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Formation of the Landscape Thinking Under the Influence of the City-planning Ideas

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The article features the main stages of the formation of the landscape thinking. New tasks of the city-planning, global consideration of the worldwide environmental problems, depletion of the natural resources and, as a result, strife towards environmental sustainability has lead to the necessity to rethink the former approach for the transformation of the open environment. Here we see a landscape inversion. Vision of landscape architects becomes the model of city design and planning process: the cultural and natural potential of the territory represents as a base material, and park territories are the important form-building and organizing element of the city environment. The natural component is becoming determinative in the city-planning process. By the end of the XX century the professional community has formed ideology, based on the fact that the urbanized environment is the cultural landscape, part of the natural landscape and the global ecosystem and it is directly reflected in the targets of the project process: conservation of the biological diversity, philosophical understanding of the created image, artistic and ornamental expression of the material history of the city, addition of the educational components, etc.

Landscape urbanism exactly characterizes the new way of development of city-planning where the concept of the landscape supersedes the architecture as the base of modern urbanism. It emphasizes the interdisciplinary approach to environment transformation. The landscape is perceived not only like lens whereby we look at the city; it becomes a basis of modern methodology of environmental design.

Keywords: landscape, natural environment, landscape architecture, city-planning activity, sustainable development, landscape urbanism.

Point. In foreign countries landscape architecture takes active part in modeling “Man-Nature” relationship, based on harmonization and humanization of space, preservation of the ecological integrity, cultural identity and providing the spiritual needs of people. Landscape architects “heal” the damaged tissue of the city, returning nature to the urban environment, or closing problematic environmental areas by the

“natural sarcophagus”. The formation of the landscape thinking happens gradually with understanding of the general purposes of creation of the functional and comfortable environment for human life, which is associated with the development of the theory of landscape urbanism, architecture and city planning, as well as with the usage of the engineering achievements of the natural sciences, exact sciences and the humanities.

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Example. Landscape architecture becomes an independent field of activity due to the functional, social, sanitary and hygienic problems, rapidly developing industrial cities in the period of formation of the public gardens and parks, and goes through several stages of development. In 1899 F.L. Olmsted founded the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA), thereby “protecting the future of this area professionalism.”

At the first stage the landscape objects and their place in the structure of the city were determined. The new, owned by the city, but always natural and landscape, as it was considered in the middle of the XIX century, object, required different from the traditional garden art approach to the design and methods of creation. The public parks in Europe required accessibility, democracy and freedom of planning, contrary to the representativeness of the parks and gardens of the aristocracy, closed to the public (Battersea Park in London, England – arch. J. Gibson, 1867; Sefton – Park in Liverpool – arch. E. Andre, 1867). Different kind of pastime was organized in their territory, including educational leisure. In the process of design of the first U.S. public Central Park in New York City (F.L. Olmsted, C. Vaux, 1857), the authors proposed a new concept – the preservation of the intact nature area in the center of the urbanized district. Natural areas in the residential places of the United States were expropriated and used as public open green spaces. Later, the inclusion of forests in the planning of the city was used in Paris (Boulogne and the Vienna woods – Alphand, B. Deschamps and E. André, 1864). The proponents of the progressive reform movement “The Beautiful City”, popular in the North American architecture and urban planning in the 1890-1910, believed that the introduction of the green recreational spaces to the urban environment is the only way to “cure all the ailments,” improve the quality of

life and solve many social problems (Waymark, 2003). A search of the optimal ratio of the area of landscaping and the built-up area took place. The theme of recreation continued in the Project Manifesto by G. Eckbo, D. Kiley and J. Rose, published in 1939-1940 in the «Architectural Review» journal. The authors believed that the city is placed between a person and recreation, consuming his/her spare time by distance and absorbing his/her vitality. That is why rest, life, and work are concepts that should not be separate objects, but items of one unit. Therefore it is necessary to create a complete well-distributed flexible system of recreational areas, which provide all types of recreation and meet interests of all ages.

