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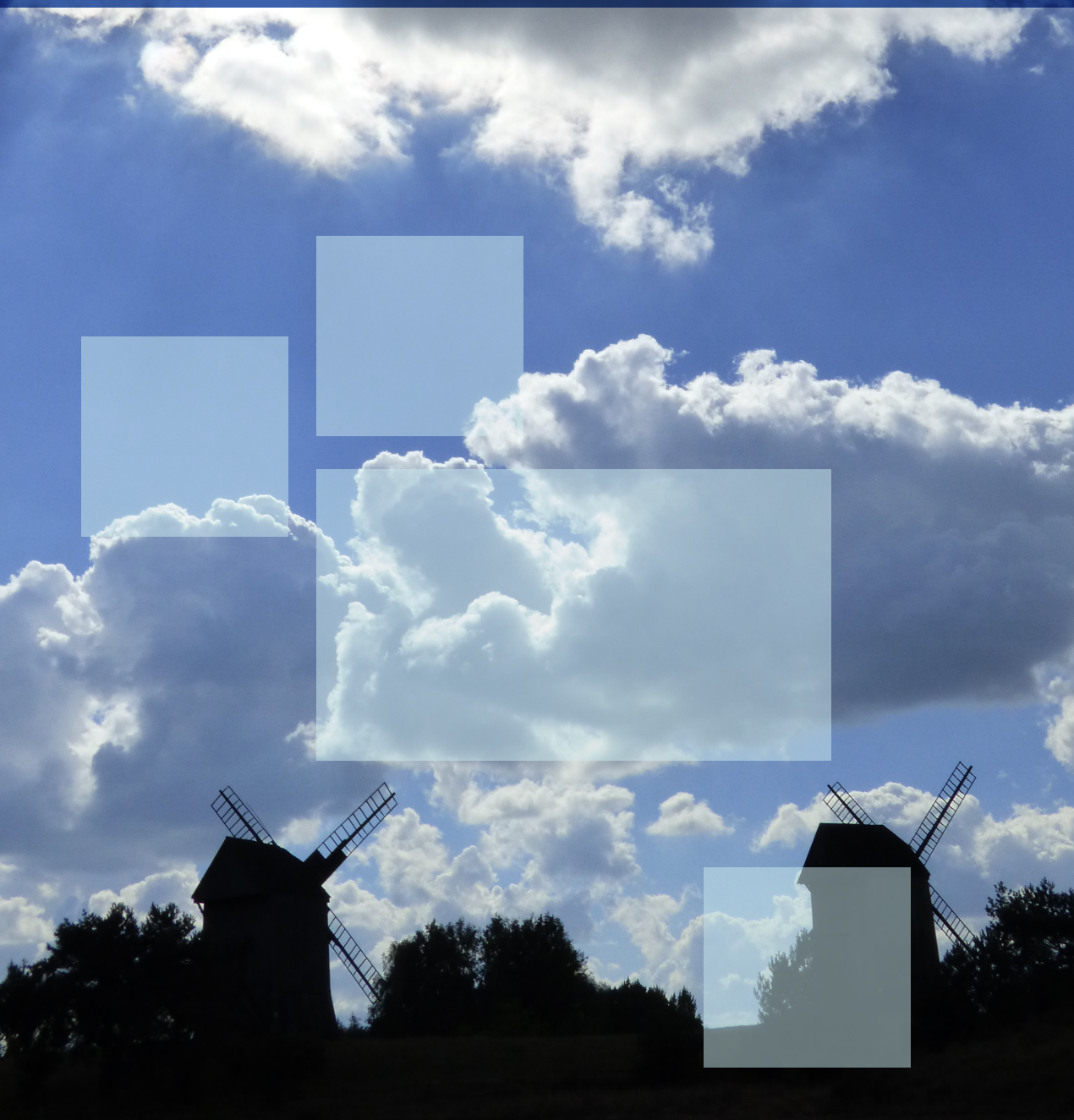

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Editorial

The present volume of the *Polish Journal of Landscape Studies* is dedicated to the memory of the late Anna Zeidler-Janiszewska (1951—2017), who was one of the founders of the journal and a member of its editorial board. Its contents are inspired by her own inquiries into ecology and deal with environmental subjects. that she was generally interested in.

Anna was a philosopher and an eminent culture scholar specialized in modernity and postmodernity. Her role in establishing and developing culture studies in Poland cannot be overstated. What is more, she definitely opted for interdisciplinary or transdisciplinary approaches and tirelessly strove to offer opportunities for exponents of different disciplines and approaches to meet as often as possible. Her way of achieving this goal was based on editing books and periodicals as well as organizing academic conferences. This is one of the reasons why she so warmly welcomed the idea of founding the *Polish Journal of Landscape Studies*

Anna was also one of the organizers of *Miastonatura. Zielona przyszłość miast?* (*Citynature: A Green Future of Cities?*), a conference that took place on April 21, 2017, and was made possible thanks to the cooperation of Instytut Badań Przestrzeni Publicznej (Public Space Research Institute) of the Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw, the Institute of Philosophy of the University of Warsaw, and the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences of the SWPS University of Humanities and Social Sciences. The main objective of the conference was to reflect upon the place and role of nature in contemporary cities.

Anna approached the issues of nature and ecology from the standpoints of aesthetics, culture studies, and—finally—culture-oriented science and technology studies. Although ecology was only one of many theoretical issues that she devoted herself to, her intellectual commitment to the field can be traced through the years. This is the reason we have decided to open the volume with three of her texts. The first one, dating back to 1992, is an attempt at defining a field where ecology (understood as reflection on human environment) and aesthetics (taken at its broadest etymological meaning, i.e., understood as the realm of sensibility) could meet in the postmodern era. Her article from 2000 is, in turn, an analysis of the topic of art raising ecological questions within the context of the ethics of responsibility. Her sudden passing put an abrupt end to her work, leaving several articles unfinished, including the paper she presented at the aforementioned conference,

Citynature, that was intended to be included in the present volume. Nevertheless, we have opted to publish it unfinished in the form of a transcription of the talk she gave at the conference, participating in the session *City—art—nature*. Anna ended her speech with a number of open questions concerning the role of gardening practices in contemporary art. As has always been characteristic for her, she thus offered us all a challenge and an incentive to proceed with our own research.

Her texts are followed by a selection of papers given by the participants of the *Citynature* conference. Anna divided ecological practices into "grey" ones that she identified with technological solutions remediating the ecological crisis and "green" ones such as creating natural parks or protecting endangered species. The latter are analyzed by Maciej Luniak, who refers to his study of the natural resources of one of the city parks in Warsaw. Other green and grey practices are described by other authors. Tanya Whitehouse discusses a controversial case of a post-industrial park, whereas Beata J. Gawryszewska presents the changes that city greenery has recently been subject to and that are rooted in a new manner of imagining gardens. Going further, Magdalena Matysek-Imielińska and Ryszard Nakonieczny offer insight into the history of Polish green space design and management. The topic of public vs private spaces is pivotal for Johannes Müller-Salo, who claims that we need an aesthetic consensus—just as we need an ethical one—when city spaces are being designed.

We believe that the issues of environment, aesthetics, and ethics, which formed the axis of Anna Zeidler-Janiszewska's thought, have to be discussed in various contexts—theoretical, practical, as well as historical—since we have to thoroughly understand them if we want to have a green future in cities and elsewhere. And it seems that even though it may sound utopian, if we want to have a future at all, it has to be green.

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Aesthetics and ecology in the post-modern perspective †

Anna Zeidler-Janiszewska

Abstract

The analysis sets out from the exhibition entitled *Ressource Kunst. Die Elemente Neu Gesehen*. The author attempts to outline an area which emerges from the encounter of ecology (as a domain of reflection about the human surroundings) and aesthetics (as a discipline concerned with sensory experience) from the standpoint of post-modernism. The inquiry thus focuses on the moment in which contemporary artistic practices "internalize" ecological issues. Aesthetics becomes a branch of ecology, but at the same time ecology becomes a domain within aesthetics. According to the author, post-modernism has offered advantageous perspectives for pursuing ecological postulations.

Key words

Aesthetics, art, ecology, post-modernism

In 1989, Berlin (still West Berlin at the time) saw an extensive international exhibition (or rather a network of events) initiated by the city's Senate: *Ressource Kunst—die Elemente neu gesehen* (Jappe 1989). On the cover flap of the book under the same title, which documented that political-artistic undertaking (supplemented with critical texts and brief pre-history of the "new seeing"), one reads that until recently the eponymous term had been largely associated with the material and energetic resources of nature, which appeared to be "gushing gifts of life," gifts that were inexhaustible and therefore widely and freely exploited. Today the notion is accompanied by ecological awareness determined by the *principle of responsibility*. According to the organizers, the tenet is implemented in art by a new generation of artists who, on the one hand, go beyond the confines of the paradigm of optimistic (progressive) modernity and, on the other, transcend "land art," "arte povera," or the experiments of Joseph Beuys. As it turns out, in contemporary times there is

† The original version of this text appeared as "Estetyka i ekologia w perspektywie postmodernistycznej," in *Estetyka a ekologia[Aesthetics and Ecology]*, edited by K. Wilkoszewska, Kraków: Uniwersytet Jagielloński 1992, 81—88.

"an urgent need" to seek alternative locations, find materials which neither suffer nor cause harm, look for devices which provoke no injury, "means of approaching objects" instead of the erstwhile methods of "taking them in possession". In other words, considerable portions of today's artistic practice cease to be merely an illustration of ecological issues but, in a manner of their own, *internalize* it.

In this approach, aesthetics becomes a fragment of ecology or—depending on how the scope of the notions is "trimmed"—ecology becomes a component of aesthetics. The conclusion may appear far-fetched, yet it suggested itself in the context of the exhibition and the critical deliberations which accompanied it, as well as in the cases of numerous similar initiatives in Germany, the Netherlands, and other European countries.

It needs to be added that the exhibition in question was very much governed by the spirit of pluralism with respect to forms of expression: lectures and presentations concerned with the "pre-history" of the issue co-existed with new projects in the domain of autonomous art and diverse events, stagings, etc., which integrated various "extra-artistic" context. Likewise, diversified roles were assigned to the audience—the participants of the entire undertaking.

One of the more significant elements which determined the novelty of how ecological issues were addressed by artists, critics, and theorists contributing to *Ressource Kunst*, is that they abandoned certain traditional notions of contexts of art, departing from the division between "the artificial" and "the natural," that is, from the typical Enlightenment critical juxtaposition of good nature and evil, destructive culture (the scientific-technological domain of human experience in particular).[1]

The new "ecological-aesthetic" thought forgoes both the myth of victorious technology, so characteristic of the Enlightenment paradigm, and the opposing myth of good, "true" (profound) nature, which became marred over the centuries (a concept embedded in the self-critical myth of modernity). In fact, all oppositions of the kind are done away with. The issue I outline here boils down to an attempt to delineate the area that emerges in the encounter of ecology (meaning the domain of reflection on human surroundings) with aesthetics (as a domain concerned etymologically and in the broadest sense with sensations) in light of a current which is fairly universally referred to as "post-modernity" or "post-modernism." (Frederic Jameson (1991) terms it "cultural dominant", whereas Charles Newman (1985) would probably call it an "aura") The very name is not devoted particular attention here: thousands of pages written on that topic preclude the introduction of a relatively stable definition—even less is devoted to its elucidation, which would undoubtedly require a separate, extensive volume. For the purposes of these deliberations, I employ the term "post-modernity" which is perhaps not the most felicitous a label

1 The myths which traditionally molded such an understanding of ecology and aesthetics are discussed by Krystyna Wilkoszewska (1992).

for this new type of thinking. It arises from the critique of post-Enlightenment culture ("modernity") and aspires toward a positive conceptualization of the "signs of the times." It aims at determining the directions in which varied cultural practices develop in civilizationally advanced societies.

The statement cited at the outset, which provided a kind of ideological framework for the *Ressource Kunst* initiative, characterizes only one past current—the theme of the victorious conquest of nature by humans convinced of their boundless capabilities. As we know, a parallel critical current emerged in the bosom of modernity, for which the names of Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Theodor W. Adorno—quoted by Hans-Robert Jauss in a slightly different context—establish a symbolic frame.

The development of science, which gained positive appraisal in modern epistemological thought and its associated anthropology, becomes something akin to "negative ecology" when assessed by the critical current of modernity. The hubris of the subject who humanizes their surroundings is seen here as a kind of injury or harm inflicted upon nature. And although the "harm" was variedly described in different philosophical concepts which made up the current of the modern critique of culture, an important "therapeutic" role tended to be assigned to art or (more broadly) to the domain of aesthetic experience. It was art that would be capable of working towards future "liberation" of the inner and exterior nature of the human. This is how it was envisioned by, for instance, Max Weber, one of the most eminent representatives of the critical discourse of modernity, as he described the "iron cage" in which we were to be trapped—as he prophesied—as a result of increased "upward rationalization" (scientific-technological-bureaucratic) against the potential for spontaneity inherent in erotic and aesthetic experience. Weber's views in that respect bear astonishing similarity to ideas propagated completely independently by the Surrealist movement.

The theme of "harmed nature" construed in the Weberian spirit enhanced by psychoanalysis is elaborated by Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno in their *Dialectic of Enlightenment*. They consider Odysseus, the prototype of the later victorious subject of modernity, the first malefactor to harm nature: both the external one, which he successfully outsmarts, and the inner one, which becomes evident in authoritarian societies. The negative impact of the process of civilization in the context of "harmed nature" is not only analyzed in *Dialectic of Enlightenment* but also in the later writings of both authors, such as *Eclipse of Reason*, *Negative Dialectics*, and numerous critical essays. And, while later Horkheimer turned for succor to the sphere of religious experience, Adorno remained faithful to art, which in its contemporary form of "dried up, tearless weeping" (Adorno 1991, 252) may still preserve something "natural." "This opening up relies on a kind of *anamnesis*—a return to the original sources, that is to the primeval magic (symbiotic contact between human and nature, whose remnants can be traced in mimesis) […] [however] […] mimetic thought is merely on the horizon of Adorno's vision:

the enlightenment of Enlightenment by a notion transcending the notional sphere proves to be no more than a nostalgic project. In *Minima Moralia,* one reads that it is unattainable and whether it can be implemented or not is really without consequence. What counts, however, is a constant overcoming of the *status quo* as one strives for the magical *mimesis*" (Morawski 1992, 98—100). Stefan Morawski, whose interpretation is quoted here, draws attention to the similarities and differences linking (and dividing) Adorno's and Ernst Bloch's conceptions. The latter was most likely more optimistic when (in *Prinzip Hoffnung*) he anticipated rapprochement with the creative hearth of the natural world which, combined with transformation of the thing-in-itself into thing-for-itself, will make the world a home for everyone.[2]

The utopian horizon of "reconciliation with nature" in the spirit of renewed "settling in" may be found in another tradition of thought—namely, in hermeneutic tradition (also decidedly critical of Enlightenment and post-Enlightenment modernity). I am thinking in particular about the Heideggerian vision of the "magical square" which, once the history of "forgottenness of being" (metaphysics) is through, inspires and renews past "thinking." (Heidegger, 1971) It is also present in art, especially in poetry, a domain to which intimate contact with "being" is sometimes accessible. In one of his essays, Heidegger quotes Rilke's letter, where the poet observes that "even for our grandparents a 'house,' a 'well,' a familiar tower, their very clothes, their coat: were infinitely more, infinitely more intimate; almost everything a vessel in which they found the human and added to the store of the human. Now, from America, empty indifferent things are pouring across, sham things, dummy life …A house, in the American sense, an American apple or a grapevine over there, has nothing in common with the house, the fruit, the grape into which went the hopes and reflections of our forefathers" (Rilke 1948, 374—375; see Heidegger 2001).[3] Only poetry, as "becoming and happening of truth" can still "let being speak and arise," as we read in the famed essay *The Origin of the Work of Art* (Heidegger 2002, 16).

The utopian horizon which to a greater or lesser extent is tangible in the concepts cited here, conveys visions of reconciliation with nature structured along nostalgic lines. The past (highly idealized) became a kind of paradise lost. In this sense, the "ecological-aesthetic" project in those conceptions belongs to the sphere of "grand narratives"—as Lyotard (1984) puts it—that were intrinsic to modernity. This happens even if—fortuitously—one is clearly aware that the grand narratives can survive only in tiny shards, in fragments, in the nebulous form of "micrology," to use Adorno's words.

The new philosophical thought identified with post-modernity presumes that *oikos* will no longer be the erstwhile cosmos, nor any lasting structure in which humans could feel permanently safe. On the contrary—it is in constant motion

2 On that issue, see Czajka (1991).

3 I discussed these questions more comprehensively in Zeidler-Janiszewska (1988).

due to the nomadic status of the subject, their "migration," being in-between various partial contexts of action.

The post-modern subject lives in pluralized culture and projects that pluralism—as a principle—into themselves. As Welsch, one of the foremost proponents of the post-modern worldview (however odd that may sound) claims, life in the post-modern condition is a life in the plural—both externally and internally, meaning both living in various social and cultural contexts and living which, in its fashion and method, can course through and constellate many projects of that kind (Welsch 1992, 87).[4] At the same time, that subject—versed in the critical discourse of modernity—is deprived of stable underpinning: they are rather a weak subject (according to Gianni Vattimo (1991)) who, paradoxically, tries to turn the weakness of which they are conscious and their limitations into strength. The subject must be equipped with particular sensibility, the capacity for sensing otherness and—in their own way—accepting it. Lyotard (1984) states that they are characterized by "agility and flexibility," which precisely means a special set of *aesthetic* skills "trained" in twentieth-century art in particular. Today, we have to be able to move about in the world as we have done for years (successfully, in a way) in the realm of simultaneously pluralized and individualized artistic practice. For this reason, art and aesthetics broadly understood become, in a sense, *paradigmatic* domains of contemporary experience. They encompass the entirety of human surroundings, the human home in the broadest sense, which after all is a province of ecology. As noted on many occasions by e.g. Jean-François Lyotard and Wolfgang Welsch, as well as Zygmunt Bauman, who describes post-modernity somewhat from the outside, the post-modern subject bears sole responsibility for the outcomes of their action; they are aware that they will not be exonerated by God, Nature, or any other transcendental norms.

The new art exhibited at *Ressource Kunst* grows out from that particular awareness; it does not catechize nor persuade, knowing it has no right to do so. It only demonstrates how one can individually "handle" all that which becomes human environment, how to engage in a sensory, emotional, and intellectual dialogue with it, how to treat surroundings as a partner rather than an object of manipulation, how—in other words—ecological ethics and politics *become aesthetics* in specific artistic or para-artistic activities. What is more, artists encourage others to do likewise by exposing the very attitude of sensibility towards the environment of each human being; they show how the world in which we live can be aesthetically problematized, whereby "aesthetically" means at the same time responsibly and therefore ethically. In contrast to grand narratives, which purported to take responsibility for the entirety of the future world and the shape of human happiness, the

4 See also his final observations on the status of the subject of contemporary culture in Welsch (1987).

contemporary subject associates the project of successful life with the concrete—with the here and now.

If this is how we construe the fundamental goals of the new, post-modern thinking, it becomes easy to demonstrate the essential difference with regard to previous tradition (cited here only fragmentarily) and—respectively—the difference between two possible cultural situations that those two modes of thinking seek to describe. The analysis of the post-Enlightenment model of scientific-technological progress and human ascendancy (a subject that is imperious, conquering, and self-assured) as well as alternative traditions (Dewey's pragmatism) provided substrate for the conviction that "we live in times, in which we *no longer* intensely experience the shrunken natural environment, or fine arts that are detached from life and, *as yet*, do not experience our everyday surroundings abundantly and fully" (Wilkoszewska 1990, 76). Post-modernist thinking and the associated artistic practice (which only partially encompasses that which artists and critics call "post-modernism" in architecture, visual arts, music, and literature)[5] brings us closer to the horizon which, in the above quote, follows "as yet."

Initiatives such as the one with which my deliberations started seem to demonstrate that the new thinking (defined at once as post-modernist and aesthetic) establishes a promising perspective as far as realization of ecological postulations is concerned. In his work devoted to that very thinking, Welsch (1991, 218) asserts that "our present and the expected future will be determined by two major directions: post-modernity and ecological demands. I believe that a juncture where these two directions coincide is viable. We know today that the entire human activity—from the designs of grand politics to family life, and from our communication systems to elusive, momentary sensations—is concurrent with that diagnosis. The age of transition in which we live is a time of remodeling in all domains."

Thus, art and aesthetics would have a pioneering role to play, which is a greatly optimistic notion given the unceasing laments of those who deplore the collapse, crisis, or even decline of both.

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5 Lyotard and, for instance, Welsch would qualify a substantial part of post-modern practices (e.g., those conceptualized by Jencks or Oliva) as belonging—at most—to the post-modernist "surface."

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"Green" and "grey" ecologies as a notional context of contemporary artistic practices†

Anna Zeidler-Janiszewska

Abstract

The author highlights the need for the societies to become aware of the ecologically motivated ethics of responsibility. She discusses the division of ecological practices into "green" (e.g. establishments of reserves, protection of endangered species) and "grey" ones, which have been analyzed by P. Virilio, who defined them as "no longer an ecology of substance, but an […] ecology of the shrinking world." According to the author, ecologically committed art contributes to propagating responsible attitudes, by drawing for instance on the tradition of avant-garde commitment. It is manifested in all currents which expose the dangers of the advancing technology and look for means of overcoming such threats (grey ecology).

Key words

Art, ecology, environment, technology

When in the late eighteenth century Count Buffon was writing his *Histoire Naturelle*, he was convinced that primeval nature which had not been transformed by the human hand is utterly unworthy of attention. He believed it to be a "barren and miserable" land which mirrored the reflections of mortality. On the other hand, he saw vigor and charm in nature that was civilized, ordered, and reshaped by the human. Such an opposition, in particular the value attached by Buffon to each component, is astonishing today. As Wolf Lepenies (1996) explains, the French

† The original version of the text appeared as „Ekologia „zielona" i ekologia „szara" jako światopoglądowy kontekst współczesnych praktyk artystyczny," in *I Orońskie konfrontacje. Kosmos—ekologia—sztuka*. Orońsko: Centrum Rzeźby w Orońsku 2000, 87—90.

naturalist drew on the classical theology of the physical world, in which the power of creation and destruction rested solely with God. Francis Bacon's agenda, perpetuated by René Descartes in *Treatise on Method*, which inspired human conquest of nature and its subjugation, could in this context be implemented without concern for the destructive impact of ever more readily undertaken transformations.

However, as nature became historicized in the nineteenth century, people grew aware of the dangers involved in unchecked exploitation. Today, when so much is said about "limits to growth" (which regrettablystill fails to be reflected in policies and in the ordinary, everyday actions of people), when various "green" ecology movements nostalgically refer to the utopia of nature, one obviously protects and finds charm, even sublimity, in those areas which Buffon thought "barren and miserable," a visible sign of the world's transience. We are now inclined to associate mortality with our own actions, and yet we often continue these actions against the increasingly widespread critique of the anthropocentric view of the world—that is to say, we continue to pollute and destroy our environment, formerly "pure" and primeval nature. It has also undermined our certainty of our own culture-dependent condition (which became a "second nature").

In *Das Unbehagen der Kultur*, Sigmund Freud pointed to the ambivalences inherent in the practical implementation (in accordance with the Baconian-Cartesian program) of the omnipotence and omniscience which had once been attributed to God. As Freud wrote, "man has become a god by means of artificial limbs, so to speak, quite magnificent when equipped with all his accessory organs; but they do not grow on him and they still give him trouble at times" (1994, 23). He also added that despite making themselves resemble God, humans today do not feel happy and are tormented by fears. Almost at the same time, Ernst Bloch, an extraordinary philosopher (little known in Poland, though) was gravely concerned with the "anxiety of the engineer" (and the scholar) who saw the materiality of the world (the foundation of experience so far) slip at an increasing pace through their fingers. In those days, perhaps only the futurists were apt to believe that taming the natural around us and within ourselves would bring humanity nothing but happiness.

Freud and Bloch considered the positive and negative aftermath of the "technologization" of human experience, a process they observed as it was happening. Today, we are even more vehement than they were in stressing the disadvantages of striving for "omnipotence and omniscience," both with respect to the environment and the human being, while seeing anthropocentrism—noble though its intentions may have been—as a manifestation of excessive pride and disregard for outcomes in near and remote environments as well as on future generations. Still, the critique does not mean a return to the classical theology of the physical world; there is no need for grand moves in the notional domain ("metaphysical" ones) to

be able to accept ecological values (in the broad sense, drawing on Greek sources) as superior.

In a variety of fields, contemporary ecology reckons the losses and designs various conservation strategies, which in the "green" dimension include establishment of nature reserves, supporting threatened animal and plant species, elimination of pollutants in the environment, etc. A number of such undertakings is associated with efforts to improve quality of life—a value much highlighted in consumption-based societies.

The domain of ecology is not determined solely by suitable policies (applied to macro-, mezo- and microenvironments) and the practices they provide for. It is also a sphere of individual commitment—small steps taken every day. Art can and does enter into each of these areas, from sweeping programs to initiatives aiming to save several trees on a particular street in a city.

Before I discuss the forms of art's commitment to ecology, I should elucidate a number of more general issues. We usually see ecology in conjunction with politics, while it would also be worthwhile to put more stress on its ethical aspect, as it very much tallies with the ethics of responsibility, previously advanced by Max Horkheimer and extensively elaborated today by Hans Jonas, Karl-Otto Apel, or Dieter Bimbacher. The responsibility in question encompasses not only one's loved ones, but distant fellow human beings as well—those whose faces we do not know, who not only live far away but also have not yet been born. Thus, ecologically committed art indirectly contributes to propagating responsible attitudes, and perhaps this is what its foremost task consists in today and in the future. In so doing, it opposes the egotistical and narcissistic proclivities of the consumerist system (which, as already observed, does display ambivalent traits, in that by emphasizing quality of life it empowers ecological movements which operate beyond consumerist ideology). Moreover, art punctures the pride-filled balloon of the anthropocentric image of the world.

Another question is the diversity of worldview-related premises behind ecological movements and their purely hybrid nature, which in general involves drawing on various cultural traditions. Bio- and eco-centric "deep" ecology are the most active movements today, along with assertions which rely on a more rationalized ethical argumentation. However, when one examines texts written by representatives of "deep" ecology in greater detail, it becomes evident that they often employ the same myth of "untainted" nature and the human who is integrally bound to it (clearly, a nostalgic myth), which the critics of early modern industrialization resorted to as well. Meanwhile, Jean-Jacques Rousseau is simultaneously relevant and obsolete. His thought is relevant as far as preserving the memory of the sources (often mythologized) is at stake, yet it is no longer applicable because (which needs to be explicitly stated) no return will ever succeed. We are too profoundly steeped in our "second nature," though even this one has to be protected

due to the expansion of the "third nature." Freud and Bloch never anticipated the actual scale of the developments they had predicted. With the emergence of virtual worlds and advances in communication technologies (which tend to be treated as technologies of pseudo-communication), as well as genetics, plastic surgery, etc., and the rapidly quickening pace of life and experience, we move about in a world which is far more artificial than the realm of "second nature," and thus we drift even further away from primeval nature.

Jean Baudrillard, a philosopher and sociologist who likes to conceive bleak scenarios for the future, has little faith in the possibility of protecting the first and the second nature alike. "Certainly, this whole panoply of survival issues - dieting, ecology, saving the sequoias, seals or the human race - tends to prove that we are very much alive (just as all imaginary fairy-tales tend to prove that the real world is very real)," he states, adding that "we have subtly passed over into a state where life is excessively easy" (Baudrillard 1988, 42—43).

