THE ROOF LANDSCAPES, THE HISTORIC CITY CENTRES AND CONTEXTUAL SEARCHES OF THE GREEN STRUCTURE

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ABSTRACT

The expressiveness of the historic urban space alongside with the shape of the outer facades of the building is largely determined by the roof landscape and its separate compositional elements – color, the form of the cover, the pitch game of the roof plane, the roof pitch or the building's turn to the rest of the building construction, roof constructions, chimneys, etc.. The lower is the construction, the easier it is to read the roof character. Both groups of the big trees have often broken in the old building construction where the foliage masks the perception of expressiveness of the historic space, narrowing the view angle and obscuring the silhouette of the wooden building construction of the street. This is particularly true in areas where wooden buildings have disappeared from the continuous building construction, being replaced by tree seedlings which, not removed in a timely manner, form huge sizes covering facades of buildings but the root system and the amount of leaves destroy the constructive structure of buildings. Getting used to it every day, the location of the tree is assumed to be correct. Without going into detail of the structure of the historical composition of the urban constructed space, series of faulty assumptions are formed that undermine the expressiveness and harmony of the urban space.

Key words: urban structure, urban landscape, roof landscape, wedges of green plantations, green structure, visual aesthetics and quality, contextualism, harmony

INTRODUCTION

The urban planning organizes the space in which a human being will live. Architecture is also a compromise between the man-created space and natural environment. Thus, as the attitude and requirements of the society towards architecture are changing, architecture changes on the whole. The dominant instrument in the architect's work, instead of the empirical proof or theories, is creativity as the main driving force (Rukmane-Poča, 2011).

Any inhabited locality has its own physical structure and symbolical identity which may be weak but the urban landscape often forms the city's uniqueness, therefore great importance is given to the creation of aesthetical quality of the urban environment. The city has to be flexible in relation to perception habits of users and change of the function and meaning. The city is a continuous and complex form, which, at the same time, is chaotically changing (Liepa-Zemeša, 2010).

With the increase of pace of life and the amount of daily sociability of space and time, people are increasingly looking for support and comfort in the harmony of their internal environment. The supporting point in the urban space is commonly found in the historical building zone, the scale, color, form, rhythm, the semantics of which is psychologically very readable. The old pavement makes to slow down the pace and enhances the emotions instigated visually by the overall urban construction ensemble (Strautmanis, 1977).

A link is created where the external spatial environment stabilizes the human inner world. The

scale and proportions are features that by themselves are able to give to the informational environment the spatial structure of an unprecedented and unique individuality. A sense of scale or the ability to compare the dimensions of the external space and its elements with human dimensions essentially belongs to the information in the formation and development of which a great importance is given to personal experience (Strautmanis, 1977). The sense of scale is inextricably linked to the sense of proportion and it will always stimulate harmony of the spatial environment (Strautmanis, 1982).

The elements belonging to the urban space engineering constructions, advertising displays, small forms of architecture, cars, greenery, trees with their vast diversity of forms and composition, existing within a definite architectural spatial framework, generally form a spatial substantiative environment in which our life is going on (Strautmanis, 1982).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

People assess the space around them intuitively, looking for an element that could stabilize the mental and physical comfort of their internal environment. It is important that the users could perceive it clearly and mentally abstract and structure it in space and time. It must be linked to the values of residents. If the town loses its notion and accuracy, it becomes more difficult to be understood (Strautmanis, 1977). The expressiveness of the urban construction space of the 80s and 90s of the 19th century of Bauska, Jelgava and Kuldiga is characterized by a similar architectural compositional image of the building construction that highlights the stylistic trends and the scale of the building construction period that is vividly marked by the roof plane pitches and their covering material. For the method of research, there are used the research results of individual building blocks of the historical parts of the above towns derived by comparing the existing situation of building construction with the character of the gone or partially transformed historical building construction. The material under examination includes the results of the architectural survey of the old building construction where the dominant view lines are evaluated and compared with the perception of the roof landscape, amount of the green plantations and their locations in the historical center.

By the evaluation of existing tree planting areas and architectural shape of the historical building construction, there is explored the context of the urban construction environment which consists of several spatial elements - a tree plantation line along the street, a backyard with a garden, the tree height, their spacing, foliage density, color in seasons and its accent in the silhouette of the building construction, etc.. For the historical centers Bauska. Jelgava, the harmony of the of compositional elements is different but in the research a number of similarities are used between these towns which affect the construction time. architectural and stylistic trends, intensive conservation and tree planting time during the postwar years.

