ecological stability of the territory and improving the living and working environments of people. This underscores the pivotal role of biological diversity and historical value as integral components of landscapes, which are shaped by the presence of greenery or plantings, that is designed, planted, and maintained.

The Law of Land (LRS, 1994b), was designed to delineate the legal framework governing property rights, management, and utilization of land, as well as the administrative processes related to land within the territory of Lithuania, its exclusive economic zone, and the continental shelf in the Baltic Sea. In the classification of land uses, outlined in Article 3, categories such as agriculture, forestry, aquaculture, preserved territories, and other uses are identified, with the latter encompassing dependent plantings (such as public spaces within building complexes, industrial areas, and infrastructure territories) and unspecified independent plantings (Article 28). The latter are further defined in the Law of Plantings (LRS, 2007a). The conservational objectives of land include the establishment of nature reserves and areas where nature and cultural heritage sites are situated. The objectives of land administration, enumerated in Article 33, include the development and implementation of measures for environmental protection and the preservation of ecological stability within landscapes.

When summarizing the conceptualizations of landscapes as articulated in each of the examined legal regu-

lations, a clear dichotomy emerges between natural and cultural landscapes. Depending on the particular focus of each legal regulation, landscape is either delineated separately or frequently integrated into broader discussions. The cultural landscape is conceived as a multifaceted entity capable of encompassing diverse values and significances. There is a discernible emphasis on ensuring the physical stability and biodiversity of cultural landscapes, especially within green public spaces designed to improve living and working environments.

4. Legal regulations regarding burial

Burial grounds, as landscapes shaped by human activity and housing human remains and memories, fit within the definition of cultural landscape. Due to the precise yet broad nature of legal frameworks, their landscape component is often only briefly addressed. Frequently, the aspects pertinent to this study are located within articles dedicated to the maintenance and upkeep of burial grounds.

The primary document governing planning and maintenance activities in burial grounds is the Law of Burial of Human Remains (LRS, 2007b). The law encompasses the burial of full-size human body remains underground, as well as cremated remains, which may be interred underground, housed in columbaria, or scattered in designated areas such as ash fields or other locations, as permitted by the regulations of cemetery maintenance issued by institutions authorized by the Government of Lithuania (Chapter 2, Article 15). Article 24 in the Chapter 5 stipulates that the territory of a newly established cemetery should not be over 40 ha, considering the land of commonly used greenery. This is the sole instance within this law where greenery within burial grounds is referenced. Article 24 stipulates that the enclosure of monuments, tombstones, and graves is carried out in accordance with the Rules of Cemetery Maintenance (Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybė, 2008) issued by the state government in 2006. Both the responsibility and financial obligations for the maintenance of burial grounds fall under the purview of the municipality.

According to Article 31, municipalities are responsible for organizing the maintenance of burial grounds, coordinating, and supervising the work of graveyard custodians in accordance with government directives. The size of sanitary protection zone around the newly established or expanding cemeteries follow the Law of Special land use regulations (Chapter 5, Article 24), but should not be less than a 100 m (Annex 3 in LRS, 2019).

The regulations governing the maintenance of burial grounds (Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybė, 2008), as outlined in Section 11 of Article 3, specify the recommended size for graves. For the interment of the remains of an individual, the suggested area is 3.75 square meters (1.5 meters by 2.5 meters), while for a group interment, the recommended area is 7 square meters (2.8 meters by 2.5 meters). However, these guidelines remain flexible

in cases where the dimensions of the cemetery plan differ. Notably, the distances between graves, the widths of pathways, and the allocation of green spaces within the cemetery are not explicitly defined. This lack of specification raises concerns regarding the potential for densely packed urbanism resembling a carpet-like layout, while also undermining the potential for cemeteries to serve as green spaces.