Paul Virilio (1989) also warns against the easiness with which "the entire world comes home" while we succumb to the dangerous phase of "new [physical] settlement" combined with new (mediatic) nomadism. However, the originator of the aesthetics of disappearance suggests certain strategies with which it could be overcome. "The Greens, the green movement is in my view a precursor to another, grey ecology: no longer an ecology of substance, but an ecology of distances, ecology of the shrinking world," he states in one of his numerously published interviews (Virilio 1993, 61). Thus, he confronts the *thaumatological* attitude, in which speed, appearance, and disappearance are treated as a kind of miracle, with the *dramaturgical* approach, which insistently highlights the negative aspect of increasing speed, the failures, the disasters, and the dangers of uncontrollable progress. When the burden of real experience vanishes, when it is replaced by a TV or computer screen, one needs to think about building rescue rafts—an immobilizing system to prevent ominous scenarios from coming true. When practicing "grey" ecology, we should think and act like the group of nineteenth century engineers who, on their own initiative, met in Brussels to counteractcollision risks owing to the spread of railways throughout Europe. Threats have to be identified promptly and equally promptly responded to, as speeds today surpass the capacities with which the human had been naturally equipped, causing atrophy of the sense of reality and dematerialization of experience (felt already by Bloch's protagonist) on a much greater scale than thinkers in the first half of the twentieth century could have imagined. Will our future indeed consist in being disabled entities composed of artificial limbs, in Freud's vein? Baudrillard goes as far as referring to "plastic surgery for the whole human species," because "the only physical beauty is created by plastic surgery, the only urban beauty by landscape surgery, the only opinion by opinion poll surgery"(Baudrillard 1988, 32), we find ourselves in a situation of anthropological

uncertainty we have brought on ourselves and which the author of *Fatal Strategies* compares to transsexuality.

The fact that we are "connected to machines" compels us to address yet again the questions which Descartes sought to answer in *Treatise on Method*. The implants we grow so accustomed to make us realize that the faculties which set us apart as a species—thinking and feeling—have come under threat. This is how, according to pessimists, the modern understanding of ascendancy over external and internal nature comes to an end.

The diagnosis is obviously exaggerated, but it suffices insofar as it inoculates us with adequate doses of anxiety and urges us to act in the domain of "grey" ecology.

Personally, I am of the opinion that in fact we do not live solely in the world of "second" or "third" nature, but in multiple worlds which generate various types of experience ("old" and "new" ones). The hybridization we yield to in the process need not be immediately ascribed negative value. The point is to devise such rules of transitioning between these worlds and types of experience that 'that their specificity is neither compromised nor eliminated'. And when new regions reveal their seductive power and take us under their sway completely, one needs strategies to protect the experience of the old type, without which the anthropological condition is made seriously vulnerable indeed.

Thus outlined, the broad context of "green" and "grey" ecology associated with the ethics of responsibility creates a vast scope for art and runs, as it were, athwart its previous divisions and qualifications. It is in that very context that we find the extension of avant-garde commitment, though it is no longer treated in a universalist and unconditional manner (as in some of the early avant-gardes). Moreover, by virtue of coupling "green" and "grey" ecology, pro-ecological artistic practices comprise not only the creative actions described in *Kunstforum* (1999) or certain domestic practices in the domain of "land art," or (especially as regards Poland) "arte povera" (definitely less spectacular than land art), or site-specific art (functioning in opposition to Marc Augé's non-places), but also the works of Orlan or Bill Viola, for instance. In short, these artistic practices may result in projects in which artists analyze the perils of technical and technological development, both for the environment and our own condition (which are correlated, after all), and in projects showing ways to overcome such threats. The employed conventions and artistic techniques may vary (the most interesting are perhaps those that use new technologies to demonstrate the destructive aspects of that very same technology). I would not hesitate (in an overly pompous manner, perhaps) to reiterate a view already expressed here—namely, that it is in broadly understood pro-ecological art that I see the principal *raison d'être* of the present-day and future-oriented commitment of art, which at the same time draws on the most eminent ideological traditions of the avant-garde (yet without their limitations and one-sidedness).

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Some remarks on *plant art* †

Anna Zeidler-Janiszewska

Abstract

The author analyzes artistic practices associated with the natural world, "from land art to garden art". In an overview of historical currents in art (since the 1960s), plant art is highlighted as an instrument of critique of land art, and a self-standing current which, among other things, addresses social issues and ecological threats. The author also analyzes specific examples of garden-related artistic practices within the cityscape, considering the criteria under which certain projects can be seen as successful (models to emulate). The text concludes with open-ended questions about the place of plant art in present-day critical discourses, i.e. with respect to landscape architecture, bioart, and technonature.

Key words

Art, aesthetics, environment, nature

I am interested in a certain trend noticeable in art practices involving components of the natural world: plants, animals, and minerals and the manner in which they are tackled by critics, theorists, and researchers of contemporary art.

For the majority of artists and a number of art critics, "land art," the American current of the late 1960s (shown for the first time in German galleries in 1969), provided both a positive and a negative frame of reference. The very fact that it addressed our relationships with nature was the positive element, whereas the fashion in which the issue was manifested became a negative reference point for later artistic practices.

What were the shortcomings of land art, which had already been alleged in the 1970s when it was juxtaposed with "plant art"—the art of the garden and planting with all its connotations? First, it exhibited excessively spectacular grandeur which required substantial financing; second, few viewers were to see those works; third, land art drew on wild nature, on the archetypal vision of relationships with nature, while any discussion about the pieces focused in fact on the material which

† This is a transcription of the talk held by the author at the conference *Miastonatura. Zielona przyszłość miast?* [*Citynature. The Green Future of Cities?*] held at the Warsaw Academy of Fine Aarts on April 21, 2017; transcription prepared by Magdalena Gimbut and edited by Monika Weychert-Waluszko.

documented it. Most of the land art oeuvre was interpreted in the categories of the sublime, just as Edmund Burke construed it: in opposition to beauty. Wild nature was supposed to afford sublime feelings, which did not necessarily apply to the documents to which viewers had access. In another, romantic approach, beauty was in a sense equated with nature. Two journals published in English propagated the current: *Artforum* and, to a lesser degree, *October*. A conceptualization advanced by the American critic Rosalind Krauss contended that works of earth art problematize the notion of landscape through sculpture in the expanded field of art. Theoretical reflection also took advantage of the category of the picturesque and, at times, beauty in the romantic understanding (e.g., in Christo's work). At any rate, the discourse revolved around those aesthetic categories.

Simultaneously, the practice was parodied in a variety of ways, and restricting audience access was immediately criticized as well. Then, with the plant art trend already developed, some of the more modest artistic projects carried out when land art was at its peak (i.e., the 1970s and the 1980s) began to be reconstructed. The reconstructions preferred to draw on artists from the fringe, who did not treat nature as a sinister creative force which compelled answers to fundamental questions of existence and metaphysics but rather as something under threat—something that requires our solicitude, an almost defenseless entity in fact. The aesthetic categories changed as well. Critics associated with that "modest" current emphasized that it is not about beauty, sublimity, or a combination of both, but rather a pursuit of other values that do not necessarily belong to the aesthetic-artistic realm. While the first current developed in the United States and Great Britain, the latter became widespread in countries such as the Netherlands or Germany, being conceptualized in, for instance, *Kunstforum* (1999a, 1999b). Two issues of the periodical, published under the joint theme of "the artist as a gardener," were exclusively dedicated to the matter. Besides incisive critique of land art, they offered more: the second volume contained an anthology of garden projects with various examples showing a new direction of action, resting on premises relating to LTGs (limits to growth), ecological threats, etc. Although certain continuity may be seen between the discourses of earth art and those of garden art, they involve thoroughly distinct forms of action. The aforementioned issue of *Kunstforum* provides very detailed analyses of plant art works which were found to have been exceptionally successful.

What examples are these?

One of them is Jenny Holzer's *Black Garden* (1994, Nordhorn, Germany). The artist worked at a dilapidated memorial to the fallen in the Franco-Prussian War, and subsequently soldiers killed in the two world wars, which represented an unwanted area of little concern. Following a commission from the municipal authorities and consultations with the inhabitants (the records may be found at the site, and have been provided to some extent in relevant articles), it was changed into a unique

garden, as most of the plants there had a blackish hue or bloomed black. Black tulip bulbs were ordered from the Netherlands, though it needs to be noted that tulips—growers will know—change color over time, so every three or four years new ones had to be planted in order to maintain the original tone. Various other plants, almost all of them black, were ordered as well, including an apple tree from California which bears black fruit. The tree is situated in the center, being a kind of tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Besides complex horticultural arrangements, the benches placed in the garden were an important element in the project as well. They are just like the benches at the Centre for Contemporary Art in Warsaw, which Jenny Holzer left there having completed her Warsaw project and which she places in many other locations. The features are crafted from local stone and bear anti-war inscriptions in English and German. In any case, apart from the garden complex which occupies a fair amount of space in the center of the town, other research paradigms also come into play. *Black Garden* is an interesting object for those who study forms of commemoration; it is featured in books concerned with the anti-monument genre and offers a functioning example of collaborative art, because local inhabitants have to take care of it, preserve its colors, etc. This is one of the more extensively discussed examples of garden art.

Another example is the project entitled *Flood*, the work of the American Haha collective (1992—1995). As part of the Culture in Action festival in Chicago, the group designed a garden within a building—a hydroponic one—which was a rare feat in the 1990s. Apparently, only one horticultural company in the entire United States offered trainings teaching people how to establish and tend to such a garden while also supplying the necessary equipment. Showing how such a garden works—relying on water without even a grain of soil—was only one among many other goals. The garden was cultivated collectively as, next to artists, the locals became actively involved in vegetable growing. Another significant element was the fact that those suffering from AIDS could not eat plants grown in soil, as in their case the transfer of compounds from the latter into their food proved potentially harmful. Thus, the superior objective was to familiarize people with the disease and to provide a constant supply of vegetables to affected persons in the neighborhood and beyond. Furthermore, those involved had to learn how to work in such a garden. There were many volunteers, and later every borough in Chicago was said to have a hydroponic garden. At the same time, it was a venue for talks, discussions, a library of resources, etc. Consequently, just as in the previous case, the garden became a center of many activities and discourses.

Mark Dion's vivaria also supply an example of plant art, such as the *Neukom Vivarium* (2006) in the Olympic Sculpture Park in Seattle: an old decomposing tree, plus bacteria, plus adequate temperature, plus resources which describe processes of decay in nature. *Vivarium* chiefly serves educational purposes, being a visually attractive structure at the same time. Further example may be found in Park

Fiktion in St. Pauli, a quarter of Hamburg, which became widely known thanks to, among others, *documenta* in Kassel.[1] This is also a reclaimed area, revitalized through the efforts of the inhabitants. One could say that it represents an anti-gentrification project—a continually re-established community composed of immigrants and the underprivileged of Hamburg. Park Fiktion endures, people become involved in its cultivation and the events taking place there, as well as their documentation and education. Just as the previous gardens, this one is also mentioned in tourist guides.

I would argue that projects which win fairly broad recognition, are considered exceptionally successful, and continue to exist, always accomplish a range of additional goals. Thus, in order to obtain a complete picture of *Black Garden* in Nordhorn one must use the language of botany and act as a practitioner of botany and gardening, while at the same time employing terms related to art in public space and forms of commemoration—that is, one must apply notions from the domain of memory studies as well as those associated with collaborative art. In fact, I have not found a single instance, especially in the second issue of the *Kunstforum* compilation, which pertains solely to the cultivation of nature.

A theoretical account of these interwoven tendencies is provided by Brigitte Franzen, author of *The Fourth Nature: Gardens in Contemporary Art* (2000), who analyzes numerous examples demonstrating how various discourses overlap. She poses questions that remain unanswered, and I hope to some degree that she leaves them open-ended: what actually distinguishes such garden art from landscape architecture? Another query is how Ken Goldberg's and Joseph Santarromana's *Telegarden* (1995—2004) should be classified in terms of plant art? In this now defunct project, users were given special access to an actual garden in that they could remotely (online) control a robot to plant plants, water them daily, and even prune them. People from around the world participated in the garden by visiting a website and logging in; a plant could be planted after 100 clicks or so (every user was afterwards entitled to three plants only). A forum of exchange and discussion was available as well. Theorists stated that the garden gathered a transnational community. The project itself may be seen as an outcome of combining technology, nature, and culture; hence, it may be understood in terms of technonature, a notion that had already begun to function at the time. The question is whether such an undertaking belongs to a distinct current, perhaps bioart, or whether it may be classified as gardening in the first, broader sense—namely, as plant art. All these questions remain to be answered.

1 See http://park-fiction.net/.

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Wildlife in urban parks—why sustain it?

Maciej Luniak
(Museum and Institute of Zoology, Polish Academy of Sciences)

Abstract

The author argues that it is not possible, especially in an urbanized landscape, to trace any clear dividing lines between natural structures and processes and those caused by the human. Simplifying things to the extreme, we assume that "wildlife" includes those organisms which live permanently (or are capable of living) in a given area without any deliberate human assistance. Arguments for sustaining "wild life" in city parks are many, deriving from humanitarian, ecological, social, or economic considerations. The author acquaints the reader with research conducted as part of the project *Nature of the Skaryszewski Park*. The diagnosis relating to that Warsaw park enabled the formulation of a range of recommendations whose application would protect and foster living nature in city parks.

Key words:
natural environment, sustainability, urban landscape, wild life

1. Nature and wildlife

Put in simple terms, "nature" generally denotes a complex of relatively natural (in human-transformed conditions) elements of the ecosystem—a local arrangement of co-dependencies of the biotope (climate, hydrological profile, geology, soil, etc.) and living organisms ("microbes," fungi, plants, and animals), in other words the biocœnosis, including human influence. Recently, the term "wildlife" has seen increasing use. In simple terms it describes "animate nature," although various "microbes" in the biocœnosis are generally excluded from its scope, being treated rather as a component of the environment in which wildlife is found.

The universal canon of the functioning of animate nature, even the most depleted (e.g., in urban conditions), is the cycle and flow of matter and associated energy between three levels of livingelements of ecosystems—(1) producers of organic matter, (2) its consumers, and (3) decomposers:

(1) Producers—plants (and algae), by means of photosynthesis (water + CO_2 + other inorganic compounds + solar energy), create organic matter—that is, various types of plant tissue (e.g., foliage, wood, fruit). In part, said matter, in dead form (e.g., fallen leaves), transitions directlyto the level of decomposers (3), and partially toconsumers (2).

(2) Consumers—animals in the multi-tiered food chain (herbivores, predators, scavengers) process it into their own living tissue, feces, as well as partially contribute to fragmentation and decomposition. Dead organic matter from levels (1) and (2) passes to level (3)

(3) Decomposers—various groups of invertebrates, fungi, "microbes," living for the most part in the soil and its proximate horizons, which disintegrate and decompose it into mineral components. At this point the loop of matter circulation closes. In its mineralized form, it is yet again absorbed by plants (1), for which it constitutes an indispensable prerequisite of existence (unless it is replaced by fertilizer).

These are the fundamental principles according to which animate nature functions; respecting (or negating) them, for instance in urban greenery, is decisive for the sustenance or degradation of wildlife. In the arrangement and management of city parks, one generally notices (either eliminating or tolerating) the existence of wildlife components belonging to level (1) of the aforementioned cycle—in other words, the "wild" flora—since it is the most noticeable and fits in with traditional gardening practices. The consumers (2), or presence of "wild" animals, as well as the level of decomposers which "feed" plants (3)—mainly the abundant wildlife of the soil—are largely ignored despite being an important element in a park's ecosystem.

It is not possible, especially in an urbanized landscape, to trace clear dividing lines between natural structures and processes and human influence. Simplifying things substantially, we presume that "wildlife" consists of those organisms (most often entire populations or plant communities) which permanently—for many generations or seasons of their existence—endure (or are capable of living) in a given area without deliberate human assistance. Therefore, the introduced and cultivated greenery is not a part of a park's "wildlife" (though it co-creates its environment). However, a planted tree, existing "on its own" gradually enters the structure of the park and functions as part of its natural life. Peacocks kept uncaged at a park or flightless swans do not belong to the latter either (or belong only to a lesserdegree), given that they would not be able to survive without human help. On the other hand, the squirrels, though they may take advantage of being fed by park-goers, are a part of the wildlife as they are capable of living independently.

2. Example from a centrally located urban park

City parks have generally been infrequently studied in terms of their natural life; in most cases, inventories of their flora were made (tree stands in particular) for gardening purposes. Park wildlife is known chiefly from studies of birds or, to a lesser extent, investigations into "natural" plant life. Other components of the flora (e.g., fungi and mosses) and fauna (Luniak 1983; Sikorski 2013; Zimny 2005) are seldom investigated.

The first comprehensive description of natural life in an urban park in Poland was obtained thanks to studies conducted in 2014—2015 in Warsaw, as part of the project entitled *Przyroda Parku Skaryszewskiego* (*Nature of the Skaryszewski Park*) (Luniak 2014 and 2016; Luniak and Romanowski 2016) in which some 40 scientists were involved on a voluntary basis. The area is an example of large (50 ha), frequently visited (ca. 20,000 people during the May weekend, including 600 visitors with dogs) park in the middle of the city, offering various recreational opportunities. Its environmental conditions—that is, old tree stand, bodies of water, fertile soil—as well as manner in which it is managed are beneficial to wildlife. Investigations carried out in the project spanned the sociological background and inanimate natural circumstances, such as local climate, hydro-geological conditions, water and soil quality, penetration of urban noise, as well as—quite extensively—its animate nature.

It was established that Park Skaryszewski provides habitat to approximately 1,000 species of wildlife in the three groups of multicellular living organisms: fungi (including lichens), plants, and animals. The figure does not reflect the actual number of species, because the field research lasted a relatively short time (1—2 seasons) and thus did not encompass many species-abundant groups of invertebrates, such as arachnids, insects and other arthropods, or nematodes. On the other hand, researchers identified several dozens of exotic trees and shrubs which had been planted there; these are not characterized by wildlife provenance but with time have been assimilated into the local ecosystem. It may therefore be assumed that the biodiversity of the park, as far as the abundance of species and their varieties is concerned, considerably exceeds the 1,000 figure and represents at least 10 (or in excess thereof) percent of the wildlife species composition in the entire city of Warsaw (Luniak 2008).

The level of biodiversity in Skaryszewski Park is indicated the number of species or larger taxonomic groups (taxons) observed in the course of the study (Luniak 2016, Luniak and Romanowski 2016):

— macrofungi—over 130 species, soil microfungi—well over 77 species, lichens—45 species (+ 4 species of lichenized fungi);
— land flora—26 moss species, "wild" herbaceous plants—94 species, and 162 (in 1996) species and varieties of shrubs and trees;

— aquatic flora comprises at least 40 species and groups of vascular plants and algae;
— aquatic invertebrates—at least 75 species and larger taxonomic groups, including 15 species of snails, and 6 species (each) of bivalves and leeches;
— soil fauna—only three of its numerous taxonomic groups were studied; researchers identified over 20 species of saprophytes, whose number ranged depending on the environment from 13,000 to 45,000 specimens per m^2, springtails—31 (11,000—28,000/m^2), and earthworms—5 species (on average ca. 150 specimens/m^2);
— land invertebrates, studied considerably below their full range, with snails—15 species, spiders—43, dragonflies—23, ladybirds—26, diurnal butterflies—24, ants—11, bumblebees and cuckoo bumblebees—7, and in all likelihood several dozen species of wild bees.
— vertebrates: fish—12—16 species, amphibians—4 species and 1 hybrid form, reptiles—1 species, birds—54 regularly encountered species (including 37 breeding species, amounting to ca. 300 pairs), mammals—ca. 20 species (including 5 or more species of bats).

The particular value of wildlife in the park lies in the presence of rare and protected species of flora and fauna, with over 60 species from national lists of protected species and a similar figure of species from national and global lists of threatened species, not to mention many rarely encountered in the city and the region. For instance, among macrofungi there were 2 nationally protected species and 19 from the national and international Red List. As for soil microfungi, one species had not been previously reported in Poland, and another had been encountered only once before. Also, researchers determined the presence of 3 species of lichenthatare seldom found in Warsaw. As for herbaceous plants, the park boasts a wealth of meadow (48 species) and forest (55 species) communities. Aquatic invertebrates include three protected species of bivalves and one protected snail species. In the category of land fauna, 8 of the identified spider species had not been hitherto reported in Warsaw; 6 of the discovered snail species are enumerated in the world Red List, one species of dragonfly is mentioned in the national and European lists of protected species, and there were 4 species of ladybirds which are considered rare in Poland. The assortment of birds includes 50 species from the national list of protected species and 5 species from Annex 1 to the EU Birds Directive. The breeding presence of two Polish species of nightingales (thrush and common nightingale) is a particular rarity and attraction as far as the city of Warsaw is concerned; it is also the only park in the city center area where they can be found.

Detailed findings from the above studies were presented in the monograph by Jerzy Romanowski (2016).

3. Why wildlife should be sustained

Protection/promotion of wildlife in city parks is substantiated with the following arguments:

— the humanitarian argument (universal human aspect)—counteracting the crisis of biodiversity, which represents a global challenge to contemporary civilization. It is our (personal and community-wide) moral obligation (also towards future generations), expressed in laws and regulations, be it local, national, orinternational. Nature is the foundation of humanity's existence and our partner on Earth, which is why we should respect and foster it in our surroundings. Urban greenery creates a singular opportunity for promoting wildlife, as it is not subject to any productivity regime (associated with agriculture, forestry, or game hunting), which means that it enjoys greater "liberty." The argument can be supported with the example of Skaryszewski Park, a site of rich biodiversity and a sanctuary for rare and protected species.

— the ecological argumentrelates again (see above) to the conservation of biodiversity and sustenance of abundant wildlife, though it is manifested in practical care for the quality of the environment in the city where one lives. Among other things, this involves improvement of local climate, restoration of proper oxygen and CO_2 balance (a negative one in urban areas), absorption of chemical contamination by plants, as well as reduction of pollution with particulate matter (a particularly topical issue) and noise. In terms of natural life, more abundant and more valuable urban greenery (old tree stands) performs this ecological role much better than other solutions. For an eloquent example, one could cite an excerpt from an interview with the eminent dendrologist Professor Jacek Borowski (Warsaw University of Life Science): "a 60-year-old pine produces an annual volume of oxygen that is consumed by three persons. A healthy, 10-metre high broad leaf produces 120 kg of oxygen, while average human requirement is 176 kg. This means that two small trees supply the needs of any single person" (Aksamit 2017).

— the social argument consists in the growing demand among city inhabitants for recreation in friendly contact with nature. This regularity is observed in countries with advanced standards of living (Jakubowski 2017). Another trend noted there (as well as in Poland) is increased social involvement in protection of nature within cities. In Warsaw, this is reflected both in surveys (Cieszewska, Lachowska, Szumacher 2016) and widespread public protests against degradation of nature in parks—that is, the recent response to the manner in which the Krasiński Gardens were to be revitalized (in 2013). Care for the natural assets of urban parks is tantamount to meeting social needs in that respect. A lawn in the form of a "flower meadow," with butterflies and bees, finds increasing approval compared with a meticulously tended "carpet," while a run-down oak with

multiple hollows that has been saved from felling is preferred to a row of newly planted Japanese cherry trees, which will never reach even a half of the oak's age nor its monumental magnificence.

— the economic argument—a nature- (wildlife-) friendly park is cheaper to maintain. More numerous interventions which "oppose" natural structures and processes by, for instance, eliminating natural plant life, felling old trees, intensive lawn maintenance, raking litter, shoring and paving banks of bodies of water with concrete all result in increased costs and lower durability of adopted solutions.

4. Major recommendations

Provided below there are a number of briefly formulated recommendations which might serve to protect/shape living nature (wildlife) in city parks. Their practical implementation should obviously take the requirement of recreational and historical (if applicable) function of a park into account.

1. At the stage of park design, areas intended for greenery should be the most valuable in environmental terms and ensure ecological continuity with neighboring green areas; designs should be consulted with experts in the field of natural life, whose specialties are broader than the knowledge of landscape architects and gardening practitioners.
2. While arranging or revitalizing a park, one should minimize the destruction of existing natural assets, conserve—as much as possible—the continuity of wildlife, soil, and native plants in a given area. Old trees are a particularly important element of that continuity. One should ensure richness of vegetation, with a diverse species composition adjusted to the habitat and structure (in terms of age and layers). It would be beneficial to shield the area from the neighborhood's urban traffic with a belt of high and dense shrubs (hedges). Furthermore, one should also foster the presence and growth of indigenous plants, adapted to local natural conditions, as they are cheaper to maintain and serve the fauna better. Zones of utilization should be defined with some forethought; for instance, areas where crowds and noise are likely to be present should be situated on the edges of the park. Also, special zones (sanctuaries) should be established to mitigate the conflict between intense use of the park and its natural function as well as to enable nature-related educational activities. Bodies of water and watercourses enrich the natural life of a park, and therefore they should be surrounded with natural littoral flora and have easy access to and egress from water for land animals. Moreover, one should provide breeding or nesting boxes for birds, bats, and squirrels, watering sites/drinkers, shelters for hedgehogs, insect hotels, rafts/landings for aquatic fowl, as well as arrange and protect sites

within bodies of water where fish and amphibians may proliferate. Threats to fauna should be minimized: birds collide with transparent or mirror-like glass surfaces. Unsecured lighting (dissipated to the sides) wreaks havoc on populations of nocturnal insects, causing thermal shock or exhaustion. Pest control measures should not be used with respect to moles, as they are an important part of wildlife and contribute to soil fertility. The structure of the fences should allow amphibians and small mammals (hedgehogs) to pass through without leading them into routes of urban traffic. Zones that are accessible/inaccessible to dogs have to be demarcated as well.

3. Finally, in the course of maintenance and utilization, one should minimize practices which deplete vegetation (e.g., adjusting mowing frequency and height), removal of the remains of natural plant life—fallen leaves and litter, as well as withered branches and tree trunks. Chemical agents should be avoided when fertilizing or protecting plants and controlling oppressive insects (e.g., mosquitoes); park alleys should not be salted in winter nor rat poison laid out. The environment of parks, usually over-dry, should be well irrigated. While performing gardening procedures, care should be taken not to harm the fauna—that is, avoid damaging or destroying bird nests containing eggs or young specimens, killing invertebratesor amphibians while mowing, or contaminating the area with chemical agents. Furthermore, discarded or submerged fishing lines (as well as cords, cables, and soft nets) in which animals become tangled (as they use them to line their nests or burrows) should be removed, while animals should not be disturbed in their breeding sites and sanctuaries. Trees and shrubs should not be pruned or cut during birds' breeding season (April—August). Stoppages in water supply to bodies of water and watercourses should be minimalized, as such shortages havean adverse effect on their biocœnoses; in particular, ponds must not be cleaned while amphibians are breeding. Unreasonable feeding of animals—birds and fish—should be minimized as well, so as not to draw large numbers of aquatic fowl, corvids, city pigeons, or rats, not to mention general pollution, especially for bodies of water in the park. It is crucial, however, to provide a watering (and bathing) site for the animals with easy and safe access that accommodates various animal groups (insects, birds, small mammals, and amphibians). Knowledge concerning natural life should be propagated too in order to acquaint visitors coming to the park (and staff performing variousworks there) with its nature, to establish friendly attitudes, and to facilitate its protection. Lastly, the park should be kept free of cats.

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From blight to beauty: the controversial creation of the first U.S. industrial-heritage park

Tanya Whitehouse
(Riverland Community College)

Abstract

This paper describes and assesses Richard Haag's controversial campaign to create Seattle's Gas Works Park. Haag's plan is significant in the history of environmental aesthetics, because it was the first to preserve remnants of industrial heritage in a United States city park, and because Haag appealed to aesthetics when making his case. I argue Haag's campaign was persuasive, and I claim the former gas works now function within the park in much the same way as the ruins of parks of previous centuries. And because the structures are now ruins, they do not sanctify the destructive function they used to have. Finally, I claim that human intervention in abandoned, derelict, or post-industrial sites can be worthwhile if it successfully conveys a change in use or function of those sites, thus bringing beauty out of blight.