Describing these dimensions, there is an opportunity to analyze the shape of the historical space where the results of the research are important in the aspect of further urban planning and restoration works.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Nowadays, not only the general knowledge of comfort and its determining factors is widening, but changes are taking place in the human requirements and attitudes to the closest surroundings (Strautmanis, 1977).

The architecture acts as information that creates a spatial environment and it is able to influence a positive formation of the public emotions (Strautmanis, 1977). Any spatial form has its own information. The ambient urban construction environment is an endless source of signals that people perceive as

something in its own right to understand. This set of signals which reflects quality of the environment is the most important part of the information exchange process of our psyche and spatial environment (Strautmanis, 1977).

The expression of the building construction of the 80s and 90s of the 19th century is most vividly marked by the ridged planes of roofs of houses that have survived in the towns of Courland which have not undergone serious war damage. The historic centers of Aizpute, Kuldiga, Alsunga, Grobina, etc., are characterized by a building construction, the height of which does not exceed two storeys. The basis of the architecturally - constructive shape of the facades of buildings is wooden stand, wooden corner-jointed and brick buildings with board sidings or mortar plastering on splints. In order to obtain research materials, for the needs of comparison there were used separate old building blocks in the historical centers of Kuldīga, Bauska and Jelgava. The research was based on the main view lines of courtyards and some of the street segments with tree plantations and without them.

Examining individual fragments of the old town street building, a number of arguments were selected, concerning the harmony and balance issues of the urban space:

- The trees and the green planting context in the scale of the building construction;

- The nature of intimacy for the building zone of the historical construction;

- The opportunities of perception of the roof landscape.

In the example of Bauska, the historical Riga street has been surveyed . This street is characterized by a continuous 1 - 2 storey buildings without street plantations and it has been developed in parallel to the Mēmele river, creating a visual association with the water landscape. Such street location of the urban construction character gives it the opportunity to develop a promenade, the uniqueness of which is possible to supplement with the base of the natural elements or the green - blue wedge expression. Between the street and the river a continuous building construction is located, which distances the promenade from the water's edge in about 50 m in width. For the landscape space of Riga street, in the postwar years a number of the historic building interruptions have appeared, allowing the development of the green zone. Evaluating the tree scale and proportion, it is evident that some of them cause a visual disharmony and quench in the view line to perceive expressiveness of the architectural form creation.



Figure 1. The tree cover that hides the historic building construction of Riga street (Author's photo, 2012)



Figure 2. The roof landscape and the colouring scheme of the street structure. Bauska, Riga street (Author's photo, 2012)



Figure 3. Bauska, Kaleju street. The wooden building construction losing its building, in its place there is a self-growing tree. (Author's photo, 2012)

In the building construction of Riga street at the Town Hall Square (33 Riga street), by the river side a green zone approximately 30 m in width has been created, enabling to spatially interconnect the square and the water landscape. At present, the view lines to the river are broken by the tree and

shrub cover, hiding the expressiveness of the brick architecture of the building at 37 Riga street. While at this point, it is not visually seen that about 30 m away, there is a picturesque view to the the river bluff with rapids that should be exposed, spatially searching the context with the building construction

of the Town Hall Square. Historically this point was important since it served as a place where the goods were unloaded from the boats and taken to the marketplace. Creating a wide lawn zone in this place, visually there would be obtained continuation of the Town Hall Square. For the new Town Hall Square cover in this place, a wedge pattern has been built that emphasizes the historical walk from the river to the square. Moving through Riga street eastwards or along the upstream of the Mēmele river, on the side of even number by 60 m there is a green square with recreational zones. It is created with tree plantations distanced from the red line of the street and covers about 50 m long zone along a pedestrian sidewalk. The square has appeared after disappearance of the wooden building construction in this place. Its scale and green plantations are balanced with the adjacent historic building construction and it is not overpowering it.