The specialized inversions of multifunctional society are developed. The ancient traditions of gathering flora and faunal forms (for example in the zoos) transform to the construction of the exhibition, scientific and commercial objects – botanical and zoological gardens and parks. The practice of landscape design includes sports, exhibitions and other parks.

The rapid acquisition of the territory into private ownership and urbanization process has led to the realization of the problem of preservation of the especially valuable natural landscapes outside the populated areas. The Yellowstone national parks and Yosemite Valley national parks were created (F.L. Olmsted, 1860-70s.). This tradition spread to the other countries. To avoid high anthropogenic tourist impact, the buffer zones, which regulated economic activity and types of recreation were designed, on the verge of the unique landscapes the “embraced” recreational infrastructure were developing. Nature protection methods are introduced to the practice of design.

The next stage in the development of the landscape architecture is associated with the proposal by F.L. Olmsted to organize a continuous

“green ray” that combines gardens, parks, parkways and recreational spaces of the city and its suburbs, which would further evolve into a single interrelated “green system” (“The Emerald Necklace” of Boston (F.L. Olmsted, 1890-s), “The Green System” in Seattle (J. C. Olmsted, 1903), in Chicago (1899)). Later, the idea of a continuous “Green System” was applied to any communication, which linked all the levels of landscapes and provided access to any categories of the recreational spaces.

At the turn of the XX century the theoretical concept of a city-garden in urban planning and design version of the settlement-gardens in the landscape architecture were developed side by side. In the landscape design, the techniques of the landscape park are extrapolated for the urban planning (Riverside Village, Illinois (F.L. Olmsted, 1868-1870s)). The hierarchy of public green public spaces, parks and green belts is established in Howard’s concept of “the Garden Cities of the Future” (1898). Presumably, one of the primary sources of E. Howard’s concept was thorough study of the Riverside Garden village suburb (Beevers, 2002). The other sources were: E. Howard’s personal experience as a pioneer farmer in Chicago in 1872-1876 based on the embodiment of the Act of Settlement of the U.S. Congress in 1862; as a resident of Chicago, restored after the fire in 1871, prior to the construction of skyscrapers known as the Garden City (Kukina, 2007, P.456). It is possible to include the industrial settlements to the combined version (the settlement for workers in G. Cadbury’s cocoa factory at Bournville on the outskirts of Birmingham, England (W. A. Harvey, 1879), the settlement for W.H. Lever’s soap workers at Port Sunlight, England (T. Mawson, 1910)) where, in the centre, a vast park was planned that served as a public green center of the settlement. The well-tested principle of the residential areas centre organization – park with the public open areas

for recreation with imposition of the traffic on the perimeter – was introduced to the design of the “superblocks” and “neighborhoods.” Under the influence of the “Garden Cities” movement the American Association for Regional Planning was established in 1923. The Association believed, that “the future of the idea of a Garden Cities is in the new elementary units in the plan of the city and the search for their optimal criteria” (Waymark, 2003, P.128).

Small urban gardens deserved special attention of the landscape architects in the period of the active search of the new ideas in architecture with the development of Art Nouveau, Art Deco, Cubism, De Stijl, functionalism, etc. Gardens become the continuation of the process for an architectural object (Garden of the Art Gallery in Wiesbaden, Germany (R. Hoppe, 1909), Charles de Noailles villa’s Garden (H. Guevrekian, 1927), Daal en Berg in Hague (J. Wils, 1920-21)).

Since the 1930-s a remarkable period of self-discovery and search of identity in the landscape architecture, according to local cultural traditions and natural conditions began in North and South Americas. In Europe and the Americas examples of the modernist public gardens have appeared.