Key words

environmental aesthetics, Gas Works Park, post-industrial landscape, ruins

Gas Works Park in Seattle, Washington is one of the most influential United States parks of the last 100 years. It combines the remnants of rusting gas-works ruins with green spaces (designed in part to alleviate toxic damage) and a view of downtown Seattle along with its' iconic Space Needle. The former gas plant operated at the edge of the city's Lake Union. After it closed and city officials decided to convert the site to a park, they eventually handed the project to renowned landscape architect Richard Haag. Haag's design was unusual in that it proposed preserving some of the gas-works structures, including its prominent cracking towers.

The park stimulated an international conversation about design and reclamation that continues to this day, and it has served as a model for other major urban

projects.[1] Haag won widespread acclaim for his work.[2] Much has been said about the fine example the park sets in attempting to rehabilitate an environmentally damaged location. But I wish to focus on Haag's aesthetic inspirations. When he surveyed the damaged gas-plant site, Haag became attracted to the ruins of the plant and directed a series of public arguments to the city of Seattle in which he claimed that the structures had aesthetic value and should be preserved. As Haag later recollected, "Gas Works Park is my magnum opus. It was a game-changer. Before that, industrial ruins were considered to be ugly… I began to see the ruins as ghostly groves that lent scale and gave a sense of place. I decided I'd go down to the wire to save those towers. It was very controversial" (Easton 2015). He has pointed out that for some people, it still is. Though the structures are beloved by many who celebrate Haag's imagination, other critics have been puzzled or disgusted by them and think they should be replaced with more conventionally attractive, "park-like" plants and landscaping.

Haag's campaign marks a significant development in the history of environmental aesthetics, because it was the first major campaign to protect and preserve remnants of industrial heritage in a United States city park. It also demonstrated, in a public forum, that industrial ruins can be regarded as aesthetic objects and can valuably contribute to park design. Judgments about the park plan are similarly important, for they mark the conflicted reactions such a plan may cause. As Haag notes, the park design was controversial. The conflict is reflected in the title of a local article: "Gas plant towers: Since when has junk been pretty?" (Welch 1972). The plans for this park, and responses to them, reveal normative assumptions about what a park should be and the kind of aesthetic appeal it should have.

In this paper, I will explain how this famous park came to be and provide some context for the debate its design prompted, drawing on newspaper articles in which the controversy unfolded. I will assess two of Haag's accomplishments: (1) the comparison Haag drew between artistic and architectural objects and the gas works structures, and (2) his encouragement of certain uses of these structures in the

1 The Gas Works Park Partial Bibliography compiled by Richard Haag Associates notes "it is the first park honoring industrial preservation" (Richard Haag Associates 2016). In an interview with the American Society of Landscape Architects, Thaïsa Way says: "[Gas Works Park] changed the way we saw our toxic urban sites. Before Gas Works, we took toxic soil and dumped it into some poor neighborhood's landfill. After Gas Works Park, we decided we had to deal with it on site. We had to keep the memory of previous historical decisions in the landscape, such as industry, even if we may not love that history. That opened up the door to the way we deal with cities today. The way we think about cities and infrastructure today is a legacy of Gas Works. It's critically important, even internationally" (Interview with ThaïsaWay, n.d.). She writes, "it inspired projects across the nation and around the globe, from the work of Julie Bargman in Vintondale, Pennsylvania, to the work of Peter and Annelise Latz at Duisborg Nord, Germany" (Way 2015, 147—148)—though Arthur Lubow reports Latz has said he was unaware of Gas Works Park when working on Landschaftspark Duisborg-Nord (Lubow 2004).

2 In its description of Way's book, the University of Washington Press notes "Gas Works Park is studied in every survey of twentieth-century landscape architecture as a modern work that challenged the tenets of modernism by engaging a toxic site and celebrating an industrial past" (University of Washington Press, n.d.).

proposed park. Then (3) I briefly consider our concept, "park," and the assumptions about parks that became apparent during the conversations in Seattle, as well as how we should re-purpose abandoned, derelict, or post-industrial sites, such as the former gas plant. I claim that the gas-works structures do lend themselves to aesthetic interest (a fact that may be obscured by their original functions), as Haag argued, and the ideas underlying the design of Gas Works Park actually belong within a long-established tradition of park design. I also explain how the park has avoided becoming a monument to the pollution it once caused. Then I claim that human intervention in abandoned, derelict, or post-industrial sites can be worthwhile if it successfully conveys a change in use or function of those sites and brings beauty out of blight, as one of Seattle's residents said. Haag's Gas Works Park is a good example of this approach.

Crucial to all of these claims is the fact that the park contains industrial *ruins*, and these ruins, like many others, evince aesthetic reflection, lend themselves to new uses, and have been popular features of our parks and designed landscapes. Because the structures are now ruins, not active gas works, they do not sanctify the destructive function they used to have.

1. The gas works plant

The gas works looming aside Lake Union were the first of their kind built west of the Mississippi; their remnants are the last still standing in the United States (Way 2013). The plant was built on a pocket of land along Lake Union that Native Americans considered sacred and Frederick Law Olmsted had admired for its park potential. During their working heyday producing gas for Seattle, the plant's towers jutted starkly above a site growing toxic and filthy, and as Paul Dorpat (2006) describes, "during the plant's coal years, its emissions applied a rose-colored filter to Wallingford sunsets." It closed in 1956, when new technologies rendered it obsolete. At that time, city officials determined it should be converted to parkland. Craig Campbell writes that after its closure, it became "a ghostly reminder of an earlier era which has attracted scores of artists, photographers, and others who found the 'ruins' visually exciting… To most other people, however, the gas plant is merely an ugly eyesore" (Campbell 1973, 340).

Gas Works Park in Seattle
Photo by the author

2. Plans for the gas works site: "a sacred core of iron structures and strong landform"[3]

In interviews, Haag has described being drawn to the towers of the plant, as other residents of the city apparently were.[4] He said he fell in love with the future park area and became determined to preserve at least some of the structures. Writers stress the aesthetic interest the structures held for him. For example, Randy Hester says "familiarity with the site led him to discover a sculptural beauty in the despised black pipes and towers. Haag recalls that the guardian spirit [the *genius loci*] of the place told him to leave the plant's ruins and build the park around them" (Hester 1983, 19—20). The University of Washington's research archive records that Haag's inspirations "literally came to him in a dream" and notes "he decided the structures should be saved—not for historical purposes, but rather, for purely aesthetic reasons, to provide an interesting visual anchor for the park design".[5]Arthur Lubow (2004; emphasis added) writes "Haag appreciated the *aesthetic merits* of buildings that most observers dismissed as useless fossils." Haag told Michael Richard: "I haunted the buildings and let the spirit of the place enjoin me. I began seeing what I liked, then I liked what I saw—new eyes for old. Permanent oil slicks became plain without croppings of concrete, industrial middens were drumlins, the towers were ferro-forests and the brooding presence became the most sacred of symbols. I accepted these gifts, and decided to absolve the community's vindictive feel towards the gas plant" (Richard 1983, 15).

At the very start of the 1970s, when Richard Haag Associates was commissioned to design the park, Haag asked philosophy professor Frederick Adrian Siegler to accompany him to the gas works (as Haag noted, "I had a philosopher on my team"(Raymond 2008). Having climbed one of the towers and surveyed the landscape, Siegler enthusiastically endorsed Haag's ideas and encouraged Haag to invite visitors to tour the area. Haag recalls: "the philosopher told me that there was no way that I could take plans of this place down to City Hall and convince anyone that there was some worth, some value in these totemic iron structures, you know. And he was so right on. He said you should develop [an office on the site]" (Raymond 2008).

Haag cleaned up the on-site blacksmith shop and began using it as an office, a first step in re-purposing or changing the use of the existing structures. As Haag said, "we used that building as a demonstration of how you could take the sow's

3 A term included in Haag's Master Plan and quoted in Campbell (1973, 342).

4 As Way describes, "Haag saw the dramatic site for the first time by rowboat on an autumn night and was immediately drawn to the somber black towers of the gas plant, set on the promontory surrounded by water on three sides and the Olympic Mountains visible in the far distance" (Way 2015, 150).

5 Seehttps://web.archive.org/web/20051130053512/http://www.washington.edu/research/showcase/1958a.html.

Gas Works Park in Seattle
Photo by the author

ear and convert it to a silk purse, if you will" (Raymond 2008)[6]. He himself stayed in the future park, moving around it, sleeping in some of the structures in his sleeping-bag. Over the next two years, he also worked on persuading city officials and members of the public to see what he saw in the gas works.

He set to work making the case for retention of the industrial ruins, encouraging the city to develop "new eyes for old." As Campbell puts it, "a tremendous public relations job had to be done to sell the concept of a park built around a trademark consisting of industrial relics which were generally considered 'eyesores,' even though their nature would be transformed by the treatment and activities of the area around them. In a very real sense, the plan envisioned 'recycling' of discarded and unusable industrial junk into something new and enjoyable—a metamorphosis of a unique order" (Campbell 1973, 342).

Haag gave presentations at public meetings and conducted tours for visitors to the site. Some of his supporters provided sketches of the future park. Writing in *TheSeattle Times*, Polly Lane (1971) reported that he intended for visitors to be "wooed by the magic of the huge, obsolete structures" and noted "Haag prefers to think of the area as a pleasure center rather than a park because the word park often brings to mind something he prefers this park not to be."

6 Glen Carter describes it as set "amid the bewildering array of iron" (1971).

Haag also began drawing parallels between the structures and other artistic and architectural objects. Lane reports "Haag said the existing towers provide exciting sculpture without having to commission sculptors" (1971). He characterized the towers as "Iron Gothic" and compared objects at the gas-plant site with the 1970 Osaka Expo Pavilion as well as the works of such artists as Rube Goldberg, Jean Tinguely, and Mark Rothko.[7] Thaïsa Way says Haag had been planning this strategy over several years: "to present the structures and the site not merely as industrial artifacts or historical objects but as works of modern abstract art, a new type of art." (2015, 156)[8]

According to Campbell, Laurie Olin's sketches envision "rampant fun among the ruins" (1973, 342). In those sketches, reproduced at the end of Campbell's article, Olin writes, "think of this as an armature for the imagination… The functions are almost unlimited," and "we must cultivate the sense to leave things around—the right things and then not holler when they are put to new uses" (1973, 342). Campbell notes Haag's ideas for the remaining towers demonstrate "they were suitable for many new functions" (1973, 342). Likewise, Way writes, "[Victor] Steinbrueck, just as he had done for Pike Place Market, published sketches of how the park might be experienced as children and adults came to play within and on the towers, the machines, and in the landscape" (Way 2015, 159).

Haag encouraged all sorts of activities in the proposed park space. Olin's sketches included renderings of multiple uses of the park, with the towers presiding over the recreation. Way says Haag "was claiming that one could imagine anything

7 As Campbell (1973, 342) writes, "during his presentations Haag used a cleverly arranged series of slides, which alternated shots of modern sculpture (Tinguely, Smith, etc.) and architecture (Osaka Expo '70 structures) with shots taken of structures at the Gas Plant. The parallels were obvious, the humor was not lacking, and the point was conveyed. Most viewers understood immediately that much of what is accepted as 'art' today is no more appealing, visually, than the honest, weathered, 'iron gothic' Gas Plant structures."

8 Way describes aspects of Haag's persuasion campaign as follows: (Haag and photographer Mary Randlett photographed the site.) "This documentation gave Haag ammunition for a … strategy, which he had been building over the past decade: to present the structures and the site not merely as industrial artifacts or historical objects, but as works of modern abstract art, a new type of art. Laurie Olin and Victor Steinbrueck sketched the site, suggesting new uses for and new ways of seeing the landscape and its history. Their drawings would be shared with public audiences as rough ideas for the site's possible development. Haag could also use the dramatic photographs to present the gasworks site to audiences not as a place of waste but as a new form of art. Haag elaborated on the potential of merging this artistic character with technological awe to create a new type of public space. He compared photographs of architectural structures with modern sculptures, abstract paintings, and modern art. He suggested that the 'generator towers offer a testimony to "Rube Goldberg" engineering and at the same time an "Iron Gothic" sculptural experience'… He compared the colors and textures of oil slicks to the works of Mark Rothko, the tower structures to the sculptures of Jean Tinguely. Slowly, the community began to consider how these ugly artifacts might be seen differently. They began to imagine not a toxic wasteland but a curated exhibit of modern sculpture and landscape. This significant reenvisioning of landscape came on the heels of a reappraisal of urban renewal and the emergence of the environmental movement… public meetings and presentations were critical to Haag's strategy for the park … through multiple small meetings, he slowly opened the imaginations of residents, encouraging them to think of new ways of using the site" (Way 2015, 156, 158).

Gas Works Park in Seattle
Photo by the author

in this park, as long as preserving the industrial past and its artifacts was part of the plan" (Way 2015, 155).[9]

Seattle's residents and city officials had much to say about these ideas for their new park. Many of their observations are recorded in articles and letters to the editor in *The Seattle Times*. We can clearly discern their assumptions about the aesthetic value of industrial structures as well as what a park should be in the controversy that ensued. Campbell argues that landscape architecture seldom

9 Way sees Haag's efforts as less collaborative than other writers have; she thinks Haag acted as an artist himself, persuading others of his own viewpoint, rather than soliciting and accepting their input: "first and foremost Haag's intention was to coax the public into seeing the potential of rethinking the possibilities of the site, essentially asking the public to develop new eyes for old.… However Haag's suggestion was not merely any new eyes or views or ideas about the park, but rather the strength of his eyes, view and ideas. Haag's process of persuasion was not one that invited community participation per se, as Randy Hester and others have claimed. Rather, Haag retained a foundational belief in the role of the landscape architect as the primary artist and designer. The intent of his public outreach was to persuade concerned individuals and groups that his design concept met the shared goal of a beautiful public park on the stunning location of the gas works location, but in a new language of post-industrial ruins. He did not design in response to the community, but rather he convinced them of the power of his design. And this design was based in the belief that the retention of the rusted industrial structures would be an asset, an artistic contribution to Seattle, and would serve to shape a new kind of urban public park" (Way 2013, 32—33).

encountered such problems.[10] He says Haag's project is one that "*did* generate a full-blown, emotionally debated, front-page controversy centered on the philosophy of design governing a park master plan" (Campbell 1973, 339). Haag had fallen under the sway of the site's ruins, and was determined to create a new, imaginative park setting. But many people felt, and still feel, that industrial objects are not aesthetic objects, and that parks should offer the traditionally attractive and restful combinations of plants, views, and experiences of unspoiled nature (so far as that is possible) they have long provided. As Campbell points out, "a culture preconditioned to experience beauty only in the familiar—trees, grass, water, mountains, etc.—reacted with scorn and anger to the suggestion of hidden beauty in the rusted industrial forms already categorized and stored away in their subconscious as 'ugly'" (1973, 342).

In addition to being dismissed as ugly, the industrial ruins of the plant were called "grotesque," "monstrosities," and, often, "eyesores"; in a letter to the editor, W.H.H. (1971) pronounces: "let that confused minority who profess to see art in the structures go gaze raptly at an oil refinery." Neil L. Allen (1972) wrote the plant "was built for utilitarian purposes without any effort to make it beautiful" and would be a "memorial to all the rampant damage man has been inflicting upon his environment." Lindalee Edwards (1972), granddaughter of Myrtle Edwards, claimed Haag wanted to "fill the 20-acre site with many things unworthy of any park." (The city had intended to name the park after Myrtle Edwards, but this was eventually changed, as her family did not approve of the plan.) In one article, Haag muses over the possibility of burying the structures, leaving them to be discovered in some later decade by future archaeologists (Collins 1971). Letter writer W.H.H. suggested this was a better idea than the park plan on offer (W.H.H. 1971). Other observers saw no reason to preserve remnants of a plant that had belched toxins into the neighborhood for fifty years. Why remind the city of the price it paid for its gas production? This, they felt, would be like celebrating pollution and technological folly. Ned M. Thorne (1972) said "I can see a small-scale model of the gas plant, depicting it in its day of production, as a historical education museum exhibit, but a full-size gas tower left over as a park monument is not significant from a historical point of view, and it certainly is not a thing of beauty." According to Haag, a mayoral candidate promised the city he would raze the structures straightaway if elected to office (Raymond 2008). Even the editorial board

10 Campbell (1973, 339) claims "landscape architecture as a profession has been notably free of the sort of aesthetic controversies and debates afflicting other fields such as architecture, painting, and music; and the reasons, I suspect, are manifestly simple. The allied arts have passed through continual transitions of style and philosophy during the past century.… Landscape architecture, by contrast, has evolved new details, most notably in the design of children's play areas, but has not passed through any genuine transitions in the philosophy of design. The same critical questions which have always posed themselves in site design are equally valid and current: 'Does the design respect the nature of the site? Does it respect the nature, wishes, and needs of the client and/or public? Does it possess aesthetic and functional integrity?' And since plant material in general possesses universal appeal, there has rarely been a controversy involving landscape architects which challenges their concept of beauty. After all, everybody loves a tree, right?"

of *The Seattle Times* disagreed with Haag's plan, and argued "the decision-makers must choose a design concept that meets the test of public acceptance. Relatively few citizens would find retention of the so-called 'industrial sculptures' to their liking" (Seattle Times 1971).

But Haag did have supporters, including parks superintendent Hans A. Thompson and park board chairman Calhoun Dickinson, who said the towers "reminded him of an 'Emile Zola novel' with its depiction of an 'oppressive, industrial atmosphere'" (Way 2015, 153—154). Val Varney (1971) reported Dickinson claimed the remnants "are heavy, metal sculptures that reflect an era. Once the park is complete people will see something in the towers." Gerald R. Anderson (1971) wrote "the gas-plant structures, which have been labeled hideous eyesores by some, have a remarkable beauty compared to much park sculpture for which great sums are spent. They are ours; why not just leave them there?" Lynne Harrison (1972) called the plan "imaginative" and said the towers are "a delight to the unprejudiced eye"; "there are, fortunately, many 'traditional' parks in Seattle. Surely there is room for an unusual, innovative, richly detailed urban park." According to Alf Collins (1972), "Mrs. Henry Gellert, widow of the Washington Natural Gas Co. executive who worked out details of the city's 10-year time purchase of the site, told the hearing that the plan would 'bring beauty out of blight which was my husband's concern.'" The plan was described as refreshing, and Victor Steinbrueck pointed out "I see the structures as industrial engineering and they are very interesting and exciting" (Varney 1972). And in an intriguing letter, Keith Nissen (1971) claims "I find the gas plant fascinating, picturesque, eerie and at times positively sinister. Certain of the structures are hugely evocative and I have at least a few friends who share my feelings. I find it incredible anyone could describe them as boring."

The park plan also prompted reflection about what a park is, or should be. Curiously, Haag suggested, at least on a couple of occasions, that he was not really planning a park (though it seems clear the site is now readily classified as one, albeit an unusual one). Perhaps he had in mind the many normative assumptions about what a park is supposed to be, or perhaps he simply questioned the concept of a park. In an article in *TheSeattle Times*, John Voorhees raises the question of what, exactly, a park is, and what some poll respondents had to say about this. He writes:

> What is a park?… what should a park be—particularly in this last part of the 20th century and, hopefully, into the next one?… An unscientific, random poll last week turned up nearly as many opinions about what a park should be as there were persons asked. Yet there were certain similarities.…It seems clear a composite "best park" would be restful, oriented toward nature, not overly organized, have plenty of space and be mostly off-limits to the automobile.… [No one polled was] turned on to saving any of the old gas plant on Lake Union. [Voorhees then criticizes Haag's contentions that the plant can remind us of what we do to our environments, and that the park could be a play area.]… Haag also stated that the park could become a national attraction…because of our interest in

> stopping pollution. If that line is pursued, then pulp mills, oil refineries and other polluters should already be outpulling Disneyland and Mount Rainier. (Voorhees 1971)

These ideas accord with many observers' convictions about parks, as well as the aims of landscape architecture. Board member John Andrew claimed the area "is a view park and we are leaving these monstrosities" (Varney 1972). Former Mayor Gordon S. Clinton complained "Myrtle Edwards Park was intended as just that—a park" (Robinson, n.d.). His words are aimed at establishing the future Gas Works Park was no park. Herb Robinson said "ideally, the city should wind up with a plan providing a certain amount of open space and a conventional setting for rest and relaxation, with special items of visitor interest" (Robinson, n.d.).

Yet, in 1972, following Haag's efforts and in the midst of lively debate, the City Council approved the plan. As work on the park commenced, Haag and his team launched ground-breaking measures to rehabilitate its soil. Some parts of the gas plant were removed, though the towers remained, and other structures have been repurposed and repainted for play and picnicking. A bibliography for Gas Works Park compiled by Richard Haag Associates notes of the year 1974: "derelict structures preserved for aesthetic, historic or adaptive use. Others selectively demolished" (Richard Haag Associates 2016). A significant portion of the park opened in 1975.

Since that time, the park, and Haag, have won numerous accolades. Haag won the President's Award for Design Excellence from the American Society for Landscape Architecture. Gas Works Park achieved City of Seattle Historic/Landmark Status in 1999, was placed on Washington state's list of historic/landmark sites in 2002, and was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 2013. Many of the city's cherished events, such as its annual 4th of July fireworks show, take place in or near the park. The ASLA jury wrote it is "a remarkably original and attractive example of how to reclaim a seemingly hopeless and obsolete industrial installation. Instead of being destroyed or disguised, it has been transformed into a lighthearted environment. A project of historical significance for the community" (quoted in Green 2015). This admiring appraisal was echoed in other publications. Lubow (2004) notes "the chimneys and compressors of the old plant now mirror the Seattle skyline like ruins of a previous civilization." The gas-plant structures have achieved historical importance, since they are among the very last in existence, and other landscape architects have looked to Haag's work as an example and inspiration. Numerous children have played over the years on the old machinery that provides a ready substitute for a jungle gym, and visitors fly kites on lawns carpeting once hopelessly contaminated ground. Stewards of the park intend to make new arguments in its favor by pursuing further historic status designations, such as national recognition as the first industrial landmark site and UNESCO world heritage status. Peter Kelley (2012) sounds a note of pride in observing "Gas Works

and subsequent projects established Seattle as one of the first American cities willing to recast industrial sites into places to celebrate."

3. "Bringing beauty out of blight"

Haag's campaign to convince Seattle residents of the value of the gas-works ruins is remarkable for many reasons; I list only a few here. As noted above, it was the first major campaign to protect and preserve remnants of industrial heritage in a United States city park, and it also demonstrated, in a public forum, that industrial ruins can be regarded as aesthetic objects and can valuably contribute to park design. The campaign also exhibits practical but stimulating engagement with philosophical matters: it prompted impassioned community reflection, which at times veered into the philosophical, about just what a park should be, and the campaign, as well as responses to it, involved appeals to aesthetic judgment, concepts of beauty, and imagination (not to mention Haag receiving advice about strategy from a philosophy professor).

Now I assess the following outcomes of the plan and execution of the park: (1) the comparison Haag drew between artistic and architectural objects and the gas works structures, and (2) his encouragement of certain uses of these structures in the proposed park. Then (3) I briefly consider our concept, "park," and the assumptions about parks that became apparent during the conversations in Seattle, as well as how we should re-purpose abandoned, derelict, or post-industrial sites, such as the former gas plant.

(1)

As described above, Haag asked Seattle's residents to see the remaining gas works as aesthetically important and imaginatively engaging elements of the proposed park plan. When arguing that the oil slicks resembled Mark Rothko's work and the towers looked like Jean Tinguely's sculptures, Haag called attention to affinities between the form and materials of artistic objects and the gas-plant ruins and suggested the structures could be found sculptures; he asked Seattleites to extend well-established aesthetic categories to the gas-plant structures. He simply attempted to demonstrate that the industrial ruins belonged within those categories.

Haag is not alone in noting the aesthetic qualities industrial sites or objects may have. Le Corbusier and Walter Gropius made such observations—Le Corbusier (2007) in *Toward an Architecture* and Gropius (1980) in "The Development of Modern Industrial Architecture." Sigfried Giedion (2009, 167) describes "regions which seem far removed from aesthetic feeling," though they are not; they can have an aesthetic dimension. Elsewhere, he explicitly refers to the "*unintentional* beauty of American industrial architecture" (2009, 343; emphasis added). Giedion also notes that Julius Lessing, who was the first director of the Museum of Industrial

Arts, said a display of American tools at the 1878 Paris World's Fair prompted him to experience an aesthetic reaction (2009, 340—341). Lessing even likened the tools to primitive instruments.

The famous photographs of Bernd and Hilla Becher provide perhaps the most obvious aesthetic counterpart to Haag's campaign on behalf of the gas-plant ruins. As is well-known, the Bechers photographed entire industrial landscapes as well as abandoned industrial objects such as water towers, and in doing so called attention to their subjects' formally appealing aspects. Their works—to name only a few: *Water Towers*, *Industrial Façades*, *Industrial Landscapes*, and *Typologies of Industrial Buildings*—reveal a fascination with industrial places and forms.[11]

In my view, Haag has drawn a successful analogy between the gas plant ruins and other products of human creativity; in fact, the connection is not very far-fetched. His own well-chosen examples, and the additional ones noted above, illustrate that industrial objects can be and have been viewed aesthetically. The gas works do have formally appealing qualities, though that appeal could be obscured by the pollution they created. And as the structures are no longer actively functioning as gas works, their aesthetic attributes can emerge even more clearly within a park setting that frames them. It is worth noting, too, that some people are drawn to the aesthetic properties of the materials, such as metals and concrete, making up many of our built landscapes. These materials can serve both industrial and aesthetic purposes. For example, both metals and concrete are used in building various industrial and other structures, but they are also used in making jewelry. The towers could be appealing for people who simply admire the aesthetic impact of a mass of metal.

At the very least, the ruins of the gas plant can elicit a variety of sometimes extraordinarily complex aesthetic reactions. They can come to haunt our consciousness (based on what he has said, this appears to be what happened to Haag), and, as some of the letters (both supportive and disgusted) to *The Seattle Times* attest, can alternately be viewed as beautiful, picturesque, eerie, sublime, menacing, haunting, or, as many put it when they were abandoned (including Haag), ghostly. Jonathan Maskit proposes an apt new category—the interesting—to account for our reactions to places like the gas works. He describes what may happen when we regard post-industrial sites, and his description reflects the complexity of our reactions: "we find ourselves simultaneously awed and disgusted; impressed and depressed. The power of technological culture to transform nature is made manifest here in its starkest form. And yet, we do not turn away. We both rue what is no more and are smitten by what is" (Maskit 2007, 13—14).

11 Peter Reed mentions the work of the Bechers when describing Peter Latz's work on Landschaftspark Duisborg-Nord: "the industrial ruins [of Landschaftspark Duisborg-Nord], which could easily have been subjects for Bernd and Hilla Becher, who aestheticized German industrial culture in their photographs, have transcended their original rational function" (Reed 2005, 26).

Some of these responses are in keeping with our reactions to other ruins from earlier centuries. As Elisabeth Clemence Chan writes:

> Just as ancient ruins were enjoyed in the Classical gardens, industrial ruins are enjoyed for their mysterious and sublime qualities, as well as their melancholic (what many also call "gritty") qualities. Granted, what these places mean to people is difficult to discern, influence or even understand. To be sure, one person's mystery is another's gloom; one person's melancholy is another's creepiness; and one person's sublime prospect could be another's eyesore. It is fair to assume that every individual might have a different perception of industrial ruins based on their prior experience, interests, age, and countless other influences. (Chan 2009, 24)

The case can successfully be made, then, that the ruins do have aesthetic appeal (admittedly aesthetic appeal where one does not ordinarily expect to find it) and can instigate sometimes multi-faceted, indisputably aesthetic responses, ranging from perceptions of the alluring to the gritty, or both of these and others at the same time. As letter writer KeithNissen claimed, the gas-plant structures are quite fascinating and evocative. Not all industrial ruins are aesthetically compelling, though Haag was right to suggest these are. (If the towers were less striking, for whatever reason, our ability to see them as sculptural might be compromised.) As one would expect when it comes to aesthetic matters, some have agreed or been persuaded, then and now; some have not. Nevertheless, the arguments calling attention to the gas plant's aesthetic potential are certainly plausible.