From the square, up Riga street there dominates a dense one-storey wooden building construction with roof constructions, giving the street a romantic feeling of a small town. Thanks to the small height of buildings, the roof plane landscape is readible. During the postwar years, the roofs had lost their historical colour and structure which was given by the red clay tiles or tin and they are replaced by gray slate sheets. Opposite the building of16 Riga street, approximately in a band about 80 m long, the compositional expressiveness of the building construction of the street is absorbed by the existing

brick fence along areas of production area, creating monotony of forms. Here architecturally new composition solutions are possible, that could save the flow of the building construction scale and harmony. The buildings of 20 Riga street and 22 Riga street continue the character of the historic expressive structure with building roof constructions. In the distant view lines, the roof plane game of both buildings is not visible as it is covered by a group of maple trees planted in the red line zone of the street. The same is true for the viewpoints in the opposite direction of the street where maple trees are hiding the roof landscape of 16 Riga street and 18 Riga street.

By the architectural expression of the buildings being hidden behind the tree foliage, the balance and rhythm of the scale of the building construction are lost. This is true not only in the summer time but also during the rest of the season as the branches of trees without leaves are visually heavy and overpower fragility of the building facades. The nature of the branches of the trees competes with the facade elements - window shutters, door panels, wall board sidings, pitches of roof constructions providing additional shading.

The character and harmony of the roof constructions on both sides of the street in the short view lines are readable in the houses at 20, 43, 41, 39 Riga street. Between the buildings No. 43 and 45, the partially hidden household yard with wooden sheds opens the view to the river landscape.



Figure 4. The roof landscape of the old town of Bauska missing the convincing red roof tile dominance (Author's photo - 2012)

By disappearing of the building construction between the buildings at 22 Riga street and 24 Riga street, in the post-war years, at the street side 8 linden trees have been planted, the huge crowns of which have toppled to the side of the road and cover the street in the eastern part of the building construction. The scale of the trees destroys both the composition of the street building and diminishes expressiveness of the adjacent buildings (the wooden corner-jointed one-story residential building at 47 Riga street).

The interruption of the northern side of the building construction along the river every 60-80 m allows to maintain pulsation in the urban construction space between a natural base and character of the building construction. Under the influence of various spatial transformation processes, the street has a small green recreation pocket that can be supplemented by the rest functionality - cafes, hotels, crafts and art exhibition centers.

Examining the landscape space of Riga street from the Town Hall Square to the west, as a vertical dominant here must be visible the spire of Ev. Lutheran Ann's church which is marked in the town's silhouette from the right bank of the Mēmele river. The church opposite the building at 21 Riga street is not visible as it is densely covered by massive birch trees and trees of the garden of the Church. Hiding in the dense tree cover zone to the church, a strong visual expression is obtained by the historic building on the street. In this segment the cover reconstruction of Riga street has been completed, bringing in a new colorite, form and structure. In the renewal of the cover, no enclosed concrete kerbs are used, but the rubble line with a slight slope, forming a rainwater collection for the edge of the carriageway. In the segment of Riga street from Kalna street, there is no interruption of the old building construction, therefore the visual interconnection with the Mēmele river is more scarce. The gardens are huddled behind the onestorey building construction and they are not visible from the street. The access to the river is opposite the junction with Baznīcas street where a pedestrian path leads to the river floodplains, past the

courtyards with flower beds. At the junction of Riga street and Baznīcas street, alongside with disappearing of the old building construction in the 70s of the 20th century, a public building is built, which looks heavy against the fragile wooden building construction of Riga street with a romantic facade expression. At the junction of both streets, a located with a successful recreation zone is architecture small form search, stressing the philosophical "turning point" in the city's historic building construction. It is a place where different centuries, thinking and stylistic trends meet. Down Riga street along the Mēmele river, the historic building construction closes with a river meadow and the ruins of the former windmill. in the distance of which the Bauska Castle is visible. The dense tree cover on the left bank of the Mēmele river is interfering with the construction volume of the castle, opening only fragments of it for the view. Consequently, the most powerful culminating point in the view lines of the end of Riga street – the old castle with the slope of the embankment edge visually is demarcated. Cleaning river floodplain meadows and the steep castle mound from selfsown trees, the town would regain а compositionally strong architectural landscaped space.