The Law of Burial of Human Remains (LRS, 2007b) also specifies provisions for the reuse of graves. It delineates the resting period of a grave, during which time interred human remains (non-cremated) undergo decomposition. According to Section 6 of Article 2, this period should not be less than 25 years. The determination of whether the resting period of a grave has elapsed falls within the purview of the graveyard custodian, who relies on findings from hydrogeological surveys and statements from the National Center for Public Health under the Ministry of Health of Lithuania. Section 5 of Article 25 stipulates that the grave may be reused after an additional 25 years following the conclusion of the resting period. This entails that the grave remains undisturbed for a total of 50 years, after which, upon request from an interested party and with appropriate permission, it can be reclaimed or used for another burial. Each grave is assigned a designated individual responsible for its maintenance. If a grave is neglected for a period of one year, as outlined in Section 23 of Article 3, the custodian is required to notify the designated contact person. In the absence of a response, the responsibility for maintenance is transferred to the municipality or religious community (Section 25, Article 3). If there is no request for reburial and no responsible party identified for maintenance, it signifies that the grave is entirely entrusted to a third party, leading to increased burdens on the state budget or the budget of a specific community.

In the Law of Greenery (LRS, 2007a), cemeteries are explicitly mentioned alongside parks, other public greenery, and street greenery (Chapter 4, Articles 14 and 15), thus indicating that cemeteries are recognized as green areas within the legal framework. The maintenance of plantings in cemeteries, like other public green spaces, is mandated to be carried out solely by individuals possessing the necessary professional qualifications (Chapter 4, Article 14; Chapter 7, Article 21). This includes professionals with formal training in decorative planting, agriculture, forestry, horticulture, or greenery maintenance and protection.

The Law of Burial of Human Remains (LRS, 2007b) and municipal regulations clearly state that arbitrary planting is prohibited, and some municipalities also forbid the planting of tree species typically used for forestry purposes. The wording of the latter regulation is somewhat ambiguous, making it difficult to ascertain whether it applies to individual initiatives or serves as a general rule for cemeteries. However, rules concerning grave plots primarily address users, while there are no specific guidelines provided for designers or administrators, granting them considerable freedom in deciding how the burial landscape should look and function.

Each municipality establishes its own regulations for graveyard maintenance, although many provisions overlap across municipalities. Additionally, specific rules are defined for each individual graveyard. Regional regulations often include prohibitions on planting trees, bushes, and shrubs that are likely to exceed one meter in height. This provision is outlined in the regulations for Vilnius, Kaunas, and numerous other municipalities in Lithuania.

In regions such as Šilalė, Pakruojis, Kalvarija, and Mažeikiai, *inter alia* (Kalvarijos savivaldybės taryba, 2024; Mažeikių rajono savivaldybės taryba, 2024; Pakruojo rajono savivaldybės taryba, 2020; Šilalės rajono savivaldybės taryba, 2023) among others, regulations stipulate that arbitrary planting trees typically used in forestry or other species with the potential to develop extensive root or branch systems is prohibited. Exceptions are made for pendulum and dwarf varieties of plants.

While Vilnius permits arbitrary the cutting or pruning of trees in graveyards, regions like Šilalė and Klaipėda prohibit such actions, requiring formal permission from the municipality for any cutting of trees, whether protected or unprotected. In Šilalė, bushes and shrubs may be removed without prior permission.

As the establishment of new cemeteries and the expansion of existing ones are the responsibilities of municipal governments, it is within their jurisdiction to delineate the parameters for how cemetery projects should be developed by planning specialists, including architects, urbanists, or landscape architects. Observing the projects for new cemeteries or their expansion, it is evident that greenery is included but appears to be of secondary importance. Trees, bushes, and shrubs are not the only elements shaping the landscape of burial grounds, and landscapes in general. A network of pathways, enclosures, grave plots, built structures such as columbaria or administrative facilities, and terrain alterations collectively contribute to the overall design of cemeteries. These elements typically play a prominent role in cemetery design, likely due to the stipulation in the Law of Burial of Human Remains (LRS, 2007b) that mandates the completion of infrastructure establishment before burials commence in graveyards (Chapter 5, Article 24). The law does not impose any obligation to incorporate greenery in graveyards.

Ecological concerns related to the establishment of cemeteries are not explicitly addressed, nor is the importance of biodiversity, as clearly stipulated in the Law of Greenery (LRS, 2007a), reiterated in these documents. From this perspective, cemeteries are perceived as serving the singular function of burial, whether underground or in columbaria. The priority is placed on protecting tombstones and memorials, providing instructions for their maintenance and subsequent use, while ecological needs are absent from the discourse.