One might claim that structures designed to fulfill a non-aesthetic function cannot have aesthetic appeal, though this is not a convincing objection. Many objects created for some other non-aesthetic use can aesthetically appeal to us—some kitchen utensils or office tools, for example. The fact that they are designed well to carry out their non-aesthetic function can itself be a source of aesthetic appeal. However, it seems clear that awareness of what the gas works really are did interfere with some people's ability to appreciate the aesthetic possibilities the structures represent, and I address this issue in the next section.

(2)

Even if he did this inadvertently, Haag encouraged the city's residents to not only view, but use, the structures *as ruins*. This has important implications for the debate about the nature of parks as well as for the problem of "memorializing" pollution.

Haag wished for people to observe the ruins' shapes, play among them, and generally treat them with the free-spirited exploration and enjoyment with which people have long interacted with ruins. As Campbell said, noted above, "their nature would be transformed by the treatment and activities of the area around them." Many of the features of traditional ruin-appreciation can be found here: treating formerly functioning built relics as aesthetic objects; focusing on their form following the lapse in their function; engaging with one's ruined surroundings in unconventional, playful, and

perhaps creatively inspired ways, and, relating to this, sensing possibility in a change of function. It could be argued Haag used the space in this way himself, moving around it, sleeping in different places (even if he did this at least in part to gain familiarity with his work site). He also occupied the converted blacksmith shop in what Hester calls a "quasi-illegality [that] can be attractive to innovators": "[Haag] recalls the camaraderie his group experienced when they were ejected from their blacksmith-shop office by Seattle authorities during a storm" (Hester 1983, 21).

Now Haag and others suggested, at least on some occasions, that this made the park not really like a park at all, but instead, a pleasure area. Yet it is in parks and landscaped settings in particular that ruins have long been used and appreciated. This is actually a quite traditional feature of landscaping and park design; it has a long history. In prominently situating ruins within a park landscape and suggesting new uses for them, Gas Works Park falls within the tradition of planned landscapes and gardens strewn with ruins—"follies"—that were so popular in earlier centuries. Usually, our park ruins are classical or romantic relics (or designed to look like them), not the remains of industry. But industrial ruins can be said to share the same appealing qualities as other kinds of park ruins. For example, it has been pointed out that Peter Latz had Bomarzo in mind when designing Landschaftspark Duisborg-Nord in Germany (Reed 2005, 26). As Chan writes:

> It is my view that parks containing industrial ruins are designed and built because people enjoy ruins, especially in parks…
>
> Ruins as used in Classical landscape design were part of the Picturesque aesthetic in which mystery, melancholy and the sublime were intrinsic. We see the same emotionally attractive aesthetic devices being used today, intentionally or not, in industrial ruin parks. One reason we tend to preserve and enjoy industrial ruins is that they have an emotional and aesthetic attractiveness to many people. As objectsin the landscape, relic architecture has long captured the imagination of artists, writers and designers. …The attraction of ruins, whether ancient, recent, monumental, vernacularor industrial, reflects complex cultural aesthetics. This is demonstratedin the deep history of ruins used in landscape and garden design.… In today's industrial ruin parks, one could argue that ruins are being used as follies in much the same way they were used in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Europe. Like the ruins at the Englishestate, Stowe, or the French garden Le Désert de Retz, rusting manufacturing structures built in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries stand in some parks as aesthetic attractions and icons among rolling lawns, softened by garden plantings. (Chan 2009, 21, 23—24)

However, while industrial ruins may fit comfortably within the long tradition of ruins within landscaped settings, they do break from this tradition in one important way. They have previous functions that have been destructive to our landscapes. Even while one admires their beguiling aesthetic ambiguity, one may acknowledge that industrial objects have been put to destructive uses, and, as some Seattle residents pointed out, retaining the gas plant's remnants could remind us of this history.

But if we conceive of the structures as traditional park ruins, we can resolve this tension. Ruins are elements of our built environment that are no longer functioning as they once did or no longer functioning at all. Industrial ruins are exceptionally good candidates for ruin-status, because it can be a relief to us that their functions are no longer active. We can quite literally call them follies—and be glad of this. And as Seattle's residents use the found sculptures of the gas plant in new ways, they make clear that polluting function is over, part of the past. Chan remarks "the park containing ruins appears cleaned and in a state of healing" (Chan 2009, 26). In my view, this is one reason for the "lighthearted" aspect of the park the ASLA jury recognized. The lightheartedness results at least in part from admiring and using the objects as aesthetically interesting or ruinous remnants while happily aware that their role in pollution is over. The structures have been transformed by their inclusion and new use in the changed landscape. They are now the ruins of industry, not its active instruments. Thus, we do not memorialize or celebrate pollution by retaining such structures in our parks. Instead, as we see the rusting hulks set among new grasses and see people playing and picnicking among what Haag termed the "sacred core of iron structures," we receive the optimistic impression that we are (at least one hopes) moving on from it, while retaining what is aesthetically interesting about the industrial past.

(3)

I would finally like to make some brief comments about our concepts of parks and park design, topics which obviously deserve more thorough consideration than I give them here.

As we have seen, Gas Works Park does not match the idea of the composite "best park" Voorhees's poll yielded. According to that view, parks should be serene and "natural," or perhaps should be kept that way (as we endeavor to do with many national United States parks), and this is partly why Haag's plan could be viewed as controversial. Gas Works Park is not a traditional park in that sense. It is a highly "unnatural" park environment, one in which human interference with nature is obvious (in many ways—for example, the gas plant's initial intrusion onto the shore of Lake Union and Haag's later modification of that plant).

Yet my claims above should make clear that in some respects, Gas Works Park is deeply traditional. First of all, it exhibits traditionally appreciated aesthetic qualities and prompts well-known aesthetic reactions. Second, as a park that prominently features ruins, it follows centuries of garden and landscape design. It may not even be out of step with the idea that a park should be close to nature. While its ruins themselves are not natural objects, their current presentation as ruins arguably shows respect for nature and a kind of return to nature, for, as I have attempted to show above, the park's aspect makes clear that the plant's destructive function is over (consider how Haag's description of the "ferro-forests" can bring

nature to mind). For these reasons, the park is not as unconventional a park as we might initially suppose. Instead, it might be said to represent the next step in the evolution of ruins parks.

The concept of "park" encompasses both types of park—the composite "best park" idea (or what I will call the park as nature), certainly, but also the ruins park. Both belong to the history of park design.

But suppose one accepts that industrial ruins can be valuable elements in the design of a park. One could then argue that if we do decide to retain our industrial ruins, we should disturb them as little as possible. If we value industrial ruins, we should not clean or selectively prune them like plants, and then present them in a park environment along with modifications to other plants and landscaping. Why further conflate the natural and the artificial? Why not preserve nature in parks that are close to nature, and why not preserve industrial ruins in ruins parks? Why not suppose the more ruins remain at ruins sites, the better—leaving those ruins as close to their own "natural" state as possible?

This, to me, is an interesting possibility, and in some cases (perhaps when the ruins in question are especially aesthetically compelling or otherwise significant, or located in dense urban settings), it may be the right one. However, in the case of park design, it is probably often important to signal that an industrial site's function is no longer active. A clear change or shift in our perception of a site's function may have to occur; we may have to make it obvious that we are bringing beauty out of blight. Maskit describes a type of aesthetic engagement he calls renovation: "perhaps the best thing to do with such [post-industrial] sites (or at least with some of them), is to preserve their interesting character while turning them to new uses" (Maskit 2007, 14). This turn to new uses is an especially useful and valuable strategy for potential park sites that contain industrial ruins, for if they exhibit the process of renovation in some way, they are also likely to convey a shift or suspension in function. Haag accomplished this at Gas Works Park.

In my view, such a change works well for park settings in particular, even if this makes such parks more like works of art or artificial gardens than landscapes close to nature. There is room enough for different kinds of parks, as letter writer Lynne Harrison pointed out, and presenting industrial ruins in new ways in these settings is an especially positive and thought-provoking way of dealing with them. A change or shift toward new use is also likely to turn attention away from blight and toward the aesthetic potential of structures like the remaining gas works. In some cases, attention to aesthetic significance will serve us better than attention to historical significance. For example, we already feel remorse about the environmental cost of much of our recent technological history. Although we might admire the structures that carried out these technological tasks as feats of engineering (as Steinbrueck admired Seattle's gas-plant structures), unless these structures are somehow altered by their presentation or use, they can remind us of a history

that we wish to put behind us. The details of a shift from blight to beauty must be addressed in more detail, and will probably vary widely from case to case.[12] But Gas Works Park provides a worthwhile example of this approach.

If we do not reconceive of certain industrial structures as ruins, and as potential new aesthetic objects, it is hard to ignore the impression that we would just be preserving instruments of pollution. Suppose Haag's plan had been to leave the gas plant as close as possible to the state it was in when it closed in the 1950s. The site itself would probably be intriguing for various reasons, as some people found it at the time, but it would not work especially well as a new park. In that case, a plan for a more conventional park, or a park as nature, along the shore of Lake Union might have been a better idea. Haag's plan is brilliant as much for what it mended and changed as much as for what it retained.

Our concept, "park," involves notions and traditions about which we can argue, as people in Seattle did in the early 1970s. As I have pointed out, the ideas about parks that surfaced during the debate in Seattle—the park as nature, and what I have described as the ruins park—both belong to its history. But there are other, more difficult dimensions to this concept: the degree to which the term "park" suggests human intervention, or ideally, non-intervention, in our landscapes, and whether and to what extent we should combine nature with human intervention. I can suggest at this point that interventions in abandoned, derelict, or post-industrial sites aimed at presenting industrial structures as ruins, and bringing beauty out of blight, are positive interventions, even (or, perhaps, especially) if they may be complex hybrids of the natural and the artificial. The popular High Line in Manhattan is a fine current example. And in their hybrid aspect, these parks resemble many ruins in general—combinations of human-constructed relics and nature, reasserting itself. Perhaps this can also serve as an optimistic projected description of not only some parks, but many more scenes of the 21st century that Voorhees asked us to envision.

4. In closing: celebrating the follies and ferro-forests of our future

In 2008, Richard Haag described paying a visit to his inspired and inspiring creation:

> The park is purposely designed as a very open, spontaneous park. And so you find all kinds of activities happening. Just a moment ago there was a man playing a harp down here, and I heard some bongos earlier, and a kite was flying just off the hill, the kite hill behind me. And it's a park where you got such an exhilarating sense of openness, of light and air and space and the most incredible view of downtown Seattle, repeated

12 Not to put too fine a point on it, but we must take the sow's ear in question and successfully convert it to a silk purse, to use Haag's phrase.

> and reflected in the lake. But imagine this site without these structures: just ballfields or just, you know, your usual athletic kind of feel. It'd be a nowhere place. (Raymond 2008)

Haag's words emphasize the park's unique sense of place—light, view, space, Lake Union, downtown Seattle. They also emphasize all those activities Haag hoped for—people playing music, flying kites. This is nothing like a "nowhere place." Haag then asks us to imagine the site without the structures, and indeed, after all he has asked Seattle's residents to imagine before, this request is a dispiriting one. This place would be different, and hardly better, without the relics of the gas works. It would be—paradoxically enough, in a place containing remnants of industry—less alive.

The gas plant should probably never have been built where it was. One could argue it should never have been built at all. But this did happen, where it happened. And when the time came to decide how to address the equipment that had thankfully rumbled to a stop, Haag, I have tried to show, made the most of the opportunity.

Haag's achievements give us much to think about as we consider plans for our other abandoned, derelict, or post-industrial sites. He has provided a successful model for the practice of retaining industrial ruins within parks without thereby promoting our memories or practices of environmental degradation. And this is because, as I have argued, the structures appear as ruins at the transformed edge of Lake Union. I have claimed that what may look new about Gas Works Park is actually somewhat traditional, and recalls our centuries-long interest in ruins in general. Ruins represent a link between our pasts and our futures, between former functions and whatever new ones we may envision. As the follies of our industrial era—as ruins—industrial fragments like those in Gas Works Park are perhaps best suited to bring beauty out of blight, to signal that one era has ended and another has begun. Bridging these eras are traces of former industry that are redeemed by their aesthetically arresting qualities. As Olin said, their functions can be unlimited; they, and the parks in which we find them, can be an armature for our imaginations. This is something to celebrate.

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Garden—non-garden. Contemporary trends in transformation of greenery as an instrument in the contest for the city

Beata J. Gawryszewska
(Department of Landscape Art, Warsaw University of Life Sciences)

Abstract

The aim of the paper is to characterize contemporary transformation of urban greenery, which rely on the image of garden in order to arrive at a "garden-like" character of the cityscape. It also demonstrates how the image of garden is applied in the city as a new tool of social communication in the course of democratic transformation of the urban space. The author discusses the origins of the garden-image and the "garden-like" character of space, providing examples of how it is used today in the cityscape by the inhabitants, activists, designers and artists. The text introduces a range of informal, Polish projects of urban gardens and spaces drawing on its image, describing their novel role in building the vernacular landscape of a city.

Key words

Activism, cityscape, landscape architecture, urban garden

The garden, though seemingly associated with suburban areas, now sees a revival of its popularity in European cities. Thanks to the post-modern departure from the anthropocentric vision of the natural environment of human habitation, the garden gains a new dimension in a range of aspects. Firstly, the contemporary urban garden is being defined anew, because both the place in which it emerges and the needs it caters to have undergone substantial changes. Secondly, the previous role and the character of urban greenery already suffered a major crisis in the mid-twentieth century, when the large-surface open areas in housing developments so ardently advocated for by modernists not only began to be criticized by post-modern theorists and designers, but also lost value in the eyes of their residents,

who did not hesitate to transform them as they saw fit—converting the anonymous green areas, so far devoid of cultural context, into sites that possessed individuality. Lending new aspects to space, they drew on a tradition of the image of a garden that went back to the roots of European culture (Gawryszewska 2004).

As the title suggests, my objective here is to outline the transformations of greenery that relied on the image of a garden to forge a "garden-like" character within cities and, at the same time, show how the garden image in a cityscape has been employed as a new tool of social communication in the process of democratic changes to urban spaces. Below, I discuss the origins of the garden image and the "garden-like" nature of space, subsequently quoting successive examples of its use in contemporary landscape, be it by the inhabitants, urban activists, or designers and artists.

In the text, I refer to instances of informal urban garden projects and spaces invoking the garden image in Poland, and I endeavor to describe their new role in constructing the vernacular landscape of the city. The undertakings are a material manifestation of inhabitants assuming responsibility for urban space and exercising the community's entitlement to the most obvious resource of a modern city (i.e., open space). This kind of action, seen from the standpoint of critical post-humanism, enacts a reality in which we co-exist with other beings—on behalf of human and non-human subjects which function in it (Latour 2009). In his famed *Rebel Cities: From the Right to the City to the Urban Revolution,* David Harvey (2012, 3—5) interpreted the manners in which residents enforce that right as answers to questions concerning such issues as re-evaluation of social relationships, the anticipated modification of recognized aesthetic values, as well as the desired change of people's lifestyle and of their approach to natural environment.

1. The image of a garden as a chosen place

One hears at times that the biblical Paradise was a conceptual, and even formal, prototype of a garden. And although such notions may seem anachronic today, the comparison of a garden to paradise is still legitimate when one considers its representation and the inseparable context of the earthly world—that is, noticing that the experience of the extraordinariness of the garden is utterly impossible without reference to the mundanity of its surroundings.

In the Mediterranean tradition, to which we owe our contemporary notion of it, the garden is described as a particular place found in the landscape—selected, surrounded with a wall or hedge, and divided into sections for ease of cultivating specific plants (de Crescendis 1549). The *topos* of the garden described in the tradition is an idealized space, diametrically distinct from the landscape outside its bounds (Rymkiewicz 2010). The garden has to stand out against the landscape by

virtue of its unequivocally identified image. It is made up of a repertoire of forms which establish a particular "garden-like" character.

Usually, the garden connotes a private space, however when one examines the structure of space attached to sites of habitation, be it in detached development or housing estates, where strictly private space is hard to come by, one notices that the image of the garden arises from the practices of usage and arrangement (Gawryszewska 2013). Apparently, this is the upshot of the innate human need to build surroundings which correspond to the notions of ideal, virgin nature that are simultaneously devoid of the wildness that represents a potential source of danger (Assunto 2015). Still, does it have to be beautiful?

In 2012, working in collaboration with Izabela Myszka-Stąpór, we created a traditional countryside garden, established by way of experiment at the Arboretum of Bolestraszyce near Przemyśl (Myszka-Stąpór and Gawryszewska 2013). Our experiment consisted in arranging the garden using plants available in the area, following a pragmatics of composition dictated by cultivation and consulting local inhabitants. Both the latter and the visitors to the arboretum would recall the gardens of their mothers, grandmothers, and aunts while watching us work, and then readily shared their memories. One by one, they enumerated the names of plants they felt were indispensable to arrive at an image of a "true garden": roses, night-scented stocks, pot marigolds, marigolds, tulips, primroses, irises, coneflowers, sneezeweeds, sunflowers, phloxes, and hollyhocks, obviously. The lists of plants proved repeatedly consistent, not only in conversations but also in the findings from an inventory taken in dozens of contemporary gardens carried out myself to determine the model image of a household garden (Gawryszewska 2013). It also included food crops (i.e., trees and shrubs bearing fruit, vegetables, and herbs). Interestingly enough, the respondents did not mention views or sophisticated compositional patterns, nor did they speak of how they spent time in the gardens of their childhood; they merely recalled its image.

Thus, the fundamental elements that make up the image of a garden are blooming plants: annuals, biennials, perennials, as well as fruit trees and shrubs, vegetables, and herbs. The garden plants are treated subjectively, and the gardeners establish individual relationships with them (Gawryszewska 2013, 33, 43); therefore, one seldom encounters larger surfaces planted with the same species. The characteristic mosaic of colors and forms are obtained by planting single or only several specimens at a time (Gawryszewskaand Myszka-Stąpór 2016). In Europe, especially in front gardens, the same set of plant types have been kept since at least the Middle Ages, and it is thanks to that selection that the garden image becomes recognizable. Said assortment, particularly blooming garden plants from the rose and aster families, is so important that in the case of unfavorable conditions, difficulties in cultivation, shortage of time, etc., creators of gardens resort to artificial flowers (Winiarska-Lisiecka 2016). Artificial roses, lilies, asters, and narcissuses

are encountered where the "garden-like" character of a place is so entrenched in the tradition that it cannot do without them—for instance, at the shrines in courtyards of urban tenement houses (Gawryszewska 2013, 106).

In the contemporary city, actions aimed at distinguishing a site in space often boil down to its being decorated with flowers, which brings the concept of gardens to mind. Such non-gardens, flowerbeds which nevertheless invoke the image of a garden, are seen underneath windows of blocks of flats and in the courtyards of tenements. They replace neglected lawns, to indicate that a space has been taken possession of and a meaningful place has been created. They are a message communicating habitation, addressed to neighbors and passers-by, distinguishing a placethat has an owner/gardener from a space that belongs to nobody.

Fig. 1
"Garden-like" character with which a space is endowed by drawing on the image of a household garden
A
Kalwaria garden, Arboretum in Bolestraszyce (Poland), arranged in accordance with how a traditional farmhouse/cottage garden is envisioned

Fig. 1B
Mini-garden under a window of a block of flats in Tomaszów Mazowiecki (Poland)

Fig. 1C
Flowerbed created by residents of Chomiczówka in Warsaw

Fig. 1D
Flowerbed planted on a footpath created by people taking a shortcut, courtyard of the University of Warsaw complex on Krakowskie Przedmieście in Warsaw

2. The garden as an attribute of a committed landscape

The erstwhile, medieval image of agarden—where it had been a site of cultivation, a place where the gardener toiled and everyday bustle took place—transitioned in the age of Renaissance villas of the Seicento into garden-views, designed as perspective-based vistas, geometricized and wholly subordinated to the experience of beauty from an "elevated place," such as a balcony-loggia or a terrace built specially for that purpose (Szafrańska 2011). In the sixteenth century, the garden became first and foremost a visual feature. Francesco de Vieri writes about the garden exclusively as a "piece to be gazed at" (quoted in Szafrańska 2011, 14). This duality of the garden's function may be observed in today's cities; the formalized arrangements of urban greenery laid out by certified architects are a counterpart to vernacular gardens cultivated by inhabitants and urban activists, which have more to do with a performative pleasure of working in a garden than a fancy sight. I discussed garden as a *performance* jointly with Łukasz Guzek in 2002, comparing cultivation of plants and being among them to performance art. Just like the artistic discipline, gardening is an individualistic action in space. Its form is a personal projection in that it results from idiosyncratic traits of the individual practitioner. It has an author, an inimitable character, and it is anchored in culture. The aim of being in a garden and creating it is the process itself rather than its outcome (Gawryszewska and Guzek 2002). It is approached in a similar manner by Mateusz Salwa, who remarks on the event-like character of the garden, both in terms of human action and the actions of nature itself. Thus, Salwa classifies the performative aspect of the garden as a trait indicative of the post-humanist performative shift in contemporary humanities (Salwa 2016, 173). Elsewhere, Salwa draws on Amadeo Bellini (1992) to describe the garden as an open-ended work which never reaches completion.

In line with Berleant's aesthetics of engagement, establishing and cultivating a garden entails anaesthetic experience—which consists in a daily sense of continuity with the landscape that is owed to any action in the garden, including taking care of it (Berleant 1997). Seeing the garden as a process, which tallies with the processual and at the same time participatory context of contemporary urban planning, is not unknown to theorists of green design. Martin Prominski writes about *open design* which, having delineated the general frame of space, leaves users free rein to lend individual character, appearance, and new meanings to a place (Prominski 2005, 3). Is such an effect indeed achieved in public space, in the everyday landscape moldedby city dwellers through participation? The answer to the question may be found in community gardens, green interventions taking place throughout Europe at abandoned and unkept sites, with the essential aim of building and integrating a gardening community around them (Foster 2016). They may be initiated and established by social workers or activists, as in the case of the garden attached

to the Służew Centre for Culture or the community garden on Aleja Solidarności in the Warsaw borough of Praga. Most often, however, community gardens are the upshot of grassroots initiatives. Some good examples of such undertakings include "Motyka i Słońce [The hoe and the sun]" or "Ogród Królowej Bony [Queen Bona's garden]" in the Warsaw housing development of Jazdów, where the commitment of activists from social organizations prevented the demolition of a reminder of the post-war history of the city—a collection of Finnish wooden bungalows—and led to the establishment of a publicly accessible park in which numerous NGOs set up their premises. Here, community gardens are a sign communicating that control of an area has been taken over; they are not intended to accomplish any specific aesthetic effect but rather to be jointly cultivated. The fact that their creators employed the image of a garden was intended to network all those who were willing to join the community. As part of the struggle for the city, inhabitants endow urban space with a "garden-like" character and thus reclaim gardens as places of their habitation otherwise shackled by administrative dictate.

Nasz Park in Kabaty, Warsaw—formerly a neglected stretch of lawn between the entrance to the station of the underground and the nearby blocks of flats—achieves a similar goal. Led by their neighbor, local residents decided to transform it into a garden, planting trees, shrubs, and flowerbeds to be able to spend time there. Gradually, more and more were planted in the process, while further small "gardens" cropped up around the "park."

The paradise established by the anarchist organization known as Reclaim the Fields Poland, which may be found hidden in the dense greenery of a disused plot on ul. Bartycka in Warsaw, is an example of a garden-process that set out from a political agenda, a fact its creators do not deny. At the site of former allotment gardens, the activists built a self-sufficient complex with a wind turbine,[1] bread oven, tool sheds, a point where goods may be exchanged free of charge and, naturally, beds of vegetables, herbs, and flowers. When interviewed, they stated they wished to prepare for the impending, new socio-economic realities, therefore they endeavored to create a garden and to gather a community of participants who wanted to learn how to manage resources and produce food responsibly and locally.

1 The turbine was dismantled in the summer of 2016, following a complaint lodged with city authorities by an investor who built a housing development there.

Fig. 2
Community gardens in Warsaw (Poland)
A
Motyka i Słońce (The Hoe and the Sun), run by the Workshop of Shared Goods in Jazdów, Warsaw

Fig. 2B
Goods exchange established by anarchists from Reclaim the Fields in the area of former allotment gardens and the wasteland on Bartycka Street, Warsaw

Fig. 2C
Nasz Park (Our Park) in the Kabaty district of Warsaw

Fig. 2D
Community garden on Solidarności Avenue in the Praga district of Warsaw, maintained by activists from the local center for culture

3. The garden as a trademark of "green intervention" into city landscapes

Do green areas in a city really have to be considered in opposition to a garden? After all, the nineteenth-century green areas in London, Paris, or Warsaw were gardens as well—filled with flowers, meticulously tended shrubbery, regularly planted trees, pots with agave and palm trees, as well as fountains.

The people of Brasilia use a word they coined, *brasilite*, to denote a sense of alienation and being lost in their orderly city full of immaculate, open-spaced green areas, a city which had been built from scratch by the famed modernist architect Oscar Niemeyer (Montgomery 2015, 135). As for Europe, the greenery of the earlier modernist developments can hardly be considered successful, though its potential is imposing. Today, its remnants are treated as empty spaces which, if they cannot be infilled, provide room for participatory budgeting projects.[2] No one would dare proceed likewise with a well-tended garden; thus, artists took advantage of that image—an efficacious tool of manifesting right to urban space—readily developing what might be described as gardens within the perimeters of urban greenery. One of the most well-known examples of such projects is undoubtedly Joanna Rajkowska's *Dotleniacz,* a relatively small temporary garden with apond and fountain situated in Grzybowski Square, which are in turn surrounded with "garden-like" flower beds. In 2007, the feature attracted a lively community which solicited the city authorities to leave it there permanently.

Iga Kołodziej, a landscape architect who placed boxes with garden plants in front of the Praga Museum of Warsaw, not only made up for the lack of greenery, which had been clearly overlooked by the designers of the building, but also pointed to the need for a humanized public space. She did so by introducing plants that tend to be associated with a household garden; after all, they require daily care, interaction between the world of nature which they represent and the world of culture. A similar quality characterized the gardenly flowerbeds on the embankment of the Vistula, which were put in place in the summer of 2009 on the initiative of Klara Kopcińska as part of TransFORM, a project targeting the banks of the river.

If greenery on the premises of a house becomes a garden, why should roadside greenery, for instance, not be considered a garden? It is a garden too, with the exception that the staff of the Municipal Roads Authority are the "gardeners." In the central reservation along Aleja Niepodległości, Dolina Służewiecka or ul Wawelska,

2 In spring 2017, courtesy of the Parks and Green Spaces Authority in Warsaw, I had the pleasure to become acquainted with projects submitted for participatory budgeting. Most of the suggested investments, such as open-air gyms or smog-free towers were to be carried out in green areas. I also had the opportunity to talk with urban activists who advocated that playgrounds, dog paddocks, sports fields, etc., be situated on lawns at housing developments and in the city. Proposals for the creation of flowerbeds or community gardens were numerous as well. Clearly, the inhabitants believe that these areas are empty and represent little value; therefore, they may be treated as space for new projects.

Fig. 3
Art projects exploiting the image of garden
A
The famed garden and window with knit art pots on Odolańska Street in Warsaw

Fig. 3B
One of the TransFORM works by Klara Kopcińska on the Vistula (2007)

Fig. 3C
Dotleniacz (*Oxygenerator*) by Joanna Rajkowska (Warsaw)

Fig. 3D
Flower boxes created by Iga Kołodziej

one finds flowerbeds planted with blooming annuals and bulbs, which easily bring a garden or a wild meadow to mind. In this context, the contemporary direction of green municipal policies gains completely new meaning. When building a city that is friendly to its inhabitants, authorities today use a method of humanizing space which the residents themselves have tried and tested—that is, they endow it with a "garden-like" character which is no longer perceived as small-town or even rural, but as "universal" and "democratic."