Figure 5. Ev. Lutheran Church in Bauska. One of the most expressive dominants in the town, the volume of which is hidden by a dense overgrowth of trees (Author's photo, 2012)

Jelgava City - the old building construction and its roof landscape expression today is associated with only a small part of the historical territory of the town (80s and 90s of the 19th century) which has escaped from the war and the post-war years of devastation. They are individual fragments in the town's northwestern part along Vespilsētas, Kr. Barona and Dobeles streets. The thin old building construction has contributed to the penetration of new buildings in the historic part of the town which is particularly visible in the view lines from 68 Dobeles street. The background of the silhouette is formed by the nine - storey residential building construction of the 70s of the 20th century but the foreground of the view point – the one-storey volumes of the historical buildings with gabled roof planes and trussed gables in the end pediments. The contrast of the scale and proportions of building construction of the end of the 19th century and the post-war years, and the contrast of proportions as well as the different stylistic trends in the building construction - in the above mentioned view line form a silhouette that marks the transformation process of the urban space. The background shape of the existing high - rise residential buildings is simple and linear, and their building volumes are distanced approximately 200 m away, without competing with the foreground visible architectural character and scale of the historic buildings, the facades of which are enriched by detailed elements - tiny window panes, shutters, board siding for exterior walls, color tones, lining around of the window opening, roof constructions, etc.. Unfortunately, the old buildings have lost the red clay tiled roofs, thus reducing the expressiveness of the roof landscape. The historical building construction zone and the high - rise residential building area are separated by Lielā street of a transitional character with a regular linden plantation lines and a wide lawn. The current height of trees on Lielā street is small and their crown does not exceed the height of the historic building construction.

Gradually, by disappearing of the old buildings of the second half of the 19th century, green wedges or gardens, lawns or tree plantations have been appearing in their place in the small historical block of houses. These wedges conquer the places where due to the emergency situation the wooden building construction is dismantled (3 J. Asara street). In a few years the green areas are transformed into a new building construction zone, so breaking into the spacing of the building construction of the historical blocks of houses.

The scale expressiveness of the old urban space is most vividly readable in the junction of M. Dambja street and Dobeles street with a building structure line of approximately 60 m long for each of the four bottoms of the street. The street junction of the southeastern part is marked by a two-storey plastered wooden pillar building with a corner bay (1 M. Dambja street, 90s of the 19th century). Beside it, there is an orchard that fills in the missing continuous wooden building construction interruption near M. Dambja street. The distance to the next building along the street is 30 m and visually it creates a street space fragmentation, especially in summers when the green garden expression dominates, wrapping the old buildings in the green foliage (3M. Dambja street).

Similarly, the northeastern part of the junction has been evaluated where the piece of land (68 Dobeles street) has lost the perimetral building construction and the free area is occupied by a large quantity of trees, the foliage of which covers both the backvard and the building construction of the street. Only the one - story red brick building with a luxurious facade has survived which is decorated by a risalite of the central entrance, eight window with arc-type lintels, opening axes roof constructions and a brick cornice ledge. The adjacent street bottom is covered by a wrought granite cobbles (the end of the 19th century). For the mentioned area, a number of projects have been developed to restore the old building construction on the corner of the block of buildings (Jelgavas ...,2008).

The northwestern part of the junction (2 Dobeles road) continues the historic brick building character. Here one can find 2- and 3 - storey volumes of the former manufacturing buildings that are retracted from the building line of the street, so finding an opportunity to create a small front square in the junction zone of the streets.



Figure 6. The character of the building construction of Old Jelgava (the end of the 19th century)

The factory buildings have lost their historical significance and in the perspective it is possible to create an industrial park there. In the southwestern portion of the junction, the one - story wooden buildings are decorated with an expressive fachwerk pattern in the pediment. Between the buildings at 2 M. Dambja street and 3 Dobele road in approximately 50 m line there has disappeared the wooden building construction which has been replaced by a kitchen garden along the street. Since there are no large plantations of trees, the view lines are not covered to the building construction's silhouette of Lielā street. Behind the one - storey wooden pillar building at 3 Dobeles street, a hangar-type commercial building was built (2005), the proportion of which is too huge and it suppresses the expressiveness of the old building construction. In order to reduce the scale disproportion in the view lines, it is necessary to create a regular line of street tree plantations which will not only hide the construction volume of the supermarket but also compositionally extend the southern part of Dobele road. In the eastern part of M. Dabja street, the parallelism is created by J. Asara street in which the greatest part of the historic building construction has disappeared, in some places creating 30-60 m long interruptions. Along the pedestrian zone of the western part of J. Asara street - in an approximately 70 m long belt there are gardens, stretching from the courtyard side of the building construction of M. Dambja street. In summers, in the view lines from J. Asara street, the garden merges with the adjacent square and