For instance, in the cemetery project in Nemajūnai, located in the Birštonas region, the design incorporates 275 trees of local forest species planted along the pathways, delineating the contours of the burial quarters.

Within the quarters, no additional planting is planned, leaving the areas available for regular burials. The composition adheres to geometric lines, with columbaria for cremated remains situated on the highest point of the relatively flat terrain. The entire area is adorned with a regular network of trees intersecting diagonally with the pathways.

Often, trees in graveyards are cut down to create more space for burials, as evidenced by the Ginkūnai graveyard in Šiauliai. However, in the newly opened Daušiškės cemetery, also close to Šiauliai (Šiukšterienė, 2023), not a single tree is visible over the flat terrain. The landscape primarily comprises a network of pathways, thin metal enclosures, and parking lots, with a designated area reserved for future columbaria construction.

In the expansion project of the Ivoniškės graveyard, located close to Birštonas, some existing trees were preserved, but the majority of the burial area remains devoid of plantings. The regularity of the pathways is complemented by winding paths designed for the columbaria section.

The examination of burial ground legal regulations reveals a lack of clarity regarding the permissible landscape strategies for developing burial landscapes. Furthermore, guiding principles concerning the ecological and biodiversity aspects of these landscapes are notably absent. Newly developed burial areas demonstrate a predominant focus on the construction of hardscape elements, with minimal or no consideration given to the dynamic green elements.

5. Historical cemeteries as landscapes

A number of old cemeteries, rarely dating back before the 19th century, are protected as heritage. The legal documents are prepared by heritage specialists, and the final status of protection is ratified by the Council of Evaluation of Immovable Heritage (Nekilnojamojo kultūros paveldo vertinimo taryba), operating upon the request of the Department of Cultural Heritage under the Ministry of Culture of Lithuania. The qualities of protected cemeteries include artistic value of the gravestones, burials of important figures, architectural significance of the buildings and structures, like chapels, enclosing walls and gateways, and alike. Abandoned cemeteries are also included in the list of the protected immovable heritage, though there is none or very few surviving gravestones, and the territory is densely covered with trees and bushes. Their protection is necessary to shield the human remains buried there, so they are not built over or ploughed through.

The Resolution on the Approval of Implementing Legal Acts for the Law on the Burial of Human Remains of the Republic of Lithuania (Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybė, 2008) outlines the requirements for erecting new structures within burial grounds established before 1940 or in inactive cemeteries (Chapter 4, Article 26). Tombstones are not to exceed a height of 1.2 meters. Additionally, graves may be enclosed using existing precedents typical for the cemetery's location, and may also be covered with a slab and/or bordered by boundaries. The rules specify that materials used for construction should be natural or

historically typical for graveyards. In cases where a grave is situated on a slope, a new retaining wall may be constructed, provided it does not exceed 0.5 meters in height unless deemed necessary. All interventions within these graveyards must be reviewed by the regional unit of the Department of Cultural Heritage under the Ministry of Culture. Plantings within cemeteries are maintained in accordance with state laws regulating greenery, such as the Law of Greenery.

Sometimes, though not always, one of the valuable qualities is landscape, which for the lack of tradition and landscape specialists in Lithuania, become a question for dispute between the members of the council of heritage. More often (with exceptions) landscape as protected property of certain cemeteries is attributed to big cemeteries, often within the cities, while smaller cemeteries in towns or scattered in the fields are not qualified as landscapes. In contrast to other properties of value, landscapes lack the categorization commonly applied to other types of properties. While other properties are typically classified as typical, important, rare, or unique, landscapes are generally designated as either protected or unprotected (Nekilnojamojo kultūros paveldo vertinimo taryba, 2012). This indicates a lack of established practices for evaluating and categorizing landscapes, leaving councils with binary decisions of either yes or no. Furthermore, the lack of clarity in the legal regulations complicates evaluation processes. As a result, the protection often focuses on the topography of cemeteries and specific hardscape objects, while trees, shrubs, and bushes are overlooked.