4. The garden context—the green continuum of the cityscape

Now, a city garden has to be situated in the cityscape. Given the etymology of the term, landscapes tend to be described in visual terms (Lynch 2011; Cosgrove 2014). However, it is equally important to take into consideration how people imagine it, that is, how they construe it on daily basis. It is their idea of landscape that becomes a foundation of developing one's surroundings and effecting a "garden-like" form (Jackson 1984). Jackson discusses the distinctions between the

American and the English understanding of landscape. According to the author, when Americans speak of landscapes, what they have in mind is wilderness where the evidence of human presence is minimized, and preferably non-existent. In the eyes of the English, it resembles a garden; it is humanized and only as such does it appear aesthetic. In Poland, on the other hand, one hears the echoes of both understandings of landscape, especially where the city is concerned. When asked what is needed to make the landscape of a city beautiful, inhabitants of Tomaszów Mazowiecki answered "more greenery," while beautiful greenery in their opinion was one which is tended (i.e., sheared, pruned, and adequately managed) reflecting the touch of a gardener's hand.[3] However, faced with the choice between various visions of greenery in their area—from regular flowerbeds among neatly cut hedges and mowed lawns, through naturally growing trees and meadows, to urban wasteland filled with synanthropic plants—they found each beautiful in its own way and having its own due place. Closer to buildings, they preferred a landscape resembling a garden, and more natural and "wild" greenery farther away from them. Urban landscape seems therefore to be comprehended as a continuum comprising the garden and the wilderness alike.

The garden context of the city landscape is thus urban wasteland abutting the gardens of housing developments as a continuation of green areas. In the structure of inhabited space, the undeveloped area is an equal element of the garden, on a par with the garden making up the social facade and the utilitarian garden proper (Gawryszewska 2008).

Itis therefore no surprise that residents feel at ease in such areas, treating them as natural recreation grounds that accompany their dwellings, where the constraints and pressures of everyday life fade away. This freedom of use is of paramount importance for the inclusion of those areas in a system of third places, informal territories of recreation, which are as necessary in the structure of inhabited spaces as homes andworkplaces are (Łepkowski and Wilczyńska 2016; Oldenburg 1996/1997).

At the Fort Służew housing estate, the residents developed the nearby grounds by building an informal park there, with banks, tables, places for bonfires, and ornamental trees they planted. In a seemingly abandoned wasteland, one often encounters seating of sorts, fashioned from waste material found in the vicinity, and in the wasteland terrain at the feet of what is known as the Warsaw embankment, people have made unofficial trails for mountain bikes. The users are clearly content with minimal development, which enables the previous, informal character of the wasteland to be preserved.

This observation was taken advantage of by Marek Piwowarski with a team of officers from the Municipal Property Board, who built a promenade for pedestrians

3 Results of ca. 120 interviews with inhabitants of Niebrów in Tomaszów Mazowiecki, conducted as part of the Modernization Project for the 1939 Defenders of Tomaszów Mazowiecki Housing Estate, developed by Beata J. Gawryszewska, Anna Wilczyńska, Maciej Łepkowski, Ewa Zielińska, and Dariusz Śmiechowski, November 2016—May 2017.

Fig. 4
Wasteland development.
A
Park created by residents of the Fort Służew housing estate in Warsaw

Fig. 4B
Unofficial bicycle track on Piaseczyńska Street in Warsaw

Fig. 4C
A “bank” in the former garden of a villa on Siarczana Street in Warsaw

Fig. 4D
Bicycle lane in the Praga district of Warsaw

and cyclists along the right bank of the Vistula in the semi-natural habitat of the Vistulan wetland which constitutes a Natura 2000 area. Along the ca. 8.5-kilometer path—which enjoys great favor among Varsovians—no new plants were planted; the only new feature was a water-permeable surface laid on the route, which imitates sand from the Vistula. The obtained effect enables users to feel very close to nature, while at the same time ensuring their safety with a "civilized" path whose visual aspect is additionally well-set in culture.

5. Greenery as a tool in the contest for the city

Among modern theories of urban planning, the idea of everyday landscape conceived by John Chase, Margaret Crawford, and John Kaliski stands out in particular (2008). The concept allows for everyday activities of the inhabitants which add to the overall picture of city, such as the laundry they hang out to dry or the stalls of street vendors. It is on them that the character of the city hinges rather than on grand urbanism.

The authors of the notable project entitled *Niewidzialne miasto* [*Invisible city*] also look for new manifestations of democracy in simple forms originating directly with the inhabitants, as they prove "that the city lives, and does so thanks to its residents, who do not merely 'use' but co-create it, leaving diverse imprints of their activity in its space" (Krajewski 2013, 13).

Gardens fit into that definition by all means. From minute gardens under one's windows in extensive housing estates, through flowerbeds planted by activists in apple crates, to seemingly random rows of flowers amidst lawns, the image of the garden—evoking close relationships and connoting developed, inhabited space—is used to forge a new landscape of the city where the inhabitants begin to shape its character. What is more, there are no losers in this contest. The garden, used by artists, landscape architects, and officials may become an effective tool in defending public green areas against the pressure of structural development, animating urban populations, improving relationships within it, and even fostering creative attitudes.

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Garden policies of the Warsaw housing cooperative: the garden and the right to the city

Magdalena Matysek-Imielińska
(Institute of Cultural Studies, University of Wrocław)

Abstract

The article analyzes the project of green spaces to accompany a 1920s residential development in Warsaw. The estate was intended to provide a housing minimum for the poorest inhabitants, as well as educate workers how to live an urban lifestyle. It was presumed that access to greenery, nature, a site of leisure and the smell of flowers cannot be a privilege of the bourgeoisie. Thus, the garden policy proved an emancipatory gesture, an assertion of the right to the city and a means of forging civic mindsets and attitudes. The author asks whether the innocent gardens became workshops in Sennett's understanding, shaping principles and rituals of cooperation, and examines how they helped to promote a new citizen in a new estate.

Key words

Cooperative housings, democracy, green space, urban aesthetics

In his *Rebel Cities,* David Harvey declares at the outset that the "right to the city is, therefore, far more than a right of individual or group access to the resources that the city embodies: it is a right to change and reinvent the city more after our hearts' desire. It is, moreover, a collective rather than an individual right, since reinventing the city inevitably depends upon the exercise of a collective power over the processes of urbanization. The freedom to make and remake ourselves and our cities is, I want to argue, one of the most precious yet most neglected of our human rights" (Harvey 2012, 4). Culturalistic demands to be able to shape oneself in order to collectively create space for a shared life are much more than just ensuring entitlement to joint assets: light, greenery, fresh air, quiet, or even the right to collective consumption. That "far more" is feasible thanks to specific rituals of intersubjective exchange and cooperation, enactment of tacit rules, creation of

environment from the grassroots, based on social-ecological and educational initiatives.

The interwar years saw Warszawska Spółdzielnia Mieszkaniowa (WSM) (the Warsaw Housing Cooperative) established in the borough of Żoliborz in Warsaw. Its founders, committed cooperativists and socialists, representatives of the Polish radical and secular left, set themselves two goals when designing that community-based estate; one of those was to ensure the most disadvantaged a housing minimum, while the second objective was rather of an educational-emancipatory kind. The idea was to teach workers how to live the urban way, so that passive residents may become *citi*zens—users of the urban space. The element which the national authorities at the time (whose system, as Barbara Brukalska (1948) wrote, was a capitalist-liberal one) most readily exploited and manipulated to produce social divisions at the most fundamental level was the common good (both the artificial, resulting from productivity, and the natural, i.e., the resources of the land). Thanks to the concept of a cooperative (compared toits post-war, centralist profile, the WSMcan be said to have been a minor cooperative), it became possible to reclaim the common good within the cityscape (fresh air, light, greenery, running water), to reinstate "cultural coexistence," and to reawaken active involvement in the most immediate public space. A system of direct democracy was elaborated there, and, in consequence, a framework of social self-control emerged, using cultural capital and emotional commitment to social affairs. This is because the WSM of Żoliborz witnessed behaviors detached from economic mechanisms of multiplying profit and instead relied on "socialized individualism," joint work (physical labor included) for the benefit of cooperative members (today we would say that a value relocation took placethere to the benefit of its producers).

In July 1934, Adam Próchnik published an article in Życie WSM (*Life in WHC*), a WSM periodical. His "Polityka ogrodnicza WSM" (Horticultural policy of the WHC) may be interpreted as an ecological, anti-capitalist, and, at the same time, a social manifesto.

> If we have left the narrow backstreets, the grey of the horrific tenements, if we have abandoned both the ramshackle dwellings of the suburbs and the morose, tall houses of the inner city to look for a wide space where our household could expand, not only did we strive for light and air for the working people, but also aspired to surround them with the fresh greenness of lawns and the scents of flowers. We have told ourselves—the beauty and charm of this world can no longer be shared by the rich and the affluent only, by the lucky darlings of fortune; it must be attainable to the working man. We have told ourselves—gardens and green spaces must cease to be a privilege. (Próchnik 1934, 1)

In this narrow context, the design of the cooperative membership as multi-faceted that is, both educational (knowledge about nature and the surrounding world, respect for physical labor) and aesthetic ("beauty which soothes the eyes, giving harmony"), as well as economic and ideological.

> A private capitalist chasing after profit from rent would try to exploit every meter to yield interest and revenue, building it all up as wide and high as it can go. Quite unlike a worker's cooperative. Interest does play a role, since it exists in a capitalist system. But this is not the interest of profit, but an extorted tribute to capitalism. That notwithstanding, the cooperative … acts in accordance with the premises of its social policy. Here, we have vivid proof of the difference in our creative undertakings depending on whether it seeks to gain profit or satisfy social needs. (Próchnik 1934, 1)

While outlining the garden-related agenda of the cooperative, Próchnik enumerates—apart from inner gardens—the external gardens which came into being thanks to the solidary effort of a number of residents. "Finally, one should take into account the institution which develops outside our estate, but remains robustly associated with the latter. What I have in mind are family allotments" (Próchnik 1934, 2).

1. Greenery—the right to the city and extension of the household

Let us then examine the garden policy of the WHC, by means of which almost a century ago cooperative members, workers, and inhabitants attempted to reclaim their right to the city. The WHC aspired to provide cheap, modest apartments to those in greatest need. This meant that any rent for the apartments had to be proportional to the wages the workers earned. In consequence, the occupants would obtain very modestly furnished apartments with one and a half rooms, a small kitchen, and a bathroom without a tub or shower. The inconveniences owing to that housing minimum were to be set off by the so-called social facilities: canteens, bathing establishments, and laundries. In line with the idea of a social estate, those collective social sites were extensions of the apartment, erasing the boundary between the private and the public. Speaking of a boundary between the intimate sphere and the sphere of social interaction would be perhaps more pertinent in this case. Hence, architects were convinced that other functions [of the apartment], such as work, childcare, etc. may be gradually relocated from the apartment with advancements in technology and social education. In this sense, the courtyards and green squares would perform social functions as well.

> The conditions of leisure will differ depending on age and nature of the group of people. The youngest will play in the gardens, older children—on the school grounds, the adults will enjoy rest in parks and clubs, while the elderly on those courtyards which are not marked as intended for children in the design, in the so-called quiet zones that have been laid out with the physical needs of the elderly taken into consideration. (Syrkus 1975, 301)

Access to parks, greenery, and organized areas of the estate became one of the major objectives in the plans drafted by Barbara Brukalska who, with the splendid social sense of an urban activist, not only designed the housing colonies in Żoliborz but also conducted a critical study of its layout during the war as a member of the

underground's Office of Architecture and Urban Planning, where she collaborated with, among others, Stanisław Ossowski. Today, her 1948 brochure entitled *Zasady społeczne projektowania osiedli mieszkaniowych* (*Social principles of designing housing estates*) may be seen as a genuine instance of the crossbench spatial practice advocated by Marcus Miessen. Roughly speaking, it would consist in the approach of an architect or urban planner (activist or artist—in short, anyone involved in arranging a space) in which they adopt the standpoint of a researcher who critically analyzes elements that have previously been conceptualized and implemented in the urban space. The practice of urban development is tantamount to research, and the research is tantamount to urban planning practice. This is due to the fact that the design and implementation process yields new knowledge, new ideas, and conceptions. The 'final product' is no longer paramount in light of the processes producingit. Along the way, new knowledge is produced and new ideas and projects can be developed. Rather than a final 'piece' of design, Critical Spatial Practice and its published byproducts present inquiry, documented experiment, a discursively argued thesis toward a 'spatial condition' as Miessen (2007) wrote. In Brukalska's case, this condition resulted in design and social undertakings on a neighborhood scale following a new policy of equal access to common goods and dignified life.

In her independent, modernist practice, Brukalska formulates varied social tenets for architects and urbanists: for instance, a guideline of socialized individualism, utilization of the holiday mode at one place of residence, democratic management, and attractiveness of the estate along withthe possibility of achieving seclusion there. "It is the task of the practitioner designing the estate to lay out a necessary minimum of green networks and areas, which in no case can be diminished" (Brukalska 1948, 17) at the expense of the communication network or structural development. The significance of greenery is fundamental, chiefly as a component of leisure grounds. Social estates and the community workers' estates in the interwar years were to serve as a location where productive forces were recuperated; in other words, they had to ensure comfort, relaxation, and an opportunity for leisure. Hence the guideline concerning the use of the holidaying mode in green surroundings becomes absolutely crucial: "Movement, resting in the open air, mental detachment from the affairs of one's job and household, communing with nature are—from the individual and social viewpoint—the least expensive way to renew one's strength," Brukalska argues (1948, 101).

This closely corresponds with Próchnik's garden policy:

> The worker's circumstances are such that the greenery must come to him. He needs to be surrounded with greenery. One has to adorn his daily life with verdure and flowers, as he is unable to make a second life for himself. … Hence the tremendous role of gardens and green areas in a workers' cooperative. They have a triple aim—providing beauty, ensuring health, and supplying knowledge. The knowledge of nature and the surrounding world. Health which comes from the grasses, the green trees, and the colorful, fragrant

> flowers for tired, ailing lungs. Beauty, which brings relief to our eyes. May these eyes of ours find solace in colorful patches and our thought derive harmony from it. (Próchnik 1934, 1)

In this somewhat pompous tone, Próchnik claimed greenery for the workers of Warsaw.

Beyond the political—in a sense—dimension of access to common assets and the possibility of recuperating one's strength, the idea was that the estate, through its social institutions (greenery qualified as such), should make up for the inconvenience of the limited comforts of the modest apartments. The social dimension of the estate was founded on the fact that certain needs may be satisfied in a collective manner by expanding the sphere of interaction.

Thus Brukalska, a modernist architect, looks for even the smallest green plots that may be designated as a site for leisure. For instance, designing the estate's dining hall, she "combines it with a terrace, arcade, or garden, so that during the warm months mealtimes aresimultaneously a time of rest" (Brukalska 1948, 75). Helena Syrkus sees the role of greenery in a similar light, though she enhances it with more ambitious functions. Given that the boundary between the private and the public is abolished in social estates of thiskind, introducing zones of intimacy and interaction instead, green areas become a residential feature to some extent. "A small plaza and a terrace in front of the canteen should be designed as wellso that—weather allowing—meals can be had there. A special, relatively small court would be advisable as well: a kind of 'sitting room' at the estate, with comfortable banks for several-minutes-long meetings and chats. These squares, each serving a different purpose, will be composed into one whole, enclosed by vegetation. This enclosure should be different on each side" (Syrkus 1975, 300).

One has the impression that Syrkus designs plazas—rooms that, just as particular interiors in an apartment, have their designated function; at the same time, it is delineated by verdure and integrated into one entity.

The green areas, the inner courtyards of the estate's colonies and the park, would satisfy the need for some seclusion, but they would also ensure bonding between neighbors and people as such. However, greenery is also an incentive driving a change of custom, encouraging cultural coexistence. "In the green areas, whose surface to resident ratio drops below borderline values … plants cannot withstand the human pressure. The lawns are trampled down, flowers and shrubs broken, the trees die poisoned by exhaust fumes. Here, countermeasures include increasing cultivation of the inhabitants on the one hand and expanding green areas on the other" (Syrkus 1975, 67).

In Brukalska's conception, they are not only recreational structures or a common good but also a domain of cooperation and "dwelling culture," spaces of relationships and sites of solitude. To Stanisław Ossowski, the parks and the gardens

at the estate are also "institutions" which become the nexuses of neighborly bonds and social life of the local community (Ossowski 1967, 346).

2. Greenery—the boundaries of estate identity

Having examined pre-war Żoliborz, Brukalska began searching for a center and conceptualized the notion of the estate's "core." Its purpose is to create conditions in which the inner life of the estate can be wholly detached from the life of the entire district, in order to ensure a sense of identity with the immediate surroundings, foster attachment, and create a place that people call their own. It should be easily accessible, have a connection to the borough, and should not be shut out from the outside world.

Depicting diverse variants of the alignment of the "estate core," the architect makes allowances for a range of guidelines, but the sense of identity shared by the residents takes precedence. She does not use the term as yet, speaking rather of the estate having to be "coherent" to "single out its life from the entirety of the life of the city" (Brukalska 1948, 116). The "core of the development lies in a park where the life of the whole estate concentrates; it marks the route to such facilities as the reading hall, community center, clubs, as well as a route leading outside, an easily accessible site of leisure, and a venue for meetings of the residents" (Brukalska 1948, 104). In doing so, she polemicizes with Syrkus, who in turn advanced the concept of an "axis of social life," developed a yield of the work in Rakowiec. The "axis of social life" is a belt of greenery traversing several estates, in a way that connects them and establishes a route for pedestrian traffic, at the same time being a transit street. However, for Brukalska, the "axis of social life" does not provide a secluded refuge (with a transit street being a source of noise), nor is it a mass traffic routefor the residents since it does not offer the shortest way to stops.

3. Teamwork workshops

The *modus operandi* of Samodzielne Gospodarstwo Ogrodnicze (the Independent Horticultural Farm) represents an interesting case. It functioned in the borough of Żoliborz since 1932, and its duties included development and management of courtyards and green areas. With the help of the residents and their children the plots under their care were put in order, waterworks were installed, and a horticultural library was established. As time went by, the cultivated area increased considerably. The site was intended as an educational venue, a space of cooperation, and a site of physical work.

In accordance with the WSM's principle of transparency, the horticultural center had its departments (school garden, maintenance of courtyards, as well as foods and trading department), while its functioning was superintended by members

of the WSM board, a representative of the Robotniczego Towarzystwa Przyjaciół Dzieci (RTPD) (Workers' Society of the Friends of Children) and the head of the horticultural center.

The foods and trading department took care of the sale of flowers and produce to residents of the estate; individual consulting was offered on cultivating gardens and potted plants. Seedlings and cut flowers were also being sold. The year 1936 saw the establishment of the so-called sick plant sanctuary, to which plants and flowers that needed regular tending could be entrusted over the holiday period (in 1938 a total of 659 plants were placed there for "treatment and shelter").[1] Flowers on balconies, terraces, courtyards, and squares were tremendously popular. In 1933, Klub Propagandy, Estetyki i Piękna (the Club for Propaganda, Aesthetics, and Beauty) initiated a collection among the residents, whose proceeds would go towards beautifying the courtyards: "Wishing to lend an aesthetic trim to our estate, and to make our cooperative oasis more beautiful, [the Club for Propaganda, Aesthetics, and Beauty] calls upon all residents to make a joint effort. Beginning next week, representatives of the club will be knocking on your doors, citizens of the estate, to bring you a promise of prompt transformation of the courtyards into colorful flowerbeds, and submitting a collection list for your consideration. We believe that no one will refuse even a minor contribution and make our fundraisers leave empty-handed" (O estetykę dziedzińców 1933, 6).

The maintenance department saw regularly to trees, shrubs, lawns, and flowerbeds, as well as to decoration of the shared facilities at the estate (i.e., the community establishments).

In line with the educational aspirations of the Żoliborz undertaking, the garden for children with its animal pens—run as part of the RTPD school—was the most interesting feature. It served the purposes of education and general upbringing, where children could play and spend leisure time as well. A separate committee, comprising ateacher of natural sciences, a representative of the board of the RTPD, and the head of the horticultural center, was in charge of the garden while its organizing committee consisted of an interdisciplinary group of enthusiasts who contributed as volunteers: doctors, architects, natural scientists, agronomists, school teachers, and a number of amateur gardeners from among the residents. In the interwar years, the role of natural sciences were pre-eminent and, in the secular milieu of the WSM, they occupied a particular place in the school curriculum, not only as a science of living things but also as a social science. The school garden was a kind of workshop of systematic and responsible teamwork—teaching coexistence, cooperation, and respect for physical labor.[2] It was divided into several parts:

1 See *Sprawozdanie* (1939, 68).

2 Apart from growing plants, children would make garden fixtures (frames, elements of pens and cages for animals) in the adjacent workshops.

— 360 m² were occupied by individual patches for older children and shared fields, cultivated jointly by children from the nursery, day-care center as well as first- and second-form pupils.
— in another section, there was the school garden where cereal was grown, mainly for the animals; a number of experimental plots were designated for children's biology groups (rockery, dune plants, pools for plants and aquatic animals, an herb garden).

The produce from the jointly cultivated field washanded over to the school's canteen. Apart from that, children took part in the sale of vegetables, learning the basics of economy. With time, a school zoo and a geography yard were added to the complex.

— the third section of the garden was designated for growing vegetables, flowers and plants needed to decorate the school, seedlings for the garden beds, shrubs, and fruit trees. The work was organized in such a manner that each child was able to participate in various activities (preparing soil for cultivation, raising seedlings, sowing and planting bulbs, tending to perennials, and building frames). The garden workshop was to be used by primary and secondary school children, as well as pupils from schools in the area, thanks to special agreements. Work in the garden was provided for in the adopted curriculum, with two hours per week.

People were also able to sign up for an allotment in the school garden on their own. Children aged 10 and above would thus receive their own patches (3—5 m²). Young gardeners signed a written agreement defining their rights and obligations, the manner of using supplied tools, and expert advice. Also, the agreement stipulated rules of coexistence and cooperation and obliged one to contribute in the shared garden. Children were given their gardening notebooks, in which the course of work and plant growth were recorded. General meetings of all the gardeners were convened from time to time in the garden to discuss comments and desiderata relating to the organization and functioning of the garden. Thus, new solutions were introduced, tools were improved, and streamlining concepts were developed.

Work at the school garden was coordinated by Stanisław Żemis, the natural sciences teacher who, recapitulating his teaching experience in the interwar period in 1958, wrote thus:

> Increasing the self-reliance of a child in gardening, from the shared plot of the nursery to the ever-larger personal patch, corresponded with the development and experience of children; at the same time, working in the community patch ensured socialization and fostered coexistential and cooperative capacities. The physical effort, systematicity, and precision that working the garden requires, taught children respect for every kind of human labor, without moralizing about it (Żemis 1958, 17).

Children tending to animals published an illustrated newsletter describing the life of particular animals and the most recent developments in the garden. The columns entitled "Things done" and "Things we'll do" enjoyed particular interest among the readers (Kuzańska-Obrączkowa 1966, 136).

A recreational-playground area was also provided (800 m²), including a sandbox, volleyball court, a jump track, a bicycle track, and an extensive lawn for all sorts of activities. The playground was quite ingeniously arranged, using bricks and planks, as the creators and architects of the facility wished to avoid the excesses of fancy equipment, which disciplines the children and enforces monotonous and mechanical play. The "building site" playgrounds were intended to promote unconstrained development of constructional forms and free shaping of space. The underlying premise was that it tallied ideally with the needs of children, for whom the very act of arranging their play space, animating objects and construction, are the most compelling activity. In most cases, children do not play in the spaces they have built, but abandon them only to build new ones, playing another game.[3]

The garden was also home to a sports club, a tourism club, and a venue for kayaking workshops run by Igor Newerly, writer, author of *Zostało z uczty bogów*, and close collaborator of Janusz Korczak.

In the recollections of a Żoliborz child, those "patches" and the animal pens are a vivid memory, an inseparable part of the estate.

> The "patches" had been established at the turn of the 1930s at the site where they later built Suzin street, the nursery, the boiler house, the cinema, and further WSMcolonies. With community effort, the soil was cultivated and the hut standing there was put to use. Each WSM child—supervised by an elderly lady, Julia Zubelewicz, and a young gardener named Pawełek—worked at the "patches," sowing and planting various crops and ornamentals. We even had greenhouses where we grew potted plants and seedlings of various vegetables: tomatoes, cabbage, and kohlrabi. We would pick out the delicate seedlings with tongs and pegs whittled from wood. Paweł was stern: "With tongs like these you can catch a crocodile, not plant out *Begonia semperflores*," he would say and made us make more subtle tweezers from pieces of wood. We also had an animal corral at the '"patches." There were dogs there, hens, geese, ducks, guineafowl, rabbits, guinea pigs and a goat, I guess. For many of our friends who had never seen the countryside, the "patches" were their first opportunity to get to know plants and animals directly, to experience the joy of being around and taking care of them. One would watch how the plants you planted and tended yourself germinated, grew, bloomed, and ripened. Could you ever have anything as magnificent as the first horseradish or pod of peas you had grown yourself? Not

3 A similar approach to spaces intended for children originated in the 1930s with Danish landscape architect, Carl Th. Sørensen. The first "adventure playground" following his concept was created in 1943 in Emdrup, Denmark. Cf. Czałczyńska-Podolska (2010).

> to mention the joy of bringing the first flower from your patch to your mom! (Nowicka 2009, 14)[4]

Thanks to all those experiences, children in war-time Żoliborz were able to grow vegetables to satisfy the needs of the estate, ensuring it a relative economic autonomy. The hardships of everyday life forced the inhabitants to breed only livestock such as rabbits, hens, and cows, which provided milk indispensable for children and babies. In accordance with the estate's principles, it was distributed among those whose needs were most dire.

The residents took care of the green areas in their surroundings, developing strong local attachments. A 1930 report of the WSM states that "one sees great solicitude for the flowers in the fact that last year, during the lilac-blooming period, the residents spontaneously watched over the latter at nights to protect the blooms from pests" (*Sprawozdanie* 1930, 100—101). Those who had already acquired the urban manner of habitation also contributed voluntarily to beautifying courtyards, organizing playgrounds and sandboxes for children—even a small pool with a shower was put in place. Annual collections were held to raise funds for the purchase of plants with which the green areas in the courtyards would be adorned. Contests for the best-looking gardens and green squares were held as well, awarding caretakers of particular colonies and residents for the "most flowery balconies." Pertinent news was repeatedly published in Życie WSM, for example:

> This year, donations from the residents for the arrangement and maintenance of flowerbeds were in excess of 400 zloty, which enabled the purchase of a substantial quantity of roses (300 shrubs) as well as other flowers and plants. Consequently, the courtyards of the first three colonies have obtained a pleasant aspect, attesting to the cultivation of the residents. …This year, just as previously, Towarzystwo Przyjaciół Żoliborza [the Society of Friends of Żoliborz] will be organizing a prize competition for the residents of Żoliborz, awarding the best-looking flowerbeds, balconies, and windows. Let us remind you that last year the residents of our estate placed high, therefore we believe that this year's results will not have us fall behind. (Kwietniki 1931, 8)

The horticultural workshops in Żoliborz gave rise to elaborate social rituals, which were acted out publicly (commitments, record books, school classes) rather than behind the scenes. At the same time, they manifested the reciprocal bonds and natural inequality of "master craftsmen," "journeymen," and "apprentices." According to Richard Sennett (2013), the workshop as an institution must function in a manner combining long-term mutual benefits and loyalty with short-term flexibility and openness. Flexibility is indispensable in order to be able to delegate a worker to various undertakings and initiatives (Sennett refers to it as "flexible

4 Incidentally, it is worth mentioning—quite significantly, too—that the recollections were published in 2009 in Życie WSM, in the column "From the pages of history." Thus, the editors of the monthly take care to nurture historical identity in the residents today, and partake in the transfer of knowledge about the "Żoliborz custom," passing on the modes of habitation that boast such noble traditions.

networking"). Forall intents and purposes, Sennett's workshop means joint work which is founded not only on community but also on "mobile solidarity." After all, acquired skills may be utilized outside the workshop: they may be applied, tested, changed, and modified. The point is in experimenting with the capabilities one already possesses, be it skills relating to physical work, cultural competence, or social bonds. Flexible cooperation is a skill which, though acquired in the workshop, is developed later on one's own and conveyed to the local community, one's home, milieu, and into the public sphere most of all, so that one may become a citizen who consciously shapes social relationships. Thus, what the Żoliborz activists had in mind was "a new facet of a man, transcending the workshop to become present in the apartment, the house, and the estate" (Szwalbe 1962, 17), the formation of a comprehensively developed, socialized, and sensitive citizen, a user of the city who, by virtue of collective action, will justly claim the right to change public space and reinvent the city as they see fit—to build a city that is alive and functions thanks to grassroots initiatives, offering open space that ensures equal access to shared assets, as opposed to a city construed as urbanized space in which taking advantage of municipal institutions is a privilege. Addressing the educational-emancipatory aspirations of the Żoliborz agenda, Maria Swodobowa outlines its chief goals: "the platform slogan of Żoliborska Rzeczpospolita Spółdzielcza (the Żoliborz Cooperative Republic) was 'A New Man in a New Estate.' …The new individual meant a thoroughly developed one, capable of deriving joy from the beauty of nature, art, science, and above all from cooperation and fraternal coexistence with others" (Swobodowa 1963, 95).