together with the old block of houses forms a compositionally large green landscape space. The tree canopy height inhibits the scale of the building construction. This is also attributable to the area at 5 J. Asara street where the mentioned green zone merges with the garden on Vecpilsetas street. The existing trees are giant and in summers cover the roofs of Vecpilsetas street in the view lines from J. Asara street. The old building construction's spacing is so overwhelming that the tree and bush groups form diagonal green wedges that cross the street bottoms and compositionally split the area of the old building construction, altering the scale of the historic urban space. The transverse green areas spatially are much wider than the streets, thus disrupting the proportion of the historic structure of the building construction. The 2 - storey wooden pillar building with board sidings at 3 M. Dambja street is the last pile building which is preserved in this street. The constructive position of the building is severely damaged by the huge oaks in its both ends, the canopy of which covers the roof of the building, covering also the historical building construction at J. Asara street and the view lines to the spire of the bell tower of St. Ann's Church. The building construction has disappeared in the piece of land at 5 M. Dambja street as well and it is

covered by self - sowing trees, obscuring the building construction of the southern part of J. Asara street. The scale of the historical building construction of Old Town and its street width is best read between the buildings of 1 M. Dambja street and 3 M. Dambja street. Opposite the old building of 1 J. Asara street, a building at 2 J. Asara street has been restored, describing the width of this street so well. The romanticism of the small street is enriched by the restored carriageway and cobble cover of the sideway which are separated by a sloping edge of round cobbles rather than typical concrete borders. The line of trees in front of the buildings at 5, 7, 9 J. Asara street in the distant view lines from Lielā street hide expressiveness of the old building facades, so the trees should be sawn out, leaving only the huge willow which marks the line where once there was the city's rampart with the canal. The building at 9 J. Asara street is situated at the street junction with Kr. Barons street. After reconstruction of the street cover on Kr. Barona street, trees have been planted anew but the overgrown trees are cut down revealing expressiveness of the building construction's facade of the western part of Vecpilsetas street and romanticism of the roof landscape.



Figure 7. The context of different construction periods and architectural stylistics in the view points in Dobeles street, Jelgava (Author's photo, 2012)



Figure 8. The northeastern part of the junction of M. Dambja street and Dobeles street. The lost perimetral building construction line is occupied by a dense tree cover (Author's photo, 2012)



Figure 9. The interruption of the historical continuous building construction line disrupts the compositional character of the urban space. The scale of tree branches suppresses expressiveness of the old building construction (Author's photo, 2012)



Figure 10. In the junction of M. Dambja street and Kr. Barona street, the tree canopy exceeds the building's crest (Author's photo, 2012)



Figure 11. The brick architecture of the old manufacturing buildings adjacent to the wooden building construction on Dobeles street, Jelgava (Author's photo, 2012)



Figure 12. The color scheme of Jelgava Old Town in paintings. Watercolor by Uldis Roga (2002)

During the war, Kuldiga was guarded by the Courland front line and the post-socialism time has affected the wooden building structure very little. Consequently, the city's historic center is not characterized by long street building construction interruptions and a vanished old building construction.Panorama of Kuldiga Old Town reflects peculiarities of the natural base and illustrates semantics of the building construction, highlighting the most important in the different periods of time. Determining the protective zones of panorama or silhouette peculiar to Kuldiga is an important object of planning - an individual approach must be followed in areas that succumb to Kuldiga Old Town or due to the relief affecting the view both from it and to it. There are identified several sites that disrupt the harmony of the old town's silhouette (Jākobsone, 2012). Like in Bauska and Jelgava, one of the tasks of the historical part of Kuldiga is to report on the removal of the trees that are to be included in the

conservation and protection program of the old town (Jākobsone, 2012; Dambis, 2012).