With the development of the ideas of the Bauhaus school, which considers the building as a self-contained environment, regardless of the context and abandoning the traditional landscape maintenance, garden composition got an additional impetus for “independent” development. Now the landscape, as well as architecture, is regarded as a part of human activity: spatial, social, compositional, functional and three-dimensional environment “for life”. The landscape composition obtains functionality, which is independent from the architecture (Unagaeva, 2006). Implementation of these ideas is represented in the gardens of “the gray areas” that combine not only interior and exterior of the building, but the architecture with the



Fig.1. The square in front of the Art Museum in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, USA (landscape architecture by D. Kiley, 1998). Photo by the author

city, as well as landscape objects, which acts as connecting links between unlike objects of the urban structure (Fig. 1).

In the second half of the XX century landscape design was enriched by the investigations in the natural sciences, exact sciences and the humanities. There was an idea about the artificial environment, formed in the process of urbanization, which combines biogenic and anthropogenic components. A city was perceived as an ecological system. This fact led to the reconsideration of the methods and techniques of urban planning and organization of living space, based on the integration of architecture, landscape design and natural environment. The formation of ecological and landscape ideas takes place. Large landscape companies introduced “planning of the territory” and then “environmental planning” based on the “inclusion” of the population settlement in the structure of the natural complex and balanced habitation of all the kinds of living beings (Fig. 2).

Understanding of the necessity of the rational use of natural resources gets landscape architects to focus on the three main groups of problems: preservation of the existing natural landscapes, a wide range of problems connected with landscape transformation, creation of the “artificial” landscape on the disturbed territories. The most difficult problem is strip holding of wild intensively natural resources development – cultural and “dead” landscapes. The inability of the environment to regenerate and adverse changes in the biogeochemical cycles of the Earth lead to the environmental problems of the planetary scale. There was a direct threat to a City as a cultural ecosystem. The questions about the regeneration of land, which was previously involved in the production, creation of an expressive image of the urban environment, especially water front areas are raised. Programmes on the renovation of industrial landscapes are actualized, strategies on the transformation of the land using are worked out (Kukina, 2009; Unagaeva, 2011).



Fig.2. The water front of the Willamette River in Portland, Oregon, USA. Photo from S.M. Gerashchenko's archives

This period is characterized by the reevaluation of the materials' history: in the process of the "physical" reconstruction of the degraded spaces, the art image of the landscape objects bear the memory about historical events or phenomena.

Under the influence of the "deep ecology" philosophy a complex system "landscape" view on the solution of the settlements problems is formed. An urban landscape started to be regarded not only as an ecological system, but also as a part of the global ecosystem (Kukina, 2011). The destruction of the natural resources and the sharp decrease of the some kind of flora and fauna required new solution to the problem of their preservation. The French gardener and philosopher Jean Clement postulated and theorized the concept of "the third landscape," which was focused on the conservation of wild nature to form the "depository" of the planetary scale (Golovatyuk, 2009) (Fig. 3).

The eco-environmental approach to the urban design and planning, which is based

on reinstatement of the cultural identity and preservation of the biological one, as well as creation of the spiritual unity with the Earth at the regional level, is gradually developing. Ecosystem concepts become powerful tools that change ideology of the professionals who work in the city and require an interdisciplinary look at the complex solution of these problems. This, the mid-1990-s, led to the formulation of the new concept of Landscape Urbanism (C. Waldheim, Chicago, 1997), which is capable including to react to scale and time change (Lindholm, 2009).

The alliance of the specialists in different fields of design becomes very important: architecture, urban planning, landscape gardening, besides planning and design have united. In the process of formation of the city environment scientific and research work becomes very important.

"The Landscape Urbanism" accommodates and brings together not only professional disciplines, but also concepts with the opposite meaning: city – rural, natural – cultivated,



Fig. 3. Kubota public park in Seattle, Washington, USA (F. Kubota). Photo by the author

public–private, large-scale–small scale, reacting to the numerous changes in time and suggesting, according to J. Corner, an alternative to the rigid mechanisms of the centralized planning, that has better reaction to the original complexity of cities and objects dynamically expanding multi-layered city environment complex.