The projects aimed at filling the estate with greenery and the Żoliborz gardens were some of the numerous elements of that comprehensive educational experiment at a housing estate.

4. Family allotment gardens

Allotment gardens for numerous families were organized on the plots neighboringa place then named Buraków. Naturally, a dedicated self-governing body was established as well, with Edward Osóbka (a resident of the Żoliborz estate) elected as its head. On the initiative of the lessees, a mutual help section was created, chiefly to facilitate an exchange of plants between them and to help one another in putting up frames. The lease fee for an allotment of 300 m² was 3.50 złoty, with an additional 2 złoty registration fee.[5] Although the institution was external to the WSM, residents of the estate lent it a community-like, social character. Thus, the family allotments became a part of the WSM's garden policy.

5 See "Kolonia ogródków rodzinnych na Żoliborzu" (1933, 4).

As mentioned before, the WSM wanted to build apartments for those in in greatest need, the poorest workers' families, who made a living with the work of their own hands. Concerned with comfort and the housing minimum, the architects of Zespół "U" designed a complex of cheap terraced houses as well. Even though it was never implemented, the economic premises of the undertaking deserve to be considered, as the architects in question (J. Chmielewski, St. Filipkowski, Br. Kulesza, H. Kurkiewicz, L. Tomaszewski, J. Żakowski) assumed that a garden adjoining the house would have been an indispensable element of a dwelling intended for a family of 4—5 people, given that it would have ensured the most disadvantaged relative economic independence. Drawing on the studies of a Dr Gertrude Laupheimer (Laupheimer, 1931), they determined that in order to obtain produce for a family of that size approximately 300 m² should be allotted for a vegetable garden and ca. 450—500 m² for a fruit garden. Regardless of the latter, 500 m² of soil should be available for a yield of around 600—900 kg of potatoes. Hence, a plot approaching 1000 m² would have guaranteed self-sufficiency in terms of produce. At the same time, the creators of the design provided for discretionary use of the allotments, whereby individual residents would have been able to cede their allotment in favor of other residents or the cooperative. The latter would thus have utilized the plot for a cooperative garden farm, a sports field for children, or converted it to a green area.[6]

5. Gardens of the estate, or DIY

According to Chris Carlsson, the contemporary principle of *do it yourself*, developed in grassroots production and services which are not geared towards profit but towards reclaiming a sense of labor and nurturing bonds within a community, yields a different lifestyle, different modes of coexistence, new environments (Carlsson 2008, 52). Such models are implemented today by diverse urban movements that adopt autonomous strategies in urban agriculture and organize workshops as part of which people jointly engage in cultivation within a city. In Warsaw, Pracownia Dóbr Wspólnych (the Commons Lab) runs Szkoła Ogrodników Miejskich (Urban Gardening School, an urban activity based on the knowledge of "how to grow plants in the city: vegetables, herbs, flowers. How to create gardens, but there is also the knowledge of doing it together, as a community—how to create the urban environment from the grassroots, locally, in collaboration with others," says Maciej Łebkowski, one of the founders of the undertaking (Miasto2077 2016). "We would like to enhance the process of changing the city, developing projects of citywide scope with public-social components. These may be roof gardens or educational

6 See Zespół "U"(1932).

gardens adjoining nursery schools," adds Michał Augustyn from Pracownia Dóbr Wspólnych.

The "nowtopia" suggested by Carlsson is a kind of city-centric anti-capitalism.[7] It is an autonomous zone where one of the fundaments is socially useful labor performed outside market economy and profit-driven logic: work undertaken in one's free time to reify the ideals of community life. Carlsson sees work of thiskind as a tool in the struggle against commodification of the basic forms of everyday activities. According to the author, creating "nowtopia" is not a rebellion of the working classes but a manifestation of dissent to labor that is alienating and pointless. However, Carlsson has no revolutionary aspirations that would seek to confront and clash with the system. "Nowtopias" represent something akin to temporary autonomous zones, local and short-lived initiatives which open up space for a life in dignified conditions based on direct democracy and principles of autonomy. Thus, developing well-thought-out strategies as well as minor, ephemeral tactics of resistance link diverse "social centers" into a network. These 'autonomous zones,' through the process of occupying and opening up space that would otherwise be private and closed, facilitate the creation of life 'held in common.' Employing the practice of self-management and principles of autonomy, participants aim to create an example of an alternative to contemporary capitalist society. …Social centres make private space 'common' and are run on non-profit values. They act as both an ideological and material form of opposition to capitalist logic and its enclosures (Pusey 2010, 176—198).

Carlsson's "nowtopia" may be readily employed to analyze the Żoliborz project of a social estate, which consequently proves an interesting idea—requiring an update, perhaps—for a new urban mode of living based on the increasingly often redeemed concept of the cooperative and collaboration, where the city is a domain of collective and organized action.

It may also be added that the introduction of agricultural zones of self-governed and sovereign labor is seen beyond the cityscape as well. This is also a path taken by contemporary peasants and small farmers who, facing capitalist industry, began to wage a "food war" in the name of "food sovereignty."

This is why the international organization Via Campesina strives to propagate communal and collective forms of ownership, which can promote a sense of ecological responsibility and facilitate equal distribution of produce. The way to social and economic restructuring leads through self-government, diversity, and cooperation. Indeed, one finds movements of repeasantization, as entrepreneurial farmers abandon capitalist farming and increasing numbers of urbanites take up

7 The main inspiration here originates with the movement that began in the US in the 1960s and continues until today. Its adherents advocate independent production and repairs of various appliances and furnishings, redevelopment of disused facilities and vacant spaces, establishing gardens, etc. *Whole Earth Catalog* magazine may be considered a forum of that movement. See Carlsson (2008, 47—48).

small-scale agriculture. One might even consider the possibility that, as van der Ploeg puts it, "the emergence of urban agriculture in many parts of the world signals the emergence of new numbers of (part-time) peasants and a simultaneous spatial shift of the peasantry from the countryside toward the big metropolises of the world" (Bello 2009, 148).

Hence, one may ask whether the WSM, with its idea for Gospodarstwo Ogrodnicze (Horticultural Farm) and the estate gardens could not become an inspiration and an example of efficient (and empowering) functioning at the level of a "base" framework?

The multi-dimensional concern for green areas, parks, alleys bordered with verdure, and above all the estate's cultivated gardens may be treated as a manifestation of entitlement to common assets, a gesture rooted in workers' and cooperative's ethos that asserts that access to greenery cannot be a privilege of a narrow social stratum, as Próchnik put it. It may also be perceived as a local form of organizing estate workshops or laboratories which teach not only garden craft but also instill the attitude of a responsible citizen—an inhabitant of a city.

6. Conclusion

I have suggested that the Żoliborz estate of the Warsaw Housing Cooperative—in particular its garden-related aspects—can be analyzed while setting out from Adam Próchnik's postulation of claiming right to the city, of gaining access to green areas that constitute shared natural assets. This fundamental right was exercised by the cooperative's activists, architects, and residents themselves in the bottom-up mode, independently, cooperatively, while developing rules of collaboration that Carlsson would have defined as *do it yourself* in the autonomous zone of labor reclamation. All the analyzed means of getting the residents involved and kinds of activist-driven undertakings based on principles of collective space-making tally with Sennett's notions of workshop, a paradigmatic figure of being together, cooperation, and craftsmanship that mold a new person: one who welcomes the social creation of rules and rituals of team-based action, who is sensitive to various aspects of labor and aware of one's responsibility for the latter. It was at Ośrodek Ogrodniczy (the Horticultural Center) that the people of Żoliborz forged that very model.

As for the architectural designs and critical studies by Helena Syrkus and Barbara Brukalska, I have approached them as instances of modernist critical spatial practice (in line with Marcus Miessen). These committed architects would not only design workers' estates, but also demonstrated great sensitivity to workers' opportunities to exercise their rights to dignified living conditions in the city. With extraordinary creativity and critical acumen, they analyzed the functioning of existing spaces, treating themas components of the residents' existential circumstances.

The greenery at the estate was more than just an extension of an apartment; it manifested the civic right to a common asset.

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Schreber's gardens and Jordan's gardens as elements of created nature: the example of Katowice

Ryszard Nakonieczny
(The Faculty of Architecture, Silesian University of Architecture)

Abstract

The author analyzes historical examples of allotment gardens as well as sports and recreational grounds in Katowice (Poland) to underscore their importance for the appeal of the city and its ecology. Schreber's and Jordan's gardens of Katowice epitomize broader relationships between the human and nature observed in a typical contemporary city of the 20th century, where nature has crucial significance for the psychological and physical well-being, ensuring one an opportunity for leisure, promoting health, a sense of comfort, as well as activating all senses, which have become dulled today due to the impact of the virtual worlds. The author also outlines his own urban activities, which attempt to draw attention of city dwellers to the advantages of green areas.

Key words

everyday aesthetics, Jordan's gardens, Schreber's gardens, urban ecology

Remember the gardens
For that's where you came from
In the heat of the age they will bestow the cool shade
Only trees, only leaves[1]

We seldom realize the tremendous contribution of allotment gardens and recreational-sports grounds to the charm and ecology of a city. The aim of this paper is to draw attention to that important aspect that ensures city inhabitants aesthetic experience, a sense of comfort, and psycho-physical well-being. The idea dates back to the latter half of the nineteenth century and has left its imprints in many

1 *Remember the Gardens*, lyrics by Jonasz Kofta, music by Jan Pietrzak.

regions of Europe, including Upper Silesia and the city of Katowice, which features as the focus of this paper.

1. Green areas and gardens of Katowice

Katowice is found in sources for the first time in 1598, as a village established on the river Rawa (Rozdzianka), on the meadows and stretches of land wrestled from nature. The surrounding forests were cleared to provide new land for cultivation and gain access to resources: iron ore, then underground deposits of coal as well as firewood for a metallurgic site was known since the Middle Ages—the so-called Kuźnica Bogucka. In 1865, Katowice was granted city rights 267 years after the first mention of its existence, becoming a rapidly developing center of industry and trade in the Prussian state. As early as 1856, Heinrich Moritz August Nottebohm made a plan of the township, showing the streets, squares, and plots for further development, in which green areas became an important element by way of compensating the residents for the lost contact with nature.[2] In 1871, Richard Holtze, co-founder of the city and long-standing president of the municipal council, observed that Katowice's green gardens and public squares adjoining the beautiful churches, the rare and often astonishing discoveries of vistas and perspectives, all that captivates and enhances the charms of the city (Holtze 2005, 39).

The city map of Katowice dated 1884 shows a substantial quantity of green areas integrated into its layout (Złoty 2005). There are two parks: one surrounding the palace and another one on a partly drained cooling pond, at the site of a demolished blast furnace (*Hochofen*) of Kuźnica Bogucka. And there are five squares: Wilhelmsplatz (present-day Plac Wolności), another by the railway station, and three situated near churches—an old Catholic one, an evangelical one, and a Catholic church of the Holy Virgin Mary. They remained under the care of Związek Miłośników Przyrody dla Upiększania Miasta / Verschönerungsverein zur Verbesserung des Stadtbildes durch Baumpflanzungen (the Beautification Society for the Betterment of City Image Through Tree-Planting), established in 1875 (Nałęcz-Gostomski 1926, 89), from which sprang Dyrekcja Ogrodów Miejskich (the Municipal Gardens Directorate), created in 1913,[3] an authority headed until 1932 by an experienced gardener, Paula Sallmann.[4] In 1888, the suburban Süd Park was laid out outside the city on the grounds of a wild woods leased from the Hohenlohe factory in 1925, it received the name Park im. Tadeusza Kościuszki (Tadeusz Kościuszko Park). The city gradually expanded into open and less urbanized areas south of the railway line built in 1846. Next to dense urban blocks planned for the area, further green areas were designed, such as the garden in Blücherplatz (today's Plac Karola Miarki) and

2 See Hoffmann (2003, 144), Kozina (2005, 44—48).

3 See Nałęcz-Gostomski (1926, 208); Hoffmann (2003, 141).

4 See Piwowarczyk (2015, 410—423).

Nicolaiplatz (Plac Józefa Rostka). Some of the streets, crisscrossing at right angles, were marked out again to lend them a curved profile and a picturesque course, by means of which urban space became more organic and natural, featuring variable vistas, in accordance with the then highly popular concepts advocated by Austrian urbanist Camillo Sitte (1986, 129—332).

The soft run of the streets was to manifest modernity and herald an encounter with the almost primeval landscape of the Süd Park. The closer to the park on got, the more relaxed the urban structure became, from tenements to detached houses and villas located in extensive private gardens. The last link and, in a sense, a buffer zone connecting urban areas with the park were the so-called Schreber's gardens,[5] where wooden houses (*Gartenlaube*) drowned in lush greenery. In this fluid and harmonious manner, one would transition from an urbanized landscape into a forested one. The industrial city thus sought conciliation with nature, from which it had earlier attempted to separate itself.

2. Schreber's gardens

The oldest Schreber's garden was created in 1865 in Leipzig (Gryniewicz-Balińska 2015; Pawlikowska-Piechotka 2009), on the initiative of Ernst Innocenz Hauschild, who had established the first association of Schreber's gardens (*Schrebergartenverein*) only a year earlier. The name was intended to commemorate the achievement of his friend, doctor of medical sciences and orthopedist, Daniel Gottlob Moritz Schreber, who propagated healthy lifestyles and open-air exercise among children and adolescents of industrial cities, as he frequently observed conditions resulting from poor housing standards resulting from rapid and uncontrolled urbanization in the nineteenth century.

Initially, these recreational gardens were intended exclusively for children, with a possibility of minor cultivation for educational purposes. With time, however, they transformed into ornamental-utilitarian gardens directed at their parents, while the recreational-sports function was substantially limited and even wholly overshadowed by the cultivated plots which later predominated. Still, this aspect was never utterly eliminated, as small recreation areas for children would always accompany the comprehensive functional agenda of such gardens.

A similar concept was propagated by Henryk Jordan, from the moment when, in 1888, he applied to the municipal council of Kraków to be allotted grounds for the creation of a garden where children would be able to exercise and play. The idea was made a reality a year later, in the form of Park Doktora Jordana (Doctor Jordan's Park)—an 8-hectare site with greenery and five sports fields (Śliwowska and Wędrowski 1937, 5—10). Other recreational gardens were soon established

5 These were, in fact, allotment gardens, also referred to as *Kleingarten*.

Fig. 1
Plan of Schreber's gardens in Katowice on Barbary Street in 1926 (top) and in 1941 (bottom), retrieved from Plan Wielkich Katowic (Plan of the Great Katowice), 1926, and Gauhaupstadt Kattowitz, 1941. Both from the author's collection

following the example of Kraków: in Nowy Sącz, Kołomyja, Stryj, Częstochowa, Kalisz, Lublin, Środa, Włocławek, Lwów, Cieszyn, and other towns as well.

In 1899, Warszawskie Towarzystwo Higieniczne (Varsovian Society of Hygiene) organized the two first recreation and sports sites for children in Warsaw, specifically in Agrykola Park and in Ogród Saski (Saxon Garden). These were named after Wilhelm Ellis Rau to celebrate the philanthropist and renowned industrialist of Warsaw who endowed the cause with the very substantial sum of 300,000 rubles (Śliwowska and Wędrowski 1937, 10—17). In 1904, there were already 14 gardens of this kind.

Nonetheless, the German Schreber's garden was the first such concept in Europe, and they were introduced outside Leipzig as well, throughout Prussia in fact. The year 1901 saw the first garden of the sort established in Wrocław, in the Fields (*Teichäcker*) (Gryniewicz-Balińska 2015, 47—50), while the oldest one in Upper Silesia dates back to 1905. It was created in Królewska Huta (part of modern-day

Chorzów) (Dziesięć lat pracy 1938, 111—113), and has continued to function until the present day on ul. Hajducka. The second appeared in Katowice a year later, in 1906 (A.N. 1935, 155), though in an unofficial form. It was legally sanctioned only in 1909 thanks to the establishment of Towarzystwo Ogrodów Szreberowskich Parku Południowego/ Schrebergartenverein am Südpark (Association of Schreber's Gardens of the Southern Park). The area, on formal lease from the Hohenlohe company, was consistently expanded; in time, it came to be called Kolonią nadinżyniera Hugo Tepelmanna (the Colony of Chief Engineer Hugo Tepelmann), derived from the name of its long-standing president. Today, it is known as Rodzinne Ogrody Działkowe im. Tadeusza Kościuszki (Tadeusz Kościuszko Family Allotment Garden) in Katowice, on ul. Barbary 23.

Its layout follows the shape of the letter Z, with two parallel main alleys intersecting at a slanting angle with a third, arching lane. This is a remnant of the original arrangement, based on the concepts of Sitte. On either side of the avenues there are rectangular allotments whose surface ranges from 200 to 500 m^2. A wooden shed or hut could be erected on each, situated well within the perimeter of the plot. Even today, many are a delight to see, retaining their unique and nearly unchanged structure and detail. The principal aesthetics which dominates the architecture of the garden houses is vernacular, spa-like, or Swiss-Tyrolian style, drawing on the 1893 *Holzarchitektur*, the exemplary publication by architect Bernhard Liebold, though one can also discern other trends, such as a rehashed Baroque classicism designated in German culture as "*Um 1800*"(around 1800) (Mebes 1908; Helmigk 1937), whose core idea derives from the rational structure of Johann Wolfgang Goethe's Weimarian *Gartenhaus*. The forms of the Katowice garden houses resemble those exhibited today at Deutsches Kleingärtenmuseum (German Museum of Allotment Gardens) in Leipzig, where the idea was born in 1865. In some cases, they are even more interesting than the latter and thus splendidly complement the museum's collection with new forms. For the most part, the structures found in Katowice underwent little if any transformation; therefore, it would be worthwhile to ensure their immediate protection and to perhaps create an institution equivalent to the one in Leipzig.

An important place in the composition of the entire garden was assigned to the triangular community parcel, intended chiefly as a venue for recreation and exercise for children, where a pond with a fountain, a swing, a merry-go-round, and a bar for gymnastics were put in place (Nałęcz-Gostomski 1926, 244; A.N. 1935, 151; documented in photographs). Regrettably, its erstwhile function has been supplanted by private, ornamental-utilitarian cultivation, while all these facilities have been dismantled and removed. The feature was located at the end of the diagonal avenue (bottom outlier of the letter Z).

The richness of the entire site is reflected in the account of A.N. who observes that in late 1934 the garden "has refurbished outer fences and waterworks, supplying

Fig. 2
Bungalow in the Schreber's garden in Katowice on Barbary Street, 2017
Photo by the author

Fig. 3
Bungalow in the Schreber's garden in Katowice on Barbary Street, 2017
Photo by the author

Fig. 4
Bungalow in the Schreber's garden in Katowice on Barbary Street, 2017
Photo by the author

Fig. 5
The Schreber's garden in Katowice on Barbary Street, 2017
Photo by the author

fresh water to each plot, at a total value of 48,000 zloty, it possesses a community library exceeding 400 volumes, its own sprinkler system and other garden utensils worth 1,000 zloty as well as various exercise equipment and amenities for children to play with and 3,360 zloty of savings in the municipal fund. In the allotments there are also buildings and a special garden adapted to sell milk and beer" (A.N. 1935, 156). The author also adds that the area of the playground and experimental garden for children had been expanded.

The garden in question changed constantly, going through 7 major stages of development which were documented in successive city maps, local regulation plans and designs determining the location of its key facilities, made in 1911, 1915, 1926, 1936, 1939, 1958 and 1972. In the initial phase (1906/1909—1911) the plots were situated only on either side of the main diagonal avenue. In the second stage (1911—1915), new parcels were laid out behind the existing ones, as far as the Beatestrasse (ul. Tadeusza Kościuszki) to the east and Wrangelstrasse (ul. Barbary), leaving a strip of terrain along the street. During the third phase (1915—1926), the acreage of the garden increased by more than twofold, as it was expanded to the west from its oldest part, leaving a considerable expanse of free space between them, in the shape of a four-sided meadow. In the course of the fourth phase (1926—1939), that empty space was put in order and a community playground with a variety of surfaces was created there for general public use. The subsequent fifth stage (1939—1958) begins with the playground being replaced by a new feature, the so-called Jordan's garden, whose official opening took place on May 14th, 1939.[6] That new and ideologically Polish functional element was thus fused with the genetically German Schreber's garden, not only in view of its central location, but also due to the fact that the previously limited potential of the triangular recreational site for children had been improved. New functional elements appeared, located in the all-year brick facility designed in line with the streamlined style, enabling the original concepts of Schreber's and Hauschild's to be enhanced with a broad range of activities for children inside and outside the building.

That period ends with another, this time a post-war investment, namely the lottery office of the so-called Dom Służewca (Służewiec House),[7] which was commissioned in 1958 and followed the functional streamlined style of the pavilion in the Jordan's garden and facilities at the Służewiec horseracing track in Warsaw, from which it took its name. It was built at the juncture with the southern boundary of the oldest part of the garden. At that point, one had to face the inevitable threat of the new vehicle thoroughfare, which irretrievably separated the formerly organically linked elements of Kościuszko Park and the Schreber's garden. Some time earlier,

6 Photographs in the collection of the National Digital Archives: 1-N-285-1, 1-N-285-2, 1-N-285-3, 1-N-285-4, 1-N-285-1 and designs kept in the city hall archives in Katowice, ref. no. A 1/82.

7 Disused today, it had until recently served as the premises of "Galop," an eating establishment designed in 1956 by architect Roman Rudniewski and construction engineer Franciszek Klimek.

the name of the garden had been changed to "allotment" garden,[8] a name maintained by Germans throughout the occupation period (1939—1945). Today, nobody uses the original, historical name. The final period (1958—1972?) saw a reduction of the overall surface and a decrease in the number of parcels. The area to the west was liquidated completely and left fallow, which may have owed to the development of the road network and replacement of the nearby Rondo Mikołowskie (Mikołowskie Roundabout) with flyovers and traffic separation bridges, which took up much of the new area. Today, Rodzinne Ogrody Działkowe im. Tadeusza Kościuszki is limited to the surface it had before 1915, being almost completely cut off from the park. Only a narrow overpass for pedestrians and bicycles suspended above the A4 motorway connects areas which had once constituted an integrated entity. Furthermore, the liquidation of the western section of cultivated plots created a situation where the Jordan's garden, previously a central feature, is now located at the margins, creating a sense of isolation among the unaware. Nowadays, nobody remembers that these elements were connected by one idea, all the more so that the designation of "Jordan's garden" was changed in 1971 to Miejskie Przedszkole nr 3 (municipal kindergarten No. 3) in Katowice.