In the silhouette of Kuldiga, the church spires play an important role. Now, they are just noticeable in fragments in some of the points of the historical part of the town as a large part of the shrine is hidden by chaotic groups of tree plantations. In the middle part of the historic center at the junction of Baznīcas -Tirgus-Strautu streets there is situated St. Trinity Roman Catholic Church. Its volume, as a dominant, forms the end of Strautu street but the elegance of the church facade and the spire of the bell tower from Strautu street is not readable as its southern side is hidden behind a dense pine group and linden trees. The shrine's altar part or the eastern side at the junction of Baznīcas-Tirgus streets is blocked by a huge canopy of deciduous trees. The northern part of the church includes the courtyard space. Thus, the shrine's architectural expression in its perimeter in the viewpoints from the pedestrian zones is not visible.



Figure 13. Kuldiga. The huge tree crowns in year 1905 street (Author's photo)

In the view lines from Pasta street, the tree canopies hide not only the eastern end of the church but also the buildings of 1 and 3 Strautu street, losing the silhouette of the flow of the building construction

from 2/4 Baznīcas street. The spire of St. Ann's Ev. Lutheran Church is visible in the distance for a moment. In the mentioned view line, by removing trees near the catholic church, the silhouette of the street building construction would reveal its expressiveness between the buildings of 2/4 Baznīcas street and 1 Baznīcas street (city council). This would give a picturesque view point with two church spires. In turn, in the view lines from the church to Strautu street, one-storey wooden buildings with mansard constructions occupy its western side. On the other side of the street there is a square where the tree height is three times higher and suppresses playfulness and expressiveness of the facades of the one-storey buildings. The small width of Strautu street and height of the trees of the square form shading of the street building construction. The large quantity of autumn leaves laying on the roofs of the old buildings damages their cover and board sidings. Density, distancing and height of tree plantations adjacent to the historical building construction are exaggerated.

Walking down Baznīcas street in the northern direction, on the odd number side between the old buildings where there are formed interruptions (4-6 m), there are created the so-called green gates that



Figure 14. Kuldiga. Continuation of the street building construction is hidden in the branches of the tree (Author's photo, 2012)

CONCLUSION

In the recovery of the historical centers, not only the restoration work of architectural monuments is important . The visual informative perception in the distant view lines is just as important .. Restoration work includes authenticity recovery not only of the street cover material, coloring and window openings but also considering the density and proportion of location of the green structure. Restoration allows to recover not only the construction volume but also the outer space around it – the recreation zone, the height of the green plantations, their dendrological peculiarities, etc.

link the pedestrian area of Baznīcas street with the square adjacent to Year 1905 street. The green gate or entrance spaces to the square between the buildings at 12 Baznīcas street and 14 Baznīcas street is highlighted by the vine cover in the ends of the building but between the buildings at 14 Baznīcas street and 18 Baznīcas street there are formed circle - shape steps that form the second green entrance gate to the square. As an accent to the entrance there serves the symmetrical position of linden trees, symbolizing the entrance gate. The third enormous - size tree at the end wall of 18 Baznīcas street is removable. It is not only competitive in terms of the scale but the tree branches damage the external wall of the building. At the junction of Baznīcas street and Kaļķu street, there St. Catherine's Ev. Lutheran Church is located. As a dominant, it belongs to the longitudinal axis of Kalku street but it is not visible because of the tree cover in the junction. From the side of Baznīcas street, the church volume is notable only in the street turning place just shortly before the front square of the church which is partially hidden by trees. The gracefulness of the church in the distant view lines is not readable.



Figure 15. The proportion game of the historical building construction and the tree crown in Kuldiga (Author's photo, 2012)

For the planning of the historic urban space, the cultural heritage is an economic value – the resources, which are wisely managed bring ensure an economic benefit. In the current economic situation and in the future, for ensuring preservation of the cultural heritage, the public - private partnership is particularly important.. For the development, which is focused on people's quality of life, a balanced and a long-term approach there is required.

A discussion on the transformation of sites of cultural heritage in order to ensure a wider public access is particularly topical in the last few years when there has been recognized the particular importance of the cultural heritage in the creation of the quality of life of people. Professionals in the field of cultural heritage are still discussing the admissibility of the transformation of cultural monuments and preservation of authenticity, so a dialogue and consultations are necessary on the solutions of the accessibility of cultural monuments, respecting all the interest groups involved.

Local authorities in particular need more information about positive solutions and the role of the cultural and historical heritage in the recovery of economics.

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