6. Discussion and interpretation of results obtained

The main definitions of landscape within the legal regulations are those of natural landscapes and cultural landscapes. The Law of Architecture also includes "urban landscape" as a territorial category. The cemeteries are categorized as independent greens areas. And here is where we find an incoherence between the understanding of legal regulations dealing with landscapes and that of legal regulations describing burials grounds. The latter clearly focuses on the human remains. That is understandable, given the fact that this is their primary function and the reason of having such territories altogether. However, if the cemeteries are considered part of the green network, the prohibition of planting higher trees, bushes and shrubs, even if the stipulation is supposedly just for arbitrary planting, and might be possible having a permission for the custodian. Prohibition of planting trees of possibly bulky root and/or branch system, also shows consideration for tombstones, that might be affected either reaching them from underground and destroying the construction, or being covered with blossoms or leaves of the trees, resulting in extra maintenance of the location. This could be definitely harmonized by planting the greenery by the municipalities or communities themselves. However, the current state of graveyards indicates that these institutions are primarily

focused on maintaining only a small number of trees, or in majority of cases, no trees at all.

The analysis of legislation indicates that although cemeteries are categorized as autonomous vegetated areas, there is a lack of municipal initiatives aimed at augmenting their green spaces. In certain areas, the cultivation of forest species is prohibited, as well as other tree species characterized by extensive root and/or branch systems. Consequently, the cemetery landscape is primarily characterized by tombstones and slabs, whose size is not subject to any regulation.

Cutting the trees in the graveyards have been an ongoing process since the Independence of Lithuania in 1990. The process is often associated with the timber value, bringing extra income to the clergy or municipality, that would be taking care of the graveyards. Describing the traditions of the burial spaces in Lithuania and the trees growing there, Liutikas affirms that the big trees are often cut away, as their branches can harm the gravestones (Liutikas, 2017a, p. 55).

While an examination of various cemetery projects or their expansions in Lithuania would illuminate the design preferences of both designers and clients, often the municipalities themselves, legal scrutiny primarily revolves around the prevention of haphazard tree plantings. Nonetheless, adherence to the stipulated regulations is incumbent upon individual grave caretakers and the supervision of a custodian.

Undefined height of the tombstones in the cemeteries and the utilization of durable materials such as natural stone, concrete, cement, and similar substances is permitted, allowing for the enclosure of graves or even the complete coverage of graves with corresponding-sized stones or other materials indicates a progression of the burial site into a low-rise "granite garden," borrowing the terminology of Anne Spirn (1984). In her examination of urban environments, Spirn identifies several factors contributing to the formation of urban heat islands, noting that "in the city, concrete, stone, brick, and asphalt replace the natural plant cover of the countryside" (Spirn, 1984, p. 52). In the context of burial ground regulations, this manifests as heat islands composed of mineral materials, which also impede soil permeability, disrupting the natural movement of water.

The examination of legal regulations and visits to graveyards confirm that graves are permitted to be covered with stone or other hard materials. Additionally, there is no regulation regarding the size of tombstones, and the accessibility infrastructure primarily consists of hard materials such as asphalt or concrete tiles. Hence, the authorization stemming from the tradition of utilizing stone, concrete, and other mineral materials for tombstones gives rise to the proliferation of "granite gardens." In these expanses, the upkeep of individual commemorative sites is shouldered at least partially by state or religious institutions. This attention to the memorialization of each past citizen is commendable and altruistic. Particularly in a nation where history has been exceedingly harsh on collective and personal memory, and where the future remains

perpetually uncertain, such a stance is understandable. Nonetheless, the associated costs should be taken into account, along with the spatial characteristics of the site, which should not be relegated to a secondary concern in the preservation of memory locations.

This viewpoint regarding cemetery landscapes exemplifies the perspective outlined in the Law of Architecture, which regards landscape architecture as integral to the architectural realm. However, this perspective overlooks the intrinsic nature of landscape transformation, while also neglecting considerations of ecology and biodiversity.