3. Jordan's gardens

As already observed, the first Jordan's garden was established in 1889 on the initiative of Henryk Jordan in Kraków, so as to give children the opportunity to "play freely in the open air and sun, in good hygienic conditions" (Śliwowska and Wędrowski 1937, 2). The revival of the concept, which later faded somewhat into obscurity, should be attributed to Colonel Juliusz Ulrych, director of the Państwowy Urzęd Wychowania Fizycznego i Przysposobienia Wojskowego (PUWF i PW) (State Office for Physical Education and Military Pre-Training). In 1927, Ulrych was in charge of the closedown of the International Sanitary Exhibition, which had been organized on the military grounds in Warsaw at the junction of ul. Bagatela and al. Ujazdowska. He petitioned Marshall Józef Piłsudski to allot the area for a model children's garden, to which Piłsudski immediately consented. Thus, as of 1928, the matter was within the competence of Ulrych's office. However, the first Jordan's garden was officially commissioned only in 1929 at the site where Warszawskie Towarzystwo Ogrodów Jordanowskich (Warsaw Society of Jordan's Gardens) was established in 1932, becoming a nationwide institution two years later. Still before the latter change, the organization created 9 further gardens in the capital. In other cities, such as Poznań, Łódź, Lwów, and Katowice, similar undertakings were coordinated by the city boards or their respective garden departments. Thanks to the initiative of Centralne Towarzystwo Ogrodów Działkowych (Central Society

8 The debate concerning the naming was reported by anonymous author K-ski (1937).

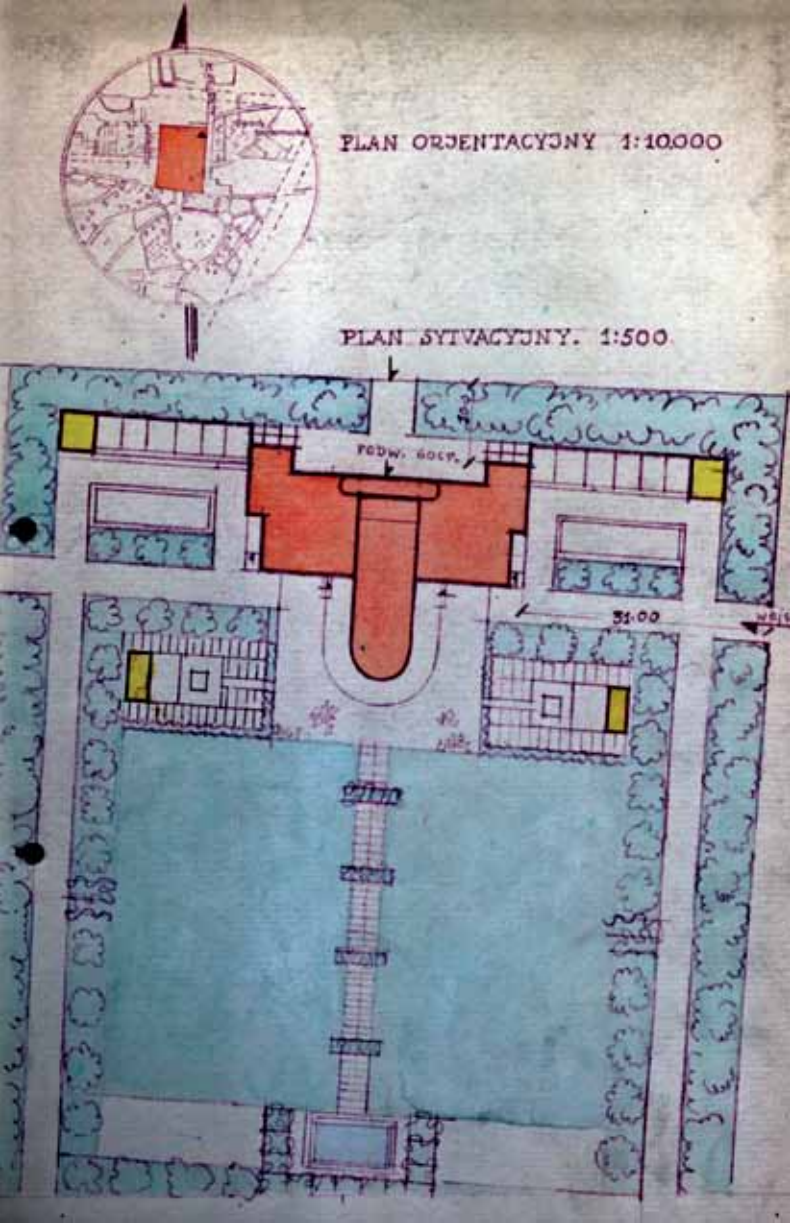

Fig. 6
Plan of Jordan's garden in Katowice on Barbary Street, 1937, designed by Kazimierz Wędrowski
From Archiwum Urzędu Miejskiego w Katowicach, cat. no. A 1/82.

of Allotment Gardens) and the PUWF i PW, the year 1937 saw the publication of a fundamental handbook and compendium relating to the establishment of recreational gardens for children in Poland, entitled *Ogrody Jordanowskie* (Jordan's gardens). The volume was written by Helena Śliwowska,[9] scoutmaster of the Republic of Poland and head of thefemale division ZHP (polish scouting), and architect Kazimierz Wędrowski. In 1938, Śliwowska married Michał Grażyński, the governor of the region, which may have had considerable impact on the extensive initiatives aimed at building Jordan's gardens on the territory of the autonomous

9 See also Kozina (2010, 77).

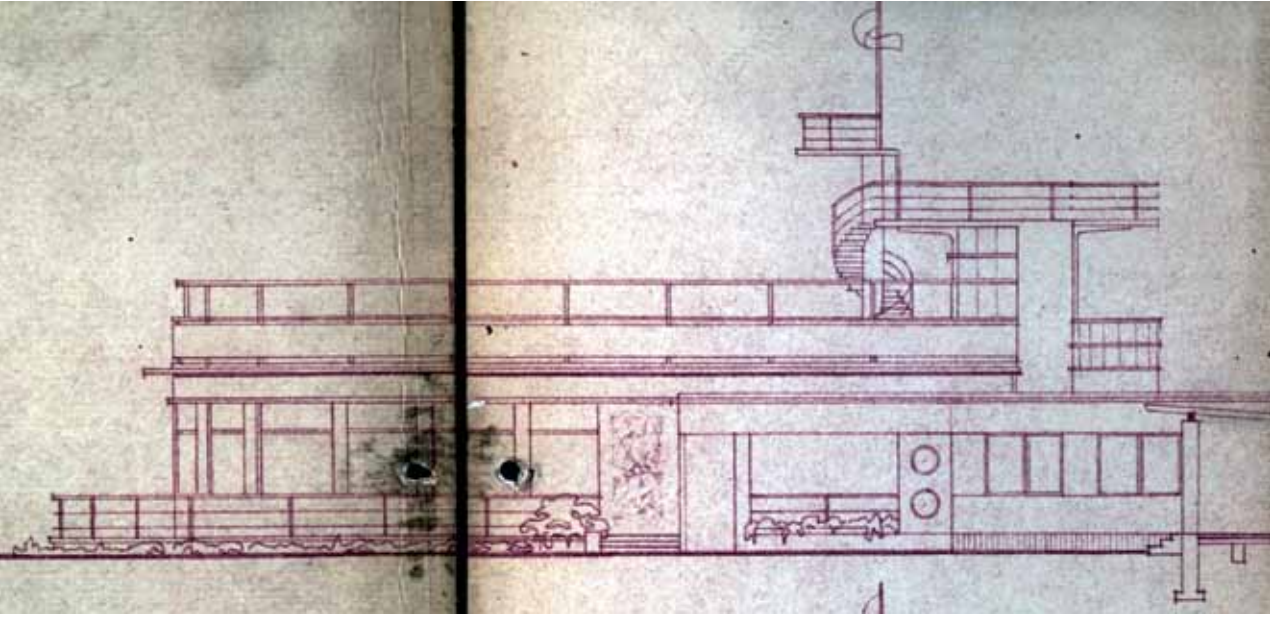

Fig. 7
Eastern façade of the bungalow in Jordan's garden in Katowice on Barbary Street, 1937, designed by Kazimierz Wędrowski
From Archiwum Urzędu Miejskiego w Katowicach , cat. no. A 1/82

province of Silesia that her husband administered. As many as 14 Jordan's gardens had been planned in 1937, including 4 in Katowice (Kozina 2010, 17). At least 7 complexes created as part of that undertaking have survived almost in their entirety: in Katowice (ul. Barbary 25, ul. Gliwicka 212—214, ul. Hallera 72), Mikołów (ul. Konstytucji 3 maja 38), Radzionków (ul. Gajdasa 1), Siemianowice Śląskie (ul. Chopina 2), and Świętochłowice (ul. Harcerska 1) (Nakonieczny 2010).

At least two of the gardens in Katowice were combined into one spatial layout with allotment gardens, by way of adding to their core concept. One of those is the Schreber's garden adjoining Kościuszko Park. The other is the allotment "Świt," established in 1935 in the quarter of Załęże, on ul. Wojciechowskiego (present-day ul. Gliwicka 233), which was attached to the large-surface Jordan's garden across the street (ul. Gliwicka 212—214), where one found a kindergarten building, a janitor's lodge, a reinforced-concrete feature providing visual identification (comprising three flagpoles with representations of three horses), two locker room pavilions, two pools, and numerous smaller structures located throughout its extensive, open grounds.

The Jordan's garden on ul. Barbary 25 was designed by Kazimierz Wędrowski in 1937 and boasted a similarly sophisticated layout composed of surviving brick facilities: the main building, the caretaker's lodge, and the reinforced-concrete entrance gate. The no-longer extant elements include two elongated arcades ending with storehouses, two pergolas, and at least two fountain pools, which were laid out on a large meadow bordered with tall greenery. The entire composition is symmetrical for two reasons: in order to facilitate a balanced division of functions

in the buildings and in the garden into sections for boys and girls, as well as due to the same treatment of the communication route leading to the Schreber's gardens to the east and west. The main building to the north is provided with a basement and access to necessary facilities: a boiler room, fuel depot, kitchen, workshops, and storehouses. The blueprint shows that the ground floor comprised a hallway, children's changing room, showers, dining room, playroom, a stairway connecting all the storeys (basement, first, and second floor), administration rooms, a doctor's office, and an apartment for the janitor. On the first floor there is also a large solarium-terrace, a smaller northward terrace, a roofed deckchair area, and a storeroom for deckchairs. Regrettably, the spiral stairs leading to the terrace above the deckchair area have not survived; from that terrace, one could once climb an iron ladder to the so-called swallow's nest—a small observation deck with a flagpole. The layout of the building is roughly T-shaped, where the vertical element is a rectangle with its bottom side rounded; this is where the two largest interiors are found: the dining room and the playroom. The horizontal body of the building includes three glazed cylindrical forms, which together with the banisters and round windows were to resemble a modern ship or fishing vessel. The structure of the caretaker's lodge featured similar elements. The nautical architecture of both is a synonym for machinism, whose core idea was to ensure rational and economical assignment of functions, simultaneous minimization of expenditure, reliability of the building, and a balance between functional and formal components. Neutral (i.e., glazed as extensively as possible), transparent, white, and smooth architecture consisting of straight, angular, or streamlined forms was to have a similar effect on the imagination of the child as building blocks do. Its aim was to educate, radiating a clear and straightforward message about basic shapes and solids, without the disruption caused by ornaments, texture, and color.

Wędrowski did not accomplish all of his objectives, given that he planned to place a figural composition of a dancing highlander at the entrance on the garden's side; although the feature is included in the design, it was most likely never made. The serenity and clarity of the structure sets the buildings apart from the wealth of color and unpredictable shapes of the organic surroundings. Thanks to a large number of apertures, arcades, terraces, and pergolas, they blur the distinction between the interior and exterior, once again restoring a maximum of nature to culture. It appears to have been a deliberate, comprehensive educational agenda presupposing an impact on both young and adult observers or users. The contrast of white architecture produces a non-invasive and maximally neutral backdrop to the spectacle of natural events, so as to highlight its momentous role in the garden—therapeutic and aesthetic alike. "Thus, nature in the garden performs practical roles and communicates various meanings, yet at the same time—by virtue of human action—it fulfils an aesthetic function as well," as Mateusz Salwa (2016, 85) summed it up.

4. Conclusions

The Schreber's and Jordan's gardens of Katowice encapsulate broader relationships between humans and nature, observed in a typical, modern, twentieth-century city, where nature was crucial to the psycho-physical balance of its residents—not only ensuring leisure opportunities, health, and a sense of comfort, but also offering a possibility of activating all their senses, which have become so shallow in today's world of virtual reality. Therefore, restoring or increasing the share of nature—both wild and controlled nature—in an urbanized environment remains a vital issue. Also, we should not destroy the outcomes of actions undertaken in the past to achieve that end; we should preserve the accomplishments we have inherited from previous generations. Regrettably, green areas in cities continue to dwindle, consumed by new development projects. In order to draw the attention of the community to the significance of urban greenery in Katowice (among other things), Wojtek Siegmund and I have embarked on a grassroots initiative and, having organized multiple events, succeeded in registering the Dom Modernisty foundation.[10] Its foremost aim includes encouraging inhabitants to action by discovering the potential and value of their place of residence. By June 10th, 2017, we had organized 11 meetings, including 10 in the series Festiwal Ogrodów (festival of gardens), which consists in monthly lectures combined with walks; their themes consistently explored the interactions between three subjects: humans, architecture, and nature. Invariably, the meetings translate into greater knowledge gained by both the speakers and the participants. The first edition of the Festival of Gardens, focusing on green modernism, took place on August 20th, 2016. I prepared three walks covering the gardens in a southern quarter of Katowice, one Jordan's and one Schreber's garden as well as three villa gardens: Anton Zimmermann's, created in 1907, Michał Zieliński's (1925—1927) and Zygmunt Żurawski's (1927—1931). This paper presents some of the information obtained in the course of my research which was communicated at the time to the participants.

The project was subsequently submitted to *Otwarty konkurs ofert na zadania publiczne województwa śląskiego w sferze działań na rzecz zachowania wielokulturowości regionu oraz kultury mniejszości narodowych i etnicznych w 2017 roku* (*Open Competition for Public Tasks of the Silesia Region to Preserve Multiculturality of the Region and Cultures of National and Ethnic Minorities in 2017*), held by the marshal'soffice of Silesia. As a result, we received a subsidy of 8,000 PLN to organize an open-air exhibition entitled *Ślady wielokulturowości Górnego Śląska na przykładzie ogrodów szreberowskich i jordanowskich* (*Multicultural Traces in Upper Silesia, on the Example of Schreber's and Jordan's Gardens in Katowice*), taking place from September 15th to December 9th 2017. The exhibition consisted of panels

10 See http://dommodernisty.org.pl.

Fig. 8
Bungalow in Jordan's garden in Katowice on Barbary Street seen from the south-east, 2017
Photo by the author

outlining the origins of the gardens, their goals, and their later fates, displayed on the grounds of the allotment gardens and kindergarten area. The public had free and unconstrained access to the exhibition. Furthermore, two meetings are planned to gather local community and elicit a discussion concerning the history of gardens. The meetings will be held in the community club at Park im. Tadeusza Kościuszki (Tadeusz Kościuszko Park) in Katowice. A guided tour of the gardens and the surviving period garden houses has been planned as well.

In 1934, the governor of Silesia, Michał Grażyński, meaningfullys tated that "allotment gardens add beauty to our industrial landscape, bring people closer to nature, giving them opportunity to forget the daily concerns and toil of professional work, let them breathe deeper, evoking a smile of joy with the crops they reap. It enables them to feel closer to what is called 'the blessing of earth'"(1934, 81). The verses sung by Jonasz Kofta, who in 1952 lived in a Katowice villa with a large extensive garden at Gen. Zajączka 10, in the vicinity of a Schreber's garden, also do not seem to have lost their relevance: "Remember the gardens, / for that's where

you came from. / In the heat of the age they will bestow the cool shade. / Only trees, only leaves." Might it be that these words recall the Katowice garden of his childhood?

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Informed aesthetic consensus and the creation of urban environments

Johannes Müller-Salo
(Centre for Advanced Study in Bioethics, University of Münster)

Abstract

The aim of this paper is to analyze the aesthetics of urban environments. One central feature of urban environments is that they are surroundings that we share with each other and hence their aesthetic outlook belongs to our *common world*. One may then ask how common, i.e. shared surroundings should be planned, designed and managed? The author claims that an informed aesthetic consensus is needed. Throughout the paper he discusses why it is important to think about a consensus within urban aesthetic decision making in postmodern times, he presents the notion of an informed aesthetic consensus and its importance for aesthetic theory, finally—he explains how it may be applied to democratic processes of urban aesthetic decision making

Key words

Aesthetics, consensus, democracy, urban management

1. Introduction[1]

More and more people in all parts of the world are living in urban surroundings. Urbanization is a central feature of societal development in the present that is unlikely to decelerate in the future. For most human beings on earth, the commonplace environment is an urban environment. Taking this for granted, it is surprising that until now the aesthetic importance of urban structures has only onrare occasions been analyzed philosophically, even within the ever-growing philosophical discipline of

1 An earlier version of this paper was presented at the XIIth International Summer Conference of the *International Institute of Applied Aesthetics*: "Considerations in Urban Aesthetics: Planning, Mobilities and Everyday Life," Lahti/Helsinki, May 31—June 2, 2017. I thank the conference's participants for an inspiring discussion and, especially, Sanna Lehtinen and Swantje Martach for their thoughtful and attentive comments.

environmental aesthetics,[2] and even within its latest development, the analysis of day to day surroundings that is sometimes called the *aesthetics of everyday life*.[3] Urban aesthetics is a field that still needs a lot of groundwork to be done.[4]

There is no intention to provide part of this groundwork here. In what follows, I will rather focus on a specific and, as I believe, highly important question—important from an aesthetic as well as from a political point of view. One central feature of urban environments is that they are common environments, surroundings that we share with each other. To be sure, many forms of land, buildings, and infrastructure can be owned privately, and nothing in this essay challenges that. Nevertheless, from an aesthetic point of view this private property, in its myriad forms, is part of our urban environment as well. We might not be allowed to enter a certain garden or work place, but the sensual appearance of the garden and the factory, as far as we can perceive it via walking on the street or stopping in front of an old and rusty forged fence, is still an important part of our aesthetic experience. Borrowing a term from Hannah Arendt, the aesthetic outlook of our urban surroundings belongs to our *common world*.[5]

How shall we design and develop common surroundings that we share with each other? And how should we decide about these questions of design and development, how should decision procedures be framed? In this paper I will consider these questions from an *aesthetic* as well as a political point of view. The focus is on the aesthetic aspects of urban design as opposite to, let us say, the ethical, technical, social, or ecological aspects of urban planning.[6] In addition, the focus is also political, as I will concentrate on the question of how aesthetic decision making with regard to shared urban surroundings could be framed in a way that is adequately responsive to contemporary ideals of democracy and civic participation.

The following paper is divided into four further sections. In the next section (2), I will briefly discuss why it is important to think about the role of informed

2 In his short history of environmental aesthetics in "ten steps," Allen Carlson mentions the broadening of its focus "to include human-influenced and human-constructed environments" as the eighth step of this discipline's development (Carlson 2014, 20). Important contributions to urban aesthetics include Berleant (1997; especially chapters 2 and 7), von Bonsdorff (1998, 139—160, especially chapter 4), Haapala (1998), Carlson (2001), Berleant and Carlson (2007).

3 For an excellent introduction into the field of *aesthetics of the everyday* see Saito (2007).

4 For possible and worthwhile directions of future research in urban aesthetics within an interdisciplinary setting see Lehtinen (2017).

5 "The term 'public' signifies the world itself, in so far as it is common to all of us and distinguished from our privately-owned place in it. This world, however, is not identical with the earth or with nature, as the limited space for the movement of men and the general condition of organic life. It is related, rather, to the human artifact, the fabrication of human hands, as well as to affairs which go on among those who inhabit the man-made world together. To live together in the world means essentially that a world of things is between those who have it in common" (Arendt 1989, 52).

6 Obviously, in real cases a sharp distinction between these different planning aspects is impossible, as there are manifold interconnections. In any case, the focus on the aesthetic aspects of planning is necessary for a clear theoretical exposition of the central concepts that are under discussion in this text.

aesthetic consensus within urban aesthetic decision making in postmodern times. After that the notion of an informed aesthetic consensus and its importance for aesthetic theory is presented in detail (3), followed by an example of intentional consensus-formation applicable to urban aesthetic decision making (4). The final section (5) will deal with questions of feasibility. I will explain that the idea of an informed aesthetic consensus might be used in the creation of participatory planning scenarios that are feasible and at the same time acceptable from a democratic point of view.

Two further comments might be useful at this point. First, I will not discuss at length the existing literature on the ethics of planning, on different modes and models of civic participation in urban development. To be sure, this discussion is of great importance for the present topic. A comprehensive treatment of the foundations of democratic urban planning would have to include this strand of thought, especially in light of the fact that conceptions of consensus have been deployed within communicative approaches to planning theory.[7] In this text, my attempt is rather to confront some contemporary political philosophies directly with aesthetic questions that arise in the context of urban planning. The leading question is whether applied environmental aesthetics can benefit from incorporating certain developments within political philosophy. This approach does not conflict with the search for an ethics of planning. It should be seen as a complementary theoretical enterprise. Second, in the previous paragraphs I have already used the terms *environment*, *space*, and *surrounding* for describing the entities that are dealt with in this paper. These terms are basic for environmental aesthetics, and, consequently, the use of these terms is controversial. Nothing in this paper is meant to imply a defense of one of these terms' specific interpretation. I use all of them interchangeably in a rather colloquial way. For the purposes of this paper, there is no need to get into extensive discussions of terminological fundaments.[8]

2. Pluralism and the Necessity to Act

In this paper, the notion of informed aesthetic consensus—that is, consensus between citizens (in this case, between a city's inhabitants)—will be developed at length. To many, the connection between aesthetics and the idea of consensus might be irritating straightaway. Aesthetic values and aesthetic judgments might be interpreted in an objectivist or a subjectivist way, they might be a matter of taste,

7 The rise of modes of inclusionary, participatory, and communicative planning is described in Innes (1995); Sager (2012) offers a description of political philosophy's influence on planning theory, putting special emphasis on those political theories of consensus that are employed in this paper as well.

8 For discussions of the concept of "environment" as it is used within environmental aesthetics, see Berleant (1992, chapter 1) and Carlson (2002, chapter 4). For the concept of "space" (and its relation to "place") and its importance for environmental and urban aesthetics, see Lehtinen (2015, chapter 1).

but they surely cannot be a matter of majority decisions or, even stronger, of consensus among citizens. Hence, what would be the point in discussing the notion of informed aesthetic consensus? The answer to this question contains one undeniable assumption and two observations. The assumption is this: citizens live next to each other within a shared urban environment. They inevitably use the urban space together—even if it consists of both privately and commonly owned buildings and places. This urban space has to be created and designed in a certain way. Decisions have to be made concerning the urban environment's aesthetic outlook. There is no way to avoid making these decisions, as arefusal to decide implies the acceptance of *laissez faire* or the city's officials' competence to decide these matters.

Decisions concerning the aesthetic outlook of urban surroundings are unavoidable. Someone has to make them, but who? Here, my first observation comes into play. One could answer that the experts in this field should decide—the urban planners, architects, artists, or maybe even philosophical aestheticians. Such procedures of decision making are well known from other areas: if one does not know, one asks the expert who knows all the relevant facts, considerations, and arguments and is therefore able to decide *correctly*. Such a procedure seems to be possible in areas of decision making where there exists a body of knowledge commonly shared and agreed on by the experts in the respective area.

Unfortunately, things are different with regards to aesthetics. The notion that it is possible to find an expert who objectively knows how a particular urban surrounding has to be designed, who could decide on the aesthetic aspects of urban space correctly—in themeaningful sense of this word—seems to be wrong. Such a notion presupposes the existence of commonly accepted, objective criteria of urban beauty or urban aesthetic value that an expert might apply in a reliable way to a specific urban surrounding. For a long time, aestheticians believed in objective criteria for beauty. For instance, Aristotle (1976, 96) claimed "the main forms of the beautiful are order, symmetry and definiteness, which are what the mathematical branches of knowledge demonstrate to the highest degree". And, even in the 20th century, varieties of objectivism have been very influential. Monroe Beardsley (1958, 462), to mention just one famous example, claimed that unity, complexity, and intensity are those features of aesthetic objects that are essential for the magnitude and value of aesthetic experiences.

In our days, however, the attempt to find objective criteria of aesthetic value seems to be misguided. Obvious shifts in values, the development of modern arts, the plurality of cultures and subcultures within a modern society impede the hope for such a straightforward solution to questions of aesthetic urban design. This by no means implies that expertise is not relevant for aesthetic decision making. On the contrary, I will argue in section 4 that it is very important in the process of informed aesthetic decision making. However, expertise in the field of urban

aesthetic is relational, depends on personal training, specific perspectives, and developed preferences. There is no general answer to the question of "What makes X an aesthetically rewarding urban surrounding?" that is not linked to the personal point of view of the respondents.

Nothing I have said so far is new or surprising for those engaged in contemporary aesthetic discourse. Nevertheless, it is important to bring these considerations to mind, as they are paralleled by similar considerations within political philosophy that might be helpful in finding an answer to the problem discussed here. Political philosophers are confronted with a comparable difficulty. For, say, Plato, the answer to the question of "What should a good state look like?" was in a way quite simple: there was a set of primary facts about the world, about its function, its value, and the individual's place within it. The expert—the philosopher king—knew these facts. And because of this superior knowledge, he was capable of designing a state and a political order that adequately reflected these facts. The state's order was somehow deductively derived from primary facts.[9]

In modern times, with its pluralistic cultures and multifaceted societies, politics cannot be based on such an objective theory of the good of the world, the state, and the human. An alternative is needed. And some of the most important political philosophers of the late 20th and early 21st century believe that consensus is a promising alternative. I will mention only two approaches. In his *Theory of Justice*, John Rawls (1972, 141f.) claims that a political order can be justifiably based on principles that are (or should be) acceptable for everyone under certain conditions.[10] People might have very different conceptions of good and value in life, but, whatever else they might want and wish for, they have an interest in living in a society where these principles are realized.[11]

The consensus Rawls envisages is primarily an abstract, theoretical consensus, even though, in later works, he assumes that it could be a factual and real "overlapping" consensus between reasonable persons living in liberal democracies.[12] However, there are other theories that adopt the idea of consensus and that try to apply it in a more concrete, realistic manner. Probably the most important theory

9 Concerning objectively just order and the individual's place within it, see Plato's *Politeia* 433a—b; concerning the rule of the expert, see e.g., *Politikos* 293c.

10 It is important to emphasize that this unanimous agreement does not presuppose any collectively shared theory of the good. Rawls rather accepts the existence of "a plurality of reasonable but incompatible comprehensive doctrines" (Rawls 2005, XVI). This reasonable pluralism is, according to Rawls, a typical feature of modern liberal democracies.

11 Rawls assumes, in his scenario of unanimous consensus, that the parties involved "take an interest in primary social goods, in things that men are presumed to want whatever else they want" (Rawls 1972, 260). A full account of "primary goods" that everyone wants to possess and that make consensus possible is given in Rawls (2005, 178—186; lecture V, § 3).

12 In the *A Theory of Justice*, the consensus is an abstract one between those parties gathering together in the *original position*—a theoretical, exactly defined scenario. See Rawls (1972, 118—122, 146f). The principles that are chosen unanimously in this scenario are presented in Rawls (1972, 302f) and Rawls (2005, 137). The idea of a broad overlapping consensus developed between reasonable people is presented in Rawls (1972, 144—150; lecture IV, § 3).

in this field is Jürgen Habermas's *Between Facts and Norms* (1997).[13] According to Habermas, "only those statutes may claim legitimacy that can meet with the assent (*Zustimmung*) of all citizens in a discursive process of legislation that in turn has been legally constituted" (1997, 110).[14] The discourses Habermas envisages are not merely theoretical abstracts, but *real* discussion between citizens: "What is valid must be able to prove its worth against any future objections that might *actually* be raised" (1997, 35; my emphasis). Ideally, as Habermas's *democratic principle* stated above indicates, these discourses lead to consensus.[15]

The parallels between the "aesthetic case" and the "political case" are remarkable. People have to live together in a society. A city's inhabitants have to design their commonly shared urban environment in some way. It is a practical necessity and hence there is no option but to institutionalize society, to design common urban space. At the same time, no valid singular conception of the good life is capable of validly serving as an "objective" fundament for a society's political and institutional order. Likewise, there is no singular conception of the aesthetically rewarding and valuable city at hand that might serve as a blueprint for "correct" aesthetic decision making. Confronted with this problem, political philosophers regularly propose consensus as a suitable solution. Why should the same not be true for aesthetic decision making as well? It seems well worth developing this parallel further and investigating the prospects of consensus-based urban design.[16]

There is one further reason for pursuing the proposed analysis: even if one does not agree that aesthetic matters in our time lack the kind of unambiguousness assumed here, one should stillconsider the prospect of aesthetic consensus building. The entities under discussion are public spaces, commonly shared urban environments that belong to all inhabitants. Even if a certain person might reasonably and on good grounds claim that she is an expert concerning the design of a certain place and that she somehow knows best concerning what the citizenry should do, it is far from clear that because of her expertise she should decide. The very idea of democracy comes into play here. If living together in a city should be organized democratically, the inhabitants should have the last word. They might be prudent

13 Habermas's philosophy is one of the cornerstones of communicative approaches to planning theory mentioned above (note 6). For a recent discussion of its merits and its difficulties with regard to urban planning in general and urban planning within complex cultural situations (e.g., multicultural megacities) in particular see Mattila (2016).

14 Habermas derives this *principle of democracy* from the general *discourse principle*: "Just those action norms are valid to which all possibly affected persons could agree as participants in rational discourses" (Mattila, 2016, 107).

15 Even though, practically, the consensus often won't be a substantial consensus but rather a procedural consensus, an agreement on procedures to find decisions: "The consensus fought for and achieved in an association of free and equal persons ultimately rests on the unity of a *procedure* to which all consent…. The citizens want to regulate their living together according to principles that are in the equal interest of each and thus can meet with the justified assent of all" (Mattila 2016, 496).

16 Further similarities could be analyzed: for example, within politics as within urban aesthetics there is—at least normally—no *creatio ex nihilo*. Rather, the principal task consists in further developments of existing resources, institutions, and structures.

in opting for the solution presented by an expert; nevertheless, they certainly have the right to decide otherwise.

The analogy between political philosophy and urban aesthetics can be stressed a bit further—and this is my second observation. Many political philosophers who defend democratic decision making and the ideal of consensus understand the apprehension that democratic procedures might lead to irrational and populist decisions. In order to diminish these dangers, they conceive of procedures that not only lead to consensus but to *informed* consensus. The consensus should somehow adequately reflect all available information that is important for the subject in questions. Therefore, Rawls claims that a consensus in the *original position* should be formed "in the light of all the relevant facts" (Rawls 1972, 417).[17] And Habermas describes the discursive search for consensus as follows:

> deliberations are inclusive and public. No one may be excluded in principle; all of those who are possibly affected by the decisions have equal chances to enter and take part…. Deliberations are free of any internal coercion that could detract from the equality of the participants. Each has an equal opportunity to be heard, to introduce topics, to make contributions, to suggest and criticize proposals (1997, 305).

These prerequisites, *inter alia*, guarantee that everyone is free in introducing those reasons theyconsider to be important for the subject under discussion. If a consensus is formed as a result of such free discourse, it will probably be a consensus properly supported by relevant reasons. Surely, the same can be true with regard to urban aesthetics. A consensus is more reasonable if the inhabitants who participate in the process of consensus formation are well informed and sufficiently acquainted with the urban environment in question and its relevant *aesthetic* dimensions.[18] Consequently, the next step in this analysis consists in answering the question of which conditions ought to be fulfilled for an aesthetic consensus be an *informed* aesthetic consensus.