Understanding of the complexity of the processes' structure and agents in the process of the urbanization of landscapes has led to the formation of a number of objects that protect human and animal life from anthropogenic impact and natural landscapes from anthropogenic human activities: "Green Ways", "Green Corridors", and «Blue Corridors". Just the communication objects of natural and anthropogenic origin made it possible to combine the city with the protected areas according to the "natural value" of the landscape. Keeping to the zoning of the territories according to the degree of their recreational load made it possible to control and manage its development, while preserving the natural identity (Fig. 4, 5).

Landscape, as a source of information, is introduced as the unifying element for different disciplines, as well as a link between the city and the natural complex, surrounding it, thus blurring visible boundaries and uniting all the living organisms into a global ecosystem. That is why, nowadays the following rule is laid down in the foreign practice of design: the work with landscape precedes any work on urban planning. Landscape company investigates potential of the territory, makes up a plan, makes recommendations for work with the environment and later connects urban and architectural decisions at the level of landscape design.

The curriculum of the major universities in the U.S., Britain and France introduces courses based on a comprehensive interdisciplinary approach in order to solve the problems of the city-planning. Thus, the School of Design at Harvard University introduced a new Masters course, which is called "Urbanism, Landscape and Ecology." "There is an important step towards the legitimization of landscape



Fig. 4, 5. BP Pedestrian Bridge in Millennium Park in Chicago (2004). Photo by the author

urbanism in the eyes of the academic and expert community” (Bokova, 2009, p.118).

Resume. Thus, towards the end of the XX century the landscape ideas were formed. The ideas were based on the fact that the city environment – cultural landscape – part of the

natural landscape and the global ecosystem, harmoniously complemented by space-and-planning facilities of urban landscape and architectural activities that make it one single unit.

Hence we can see the wide meaning of the concept “landscape composition”. This is not

just the visible process of doing something on the territory, but also its content, idea, symbolism, hidden meaning, the material embodiment of the artistic understanding of the relationship between people's vital activity and the environment, including physical, human, cultural, social and economic aspects. This concept confirms the modern idea of the landscape architecture, which now is the foundation of the development of the vital environment, based on the achievements of science and technology. Due to the changes in the ideological, philosophical and educational perception of the landscape architecture objects, they are perceived as the objects and pieces of art and technology, what influenced the formation of the modern image of the world.

The landscape of the city "is a kind of code that fixes the "image of time" - the image that extends the human' idea of the present by connection with the past and

hopes for the future" (Lynch, 1982, p.12). It reflects the change of the historical periods in the city development, artistic and spatial parameters, material and spiritual values, the reorganization of the social structures, the intensification of anthropogenic impact on the natural system, and, well-being of the society in general. Extended knowledge about the nature of the natural world, expanded and better understanding of the values of the urban environment provide the new aspects of the study. Holistic approach and systematic vision of a city's tasks, informative and "spiritual" approach, based on the philosophy of "deep ecology" provide a comprehensive solution of the problems of the urban development, what corresponds to the landscape design ideology of the western countries. Here comes the era of the cultural rehabilitation of landscape, not only fragmentarily, but when all the space should be landscape.

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Формирование ландшафтного мышления под влиянием градостроительных воззрений

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В статье рассмотрены основные этапы формирования ландшафтного мышления. Новые задачи градостроительной деятельности, мировое внимание к глобальным экологическим проблемам, исчерпаемости природных ресурсов, и, как следствие, стремление к экологической устойчивости приводят к необходимости переосмыслить ранее выбранный подход к преобразованию открытой среды. Наблюдается ландшафтная инверсия: природная составляющая становится определяющей по отношению к градостроительному процессу. К концу XX столетия в профессиональном сообществе формируется ландшафтное мировоззрение, основанное на том, что урбанизированная среда – культурный ландшафт, часть природного ландшафта и глобальной экосистемы, что находит прямое отражение в целях проектного процесса: сохранение биологического богатства, философское осмысление создаваемого образа, художественно-декоративное выражение материальной истории города, внесение образовательной компоненты и т.п.

Ключевые слова: ландшафт, природная среда, ландшафтная архитектура, градостроительная деятельность, устойчивое развитие.