7. Conclusions

The analysis of legal regulations reveals contradictions in the understanding of landscapes and cemeteries. The rules appear to be intended for adherence by graveyard users, while the primary document defining the graveyard landscape is the landscape design project itself. It is important not to overlook the role of the municipality, as it collaborates with design professionals and often reflects the broader societal attitude. Such concerns of the preference of the legal regulations show the results in the contemporary spatial configurations of both historical burial grounds, as well as those of our day and age.

The significance of biodiversity, as articulated in the Law of Greenery, should also apply to cemeteries. However, cemeteries devoid of greenery layers may struggle to meet this requirement. The ambiguous definition of landscape and value quality in protected cemeteries leaves the fate of greenery subject to the discretion of each institutional caretaker of the graveyards.

It is understandable that not every tree warrants preservation; however, given the urgent circumstances of the climate crisis, which bring heightened risks of storms, concerns about a warming planet, and the essential role of healthy soil in carbon sequestration, burial grounds also play a role. As they currently stand, the legal regulations governing burial grounds encourage their expansion but often neglect the provision of essential elements such as shade, air purification, and water retention, due to the sparse tree coverage. Additionally, the prevalence of stony ground cover further exacerbates unfavourable conditions.

To mitigate the risk of tree damage during storms, heightened maintenance practices are essential. Unhealthy trees with a high risk of falling due to compromised root structures should be removed, and new trees should be planted in their place. Multiple periodic reports and field studies depict burial grounds devoid of trees. Despite plans outlined in graveyard foundation or expansion projects to plant trees along pathways, implementation of these plans is infrequent.

The prohibition of completely covering graves with slabs should be deliberated, along with the exploration of alternative biodegradable materials. Emphasizing the landscape aspect of burial grounds, incorporating green spaces with grass and trees (referred to as "breathing

landscape”) should be thoroughly analysed and specified within legal frameworks.

Furthermore, the absence of specific guidelines for designers and administrators provides them with flexibility in shaping burial landscapes. While this flexibility allows for innovation and adaptation to local contexts, it also raises questions about the ecological sustainability and long-term viability of burial ground designs.

In considering these aspects, careful consideration should be given to the cultural landscapes we are shaping in contemporary burial grounds—what messages do they convey about our values, concerns, and dreams for the afterlife?

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LAIDOJIMO KRAŠTOVAIZDŽIŲ PROGRAMAVIMAS: KRAŠTOVAIZDŽIO ĮSTATYMŲ LIETUVOJE ANALIZĖ IR JŲ POTENCIALI ĮTAKA KAPINIŲ ERDVINIAM FORMAVIMUI

E. Bazaraitė

Santrauka

Šiame tyrime nagrinėjama Lietuvos kapinių reglamentavimo bazė ir kraštovaizdžio projektai, daugiausia dėmesio skiriant teisiniams dokumentams ir savivaldybių reglamentams, apibrėžiantiems laidojimo kraštovaizdžių priežiūrą ir plėtrą. Analizė atskleidžia Žmonių palaikų laidojimo įstatymo ir Želdynų įstatymo dichotomiją: pirmasis akcentuoja laidojimo praktiką ir memorialinę apsaugą, o antrasis pirmenybę teikia ekologiniams tikslams ir želdynų biologinei įvairovei. Savivaldybių teisės aktai skiriasi požiūriu į medžių sodinimą ir priežiūrą kapinėse – kai kuriais atvejais draudžiamos tam tikros rūšys arba savavališkas sodinimas. Konkretų gairių nebuvimas projektuotojams ir administratoriams suteikia lankstumą formuojant laidojimo kraštovaizdžius, o tai sudaro sąlygas skirtingiems erdvės sprendiniams įvairiose savivaldybėse užgimti. Neseniai išplėstų Nemajūnų, Ginkūnų, Daušiškių, Ivoniškių kapinių atvejo analizė iliustruoja vystytojų požiūrį į kraštovaizdžio dizainą ir medžių išsaugojimą. Išvados rodo, kad ekologiniai aspektai turėtų būti labiau integruoti į kapinių planavimo ir priežiūros praktiką.

Reikšminiai žodžiai: kapinių priežiūra, savivaldybių reglamentai, įstatymai, kapinės, dizainas, įstatyminė bazė, žaliosios erdvės, ekologija.