3. The Concept of Informed Aesthetic Consensus

It is now time for a closer look at the formation and functioning of informed aesthetic consensus. I cannot develop a full account of the complex process of consensus formation here, but it is important to highlight some essential features of consensuses.[19] An aesthetic consensus is an agreement between some people or a group with regard to the aesthetic value of certain entities. Aesthetic consensuses

17 See also Rawls (1972, 70)—the parties in the original position "reason only from general beliefs shared by citizens generally, as part of their public knowledge. These beliefs are the general facts on which their selection of the principles of justice is based."

18 See Haapala (2005) concerning the ideas of aesthetic acquaintance and familiarity with everyday environments.

19 In Müller-Salo (2016), I analyzed the process of consensus formation and its importance for an adequate understanding of aesthetic value judgments, thereby focusing on the aesthetic evaluation of natural environments.

are ultimately grounded in the individual aesthetic experiences of human beings. A person experiences a certain object, a landscape, a surrounding, or an environment, natural or artificial, as aesthetically valuable or worthless. Based on this and similar experiences, she might form an aesthetic judgment on the aesthetic worth of the entity in question. Whenever two persons start a discussion about the aesthetic experience of the object in question, they begin to negotiate on the possibility of aesthetic consensus between them. If they agree on an aesthetic value judgment, if their agreement is stable and continually accepted by other persons as well, then an aesthetic consensus can be formed within a society. Such consensuses can be stable over time, as they are typically conserved via the media, via art, literature, and their integration into educational programs.

Aesthetic consensuses are a vivid part of our daily cultural experience. Think about societal consensuses concerning the high aesthetic value of certain works of art. Consensuses are present in advertisements, where the same motifs and depictions of landscapes are used again and again on TV, on leaflets, and on postcards. Consensuses appear in the construction of look-outs which are installed at sites commonly considered to be of enormous aesthetic value.[20] Finally they can be found in the literature and cultural memory of a society, which connects specific places and urban settings with particular aesthetic attributes.

Consensuses, as these examples show, are developed within certain times at certain places between certain people. They are limited by space and time; they can be deeper or more superficial. They can include nearly every member of a society or just some group as anavant-garde or a certain subculture. Consensuses should be distinguished from random coincidences between different peoples' individual tastes. This differentiation is not always possible or easy to recognize, but, in general, consensuses are evaluational agreements that, unlike architectural trends for instance, possess a certain temporal stability and societal visibility.

So far, I have indicated how consensus formation might work and how the existence of aesthetic consensuses can be experienced within everyday life. Aesthetic consensuses that are focused on the aesthetic evaluation of a certain urban environment function in quite the same way. People have aesthetic experiences within these environments; they discuss them with each other, and eventually a consensus between some of them might form. At this point, however, one feature becomes of crucial importance. If aesthetic consensuses, as the last section suggested, should be an adequate base of aesthetic decision making for urban environments, it is important that these consensuses are formed *within an adequate group*. If a consensus is to legitimatize an aesthetic decision, it has to be a consensus that includes all relevant stakeholders. It cannot simply be a consensus between some random people or between certain groups of citizens. In the case of urban aesthetic decision

20 See Sepänmaa (1986).

making, the inhabitants all together form the group of stakeholders that is relevant. Consequently, an aesthetic consensus concerning a certain urban environment can be an adequate and legitimate fundament of aesthetic urban design if and only if this consensus is a consensus formed between the city's inhabitants.

Certainly not every aesthetic consensus is an *informed* aesthetic consensus. In what follows I will propose three conditions a consensus has to fulfill in order to be an informed aesthetic consensus. These conditions can be called *sufficient personal engagement*, *sufficient basic knowledge of the object*, and*sufficient knowledge of the object's aesthetic interpretation*.

Sufficient personal engagement: I borrow the term 'engagement' from Arnold Berleant's (1992) well known work on environmental aesthetics. The main idea in positing this condition is that an appropriate aesthetic judgment must be grounded in a person's longer lasting aesthetic engagement with the object in question.[21] This engagement certainly includes different personal aesthetic encounters with the object that endureover a certain period of time. With regard to urban environments, one can reasonably claim that several aesthetic experiences should be hadthat reveal the environment's different facets, as they appear in different seasons, under varying weather conditions and times of the day, etc.[22]

Sufficient basic knowledge of the object: The second condition requires that a person has enough basic knowledge about the object she is evaluating from an aesthetic point of view. This does not imply that it is not possible to have a rewarding aesthetic experience of an object that one does not understand. Nevertheless, an informed aesthetic consensus needs informed citizens. The knowledge needed is provided by those disciplines that study the object in question scientifically. As we all know, with regard to urban surroundings, many disciplines are relevant; the most important ones include urban planning, human geography, architecture, history of urban life, history of art, and urban sociology.[23]

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21 This is not the place to develop a full theory of aesthetic experience and aesthetic value judgments. Nevertheless, this first condition surely implies the thesis that aesthetic judgments are different from other forms of judgments in at least one important way: they have to be based on personal experience. A world-famous critic can tell me that a novel is aesthetically rewarding, but I cannot know of its aesthetic value until I have read it myself, whereas I can know its length via reading the critic's text which mentions the number of pages the novel includes. As this understanding of aesthetic experience seems to be widespread, the first condition for informed aesthetic consensus can be assumed without discussing these matters further.

22 A fully developed account of urban aesthetic engagement would have to confront several problems that cannot be discussed here. One important difficulty is this: how can one engage aesthetically with an urban environment that does not exist yet? A possible answer could emphasize the importance of studying planning models (e.g., digitally presented and animated urban spaces) and direct aesthetic interaction with the current state of the land chosen for urban construction.

23 This second condition's main idea is well known from other areas of philosophy, especially medical ethics. If some treatment is only acceptable if the patient undergoing this treatment *agrees*, the patient's consent can only be valid if she has been adequately informed about the treatment, its benefits, and its risks. This is the very idea of *informed consent*, see Beauchamp and Childress (2013). The same is true with regard to informed aesthetic consensus: informed aesthetic consensus is a legitimate basis of urban aesthetic decision making because the individuals concurring with

Sufficient knowledge of the object's aesthetic interpretation: The third condition requires one's acquaintance with traditions of aesthetic interpretation and evaluation regarding the object in question. One could make the claim that this is a part of the second condition as some scientific disciplines deal with the histories of cultural interpretation and symbolic usage of urban surroundings. But I think it is worth positing this aspect separately, as knowledge of these areas can be gained not only through the mentioned disciplines but also through direct individual engagement with the cultural symbols in question. Think, for example, about the contrast between small towns in rural areas and big metropolises. If one evaluates the aesthetic experiences ofa small town, one should be familiar with the attitudes, mentalities, descriptions, and other cultural images that are associated with small townsin one's own culture, as they are, for instance, presented in novels and music. These might have a big impact on one's own perception and judgment.

Obviously, these three conditions do not apply to an aesthetic consensus as such, but rather to individual persons. However, the relation is clear: an aesthetic consensus will be an informed aesthetic consensus if the people participating in forming or upholding this consensus—or at least a sufficient number of them—individually fulfill these criteria. Sufficiently informed citizens are able to build informed aesthetic consensuses.

4. Strolling through the district, reaching informed aesthetic consensus

It has been explained how aesthetic consensus formation works and which criteria are suitable for qualifying a certain consensus as informed. Subsequently, in this section I will answer the question of how an informed aesthetic consensus might be reached in practice using an example that illustrates how processes of consensus formation can be initiated and guided intentionally.

It is by no means self-evident that an aesthetic consensus concerning a certain environment has formed within a local group or within a bigger society. The formation of such consensuses depends on very different cultural factors and influences. In my view, one of the main difficulties urban aesthetics has to confront is the fact that few urban surroundings are the object of an aesthetic consensus, no matter whether they are informed or fluid, vague, and superficial. Explaining this observation merits an in-depth analysis that I cannot offer here and that probably should be left to a historian or sociologist. That being said, at least one plausible explanation should be mentioned: Yuriko Saito pointed out in her intriguing work on the aesthetics of the everyday that the Western tradition of taking fine arts and

this consensus have adequate basic knowledge about the urban environment in question. Consensuses' legitimatizing force would be much weaker if this criterion were given up. Carlson prominently defended the idea that knowledge is important for an adequate aesthetic appreciation of human environments, see Carlson (2000, chapters 4 and 5).

the individual engagement with fine arts as the most important, paradigmatic case of aesthetic experience and aesthetic evaluation probably contributed to the aesthetic negligence of the everyday—and urban surroundings are an important part of the everyday (Saito 2007, chapter 1).

In any case, this problem has to be tackled if the idea of consensus is tobe used as a device for the structuring of urban aesthetic decision making. The formation of an aesthetic consensus is impossible unless those myriad "ordinary" urban environments come into focus of aesthetic attention. Urban aesthetics as applied aesthetics should conceptualize methods and tools that create possibilities for a city's inhabitants to engage aesthetically with their daily urban surroundings. Furthermore, citizens have to be provided with opportunities for gaining the knowledge required for the formation of informed aesthetic consensuses.

Imagine an urban district in a city of average size, a district in which people both live and work, a district that has been built over a long period of time as is typical for many European cities, a district that consequently comprises buildings of very different eras and styles of architecture. Imagine further that, in the local parliament or committee, some competing plans for further urban development are under discussion. As the topic is very controversial, the local parliament furthers the citizen's participation. Hence, they ask scholars working in the field of urban aesthetics to design projects for informing and including citizens. Without a doubt, this example is highly idealized. Nevertheless, it is well worth pursuing it. The problem of idealization and practicability will be addressed in the subsequent section.

An urban aesthetician in the example could, for instance, create a series of guided and unguided promenades through the district in question.[24] These promenades have to include elements that enable citizens to fulfill those three conditions necessary for informed aesthetic consensus mentioned in the last section. First, sufficient personal aesthetic engagement with the district is needed. Therefore, there should be a series of promenades rather than just one. Throughout this series the citizens should cross all important streets and areasof the district—and it might well be the case that some hidden street corner is aesthetically more important than a bigger road. Some of the promenades should be experienced by daylight, some in the dusk, others in the middle of the night. They should walk in winter and in summer; they should experience a hot summer afternoon, when the heat is interrupting the city's normal life and when every move through town is inconceivably arduous. They should experience a rainy day in the spring as well. They should walk but maybe sometimes take a bike or the bus as well.

24 In designing tools for urban aesthetic engagement, urban aesthetics can naturally rely on models of communicative planning, as mentioned in section 1 (see above, note 6) and as they are extensively discussed in the literature on urban planning. Nevertheless, in this case, those models are adapted as well as transformed, as they are used for preparing-grounds for informed consensus.

Second, an informed aesthetic consensus is only possible if the inhabitants know enough about the district—that is, if they gain sufficient aesthetically important basic knowledge. Therefore, some of the promenades should be accompanied by experts, who, due to their profession, have a certain perspective on the city and the inhabitant's lives. Needless to say, one promenade should be headed by an architect or a historian of architecture who might explain important characteristics of the town's appearance. They might, for example, explain why houses of a certain sort are of greater value in this city as they are one of the first buildings of a new style or the result of an extraordinary political or historical process.

Besides these experts, the urban aesthetician should think about including some persons in the promenades that are not experts in any particular discipline but experts of the district, persons that possess local knowledge that might not be scientific. Think of the classic example of the old neighbor who has lived in the quarter for almost fifty years and who knows exactly how they used to handle certain problems in the area a long time ago. But think as well of persons who, due to their profession, might have a very unique view of the district. For example, take the refuse collector who works for public services. He might describe how the district looks everyday early in the morning when the streets are empty and when last night's trashhas not yet been removed. Go on like this, think of a police officer working in the district, a cleric, and a bus driver.

Third, sufficient knowledge of the object's aesthetic interpretation is needed for informed aesthetic consensus. The already mentioned architects and historians of architecture might be very helpful in passing on the relevant knowledge. Nevertheless, in this case, other disciplines might be needed as well. Think of a sociologist or a historian of mentalities. Those scholars, accompanying the promenades, could explain that certain types of houses are a symbol for a certain style of politics—for example, a social democrats' politics fostering owner-occupied houses for working class people. Likewise, they could explain that certain types of residential areas are often connected within the realm of arts and cultural imaging with certain mentalities, worldviews, and political attitudes. For example, in German culture, single family houses with garden gnomes in the front yard are often associated with some form of narrow-minded conservatism.

This example could be developed in much more detail. I think that a city's inhabitants who participate in such a series of promenades would be adequately equipped to evaluate some general plans of district development or some plans for the design of a specific site from an aesthetic point of view. Between these inhabitants, informed aesthetic consensus seems possible. They might agree which development or design plan is preferable from an aesthetic point of view.

5. The Problem of Practicability

In this final section, the time has come to address a central problem: is there any chance of realizing the ideas developed so far? It might be true that informed aesthetic consensus could be an adequate basis for aesthetic decision making in urban planning. It might be true that programs like the series of promenades presented in the last section could be an appropriate way to enable citizens to form adequately informed aesthetic consensuses. However, is the argument presented above anything more than ideal theory? Is it not utterly unrealistic to assume that a city's inhabitants will ever agree in preferring one planning scenario to another one from an aesthetic point of view? Furthermore, it is certainly unreasonableto assume that all inhabitants can participate in programs that, like the series of promenades, foster aesthetic sensibility in an appropriate way.

Doubts like these are perfectly understandable and need a careful reply. Such an answer consists of two parts. The first is this: many practical, especially political, philosophers envisage theoretical scenarios, develop them with great diligence, and, at the same time, are perfectly aware that these scenarios will never become reality becausethey are highly idealized. Nevertheless, these scenarios have an important function: due to their abstraction, they can be used to clarify concepts that are relevant within a particular field. They can elucidate the mutual connection between these concepts. Therefore, within these scenarios a level of conceptual accuracy can be reached that is impossible in real world scenarios. Finally, these abstract scenarios allow for the development of ideals that can be used as a standard for the measurement of daily practice's legitimacy, righteousness, improvement, etc.

This leads me to the second part of the answer: once again, the analogy between the "aesthetic case" and the "political case" is very helpful. Political philosophers deploying the idea of consensus are confronted with the very same problem—namely, that, in practically every imaginable political act, the achievement of consensus is highly improbable. They developed strategies that can be appropriated used as well within the urban aesthetic framework presented in this paper.

One such strategy is to work with the concept of "mini-publics." Mini-publics are conceptualized in different ways, but some key features are common to all proposals.[25] A small group of citizens meets at different occasions over a certain period of time to discuss a clearly specified political problem. The citizens are selected by a random procedure that guarantees the group's representativeness. The discussions within the group are structured in ways that try to ensure that the real discourses are as close to ideal discourse situations as possible. Amongst other things, the

25 For an overview, see Goodin (2008).

participants are provided with all the information that they themselves consider to be of importance for the issue under discussion.[26]

Within such a framework, a consensus between those parties involved in a mini-public's discussion does not seem to be a utopian hope any longer. However, it should be assumed that in some cases consensus will still not be reached. Even in those cases, the deliberative framework introduced here will be of use. Habermas comments on majority decisions as the final element of deliberative discourses as follows:

> Deliberations aim in general at rationally motivated agreement and can in principle be indefinitely continued or resumed at any time. Political deliberations, however, must be concluded by majority decision in view of pressures to decide. Because of its internal connection with a deliberative practice, majority rule justifies the presumption that the fallible majority opinion may be considered a reasonable basis for a common practice until further notice, namely, until the minority convinces the majority that their (the minority's) views are correct (Habermas 1997, 306).

If a due deliberative process has taken place that included all relevant aspects and that has been conducted fairly by all parties, motivated solely by "the unforced force of the better argument" (Habermas 1997, 306), a majority decision is appropriate. The process of deliberation guarantees that all relevant reasons are present and somehow adequately reflected in the majority's final decision.[27]

These reflections on the application of normative ideals of consensus can be of use within urban aesthetics as well. They make clear how the problem of practicability can be solved. The series of promenades that has been described in the last section could be undertaken by a group that adequately represents a city's inhabitants and that forms an "aesthetic mini-public." If the discussions within the group are structured adequately, it is reasonably imaginable that the group members reach a consensus that a certain design or development plan should be preferred from an aesthetic point of view.[28] Even if consensus cannot be reached, the whole setting of the decision procedure, the individual inhabitant's participation, the listening to the different experts accompanying the walks, and the different aesthetic encounters in the urban environment in question make the assumption plausible—namely

26 James Fishkin, one of the leading political theorists of mini-publics, mentions the extent of access to relevant information as one of five criteria that are important in scaling the quality of a deliberative process (e.g., a mini public's discussion). See Fishkin (2014, 31f.).

27 A very similar idea of combining a mini-public's search for consensus with a final majority decision and its usefulness for participatory urban planning is discussed in Sager (2012). The example presented in Macdonald (2012, 116f) suggests that it is not utterly unrealistic to strive for *aesthetic* consensus with regard to urban environments.

28 Whether consensus is achieved or not partly depends on the design of the decision situation the group is confronted with. For example, a consensus seems more probable if the mini-public does not have to decide on the appropriateness of certain aesthetic descriptions of a surrounding or on some general evaluative statements, but rather on a number of well-developed proposals for urban design or urban development plans. It is surely easier to agree that a certain design proposal fits aesthetically better in a specified urban area than to agree whether this area should be described as, say, romantic, fabulous, or picturesque.

the assumption that a final majority decision adequately reflects all aesthetically important aspects. Of course, the critic can still reasonably claim that the whole procedure is time-consuming and cost-intensive. Surely, an urban planner deciding on her own would be quicker in settling the aesthetic matters in question. Nevertheless, and after all, democracy is not chosen because it is the fastest and the most cost-effective way of doing things.

In this paper, I tried to conceptualize possible paths for urban aesthetic decision making in times of aesthetic and democratic pluralism. If urban aesthetics is to be, at least partly, be a field of applied aesthetics, it should be connected with democratic theory. Urban aesthetics, as a subdiscipline of philosophy that is still in the making, should defend the independence and importance of the aesthetic point of view in contexts of urban planning and urban development. This defense, so I believe, will be more convincing, if it is reconciled with democratic ideals of civic engagement and political participation.

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Christopher Tilley, Kate Cameron-Daum, *An Anthropology of Landscape: The Extraordinary in the Ordinary*, UCL Press, London 2017.
Book review

Monika Stobiecka
(Faculty of "Artes Liberales", University of Warsaw)

Perception is action.

The above quote borrowed from Ludwik Fleck has been recently used by Polish literary theorist Ryszard Nycz (2017, 84) to ground the concept of "culture as a verb." Nycz notices that the expression "culture in action" is widely used in contemporary humanities and claims that all cultural, artistic, or humanistic initiatives supporting all sorts of movements, progress, actions and reactions lead to a number of "practical consequences, changes within world views, mentalities, sensibilities and experiences, as well as have an impact on communities that actively participate in projects" (2017, 63).

I am truly convinced that this approach to culture is shared by the authors of the book *An Anthropology of Landscape. The Extraordinary in the Ordinary,* byarchaeologist Christopher Tilley and anthropologist Kate Cameron-Daum. Their book meets the expectations of broadly understood cultural landscape studies and most current trends in new humanities, such as new materialism, sociology of space, but also theories rooted in fields such as cultural anthropology and phenomenology.

In their book, the British researchers undertook a successful attempt to deeply study a wisely chosen landscape—Pebblebed heath in south-western England. They carried out their field work and studies in 2008—2012. While using diverse methods

(e.g., auto-ethnography, participant observation, surveys, archaeological excavations), they highlighted the peculiarity of the studied landscape in a number ofways. Their exhaustive case study is holistic and far from theoretical speculation on material and sensorial, human and non-human engagement with landscape.

East Devon Pebblebed is a complex landscape being a nexus of numerous interests. The land is protected as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, inhabited by different species of plants and animals. It is also a historical and archaeological site with remains of a fortress dating back to the Iron Age. At the same time, the area, protected by several governmental and non-governmental institutions, serves as a Royal Marine proving groundsand in part as a natural resource where the Black Hill quarry operates. As a result, various stakeholders with divergent interests turn the Pebblebed landscape into a palimpsest and a site of inflamed conflicts.

Tilley and Cameron-Daum assume that this particular place must be studied through the lens of materialist, embodied, contested, and emotional perspectives. The materialist perspective is supposed to be a step towards new materialism, explained by authors as "a return to the real" that stands as "a way to reinvigorate and redirect the study of landscape" (2017, 5). By applying such an approach, they wish to move from cultural representations to the tangible and vivid material reality of the world. They intend to emphasize that physical experience is constitutive for landscape theories. Thus, the main research tool for Tilley and Cameron-Daum is the body itself—this methodology underlines the performative character of being-in-the-landscape (cf. Paterson 2009). The corporeal aspect also forms the core idea of the second perspective that they suggest, which is connected to embodiment. The idea to analyze the embodied experience of landscape is based on Tilley's previous studies presented in his *Materiality of Stone*: *Explorations in Landscape Phenomenology* (2004) which was based on the phenomenological theory offered by Maurice Merleau-Ponty. As in previous studies, in *An Anthropology of Landscape* Tilley and Cameron-Daum carefully apply the phenomenological method, allowing them to cross the binary opposition of body and mind and to consider the body-in-the-landscape as an object as well as a subject of study (2017, 6). Their third perspective is based on the observation that a landscape is a site of contestation. According to the authors, "[landscapes] are valued precisely because they are valuable, part of people's lives. They reflect the complexity of their lives. They are historically contingent and their mutability stems from the various ways in which people understand them and engage with the material world" (2017, 10). A contested landscape is thus messy, tensioned, and always in-progress. The last perspective they offer, an emotional one, is based on the assumption that a landscape is a site of emotions and feelings that stem from the "human capacity to experience landscapes as meaningful and a wish to prevent their destruction" (2017, 10).

In their research, Tilley and Cameron-Daum focus on problems grounded in the aspects of human presence in the landscape referred to by the abovementioned approaches. Firstly, they conduct research on the biographies of people residing in Pebblebed, wanting to determine how the landscape affects their lives. Secondly, by asking people questions about the landscape as a place, they want to determine the significance of places for people's consciousness, events, histories, and connections. Thirdly, Tilley and Cameron-Daum analyze the landscape as a space of various movements—they trace the paths taken by various groups of interest, seeking answers to the question of how people experience the landscape and how they feel about it. Fourthly, they also consider mediation understood as an indirect way of experiencing the landscape—for example, by riding a bike, fishing, or in the company of one's beloved pet. Fifthly, they are interested in agency, aesthetics, and well-being—more precisely, they want to find out how a materially experienced landscape sensually affects people. Sixthly, Tilley and Cameron-Daum want to determine what the landscape policy looked like in this particular case—that is, what sort of conflicts took place in Pebblebed and whether they led to its re-evaluation. Finally, following in the footsteps of Philipp Descola, they look into the relationship between nature and culture as well asthe meaning of these categories in the local context.

In order to conduct their research, the authors selected several social groups engaged in the Pebblebed landscape: land managers working for nature and heritage conservation institutions, soldiers training on the heathland, volunteers from ecological organizations, quarry workers, cyclists, horse riders, walkers, dog owners, tourists, artists, anglers, and enthusiasts of aircraft modelling. Each group was scrupulously examined, and the results of the survey served to give answers to the research questions outlined above. What is more, the representatives of the selected communities involved in the Pebblebed experience were asked to draw up personal maps of the area marking places of special, emotional, or other unique value for them.

I shall focus now on two exceptional merits of the book, and I will attempt to relate them to selected theoretical publications coming from the field of landscape studies and spatial turn. In my opinion, aparticularly noteworthy aspect of Tilley's and Cameron-Daum's book is the methodology, including the selection of the groups of interests, the manner of argumentation, and the idea of using subjective representations of the Pebblebed topography offered by the examined individuals. However, it is also possible to point out a few shortcomings which strike me as an archaeologist and an art historian.

While describing stakeholders closely related to Pebblebed, Tilley and Cameron-Daum show that the perception of the landscape is shaped by people's physical and emotional engagement in it resulting from the tasks they want or are supposed to carry out there. For example, in the analysis of the employees of the heathland

management institutions, Tilley and Cameron-Daum bring out a very significant problem related to heritage management. They outline the inconsistencies in thinking about natural and cultural heritage,[1] proving that even modern models of landscape management,[2] in which nature and culture are entangled, are in fact far from comprehensive and synergic solutions.[3] The discussed points, such as debates on the conservation of heaths (through chemical substances, mowing, firing, or grazing), indicate that the institutions responsible for landscape protection set priorities by selecting elements of landscapes that they deem to be worthy of protection. At the same time, their policy shows that landscape is understood by the administration as something that is a multi-layered structure which nature and culture constantly permeate. This may be taken to illustrate most clearly the problems that environmental aesthetics is struggling with when asking whether we perceive the landscape as a whole or as a set of elements that we somehow recognize.[4] Thanks to the study undertaken by Tilley and Cameron-Daum, the reader has a chance to understand and observe a practical approach to the abovementioned problems, and is not left with theoretical speculations bereft of the tangible and vibrant materiality of thelandscape. This aspect is—beyond any doubt—one of the greatest assets of the book andcertainly offers many fresh thoughts and inspirations for anthropologists studying landscapes.

Tilley and Cameron-Daum analyzethe landscape as a "taskscape" (Ingold 2000), while focusing on the second group of stakeholders—that is, the soldiers using Pebblebed as a proving grounds. In this case, the authors highlight the problem of the bodily experience of the landscapeby applying Merleau-Ponty's theories to soldiers' struggles in the landscape. The comparison with the preceding and the following chapters dealing with the landscape perceived by volunteers from ecological organizations is extremely interesting. While the institutions focus on the beauty and value of particular elements of the landscape through their members and volunteers take care of selected species of plants and animals, scrupulously studying protected sites, soldiers treat the heaths as a place to test their bodies or as a hated area of everyday, exhausting exercises. The comparison of these three groups of interest illustrates three different ways of perceiving the same landscape—institutions learn about it within a set of norms and rules, volunteers are guided by scientific cognition, and soldiers are taught it bodily. However, this does not diminish the last group'sknowledge of the site. As Tilley and Cameron-Daum prove, a recruit must carefully observe the area together with its vegetation, plants, sky, and animals. For a soldier, a landscape where volunteers happily count butterflies,

1 Landscape as a site of conflict may be an interesting field of study; in the context of Polish landscape studies, cf. (Kowalewska, forthcoming).

2 See Wijesuriya, Thompson, and Young (2013).

3 On synergy while planning strategies for cultural heritage protection, see Trzciński (2013).

4 See Berleant (1997).

becomes "a tough and unforgiving landscape in which to train, providing a unique combination of topographical obstacles and vegetational characteristics that make the going arduous, as does its geology" (2017, 105). The researchers, however, do not limit themselves to identifying differences in landscape perception, since they also want to prove how a landscape experience transforms people. Hence, they describe in detail the route that a recruit must take every day—running, swimming, diving, and crawling. Referring to Merleau-Ponty's remarks, they write that the soldier's body "must become a kind of machine in which ordinary sensory experience becomes dehumanized, and the experience of landscape becomes disembodied" (2017, 115). This paradox surrounding soldiers' bodily experience—becoming disembodied (they are supposed to cease feeling discomfort or pain)—is also associated with the equipment that the recruit wields during their tour, since the main rule obeyed by soldiers is not to hindertheir weapons. As a result, during the stay at the heath the weapon and the hardened body turn a recruit into a machine similar to the one described by Alfred Gell (1995).

Completely different bodily tensions were observed by the researchers in the case of one of the groups that go to the heaths for recreational reasons—namely, horse riders. The special kind of perception of the place that Tilley and Cameron-Daum analyze with the help of Martin Heidegger's category of "being-in-the-world" takes place within the relationship between people and horses. Here, the human bodily experience is connected to the animal experience andare bound together by their mutual concern for each other. Once again, the authors of the book successfully transpose theoretical speculations to a more practical level. While talking with women who regularly ride horses in Pebblebed, they arrive at the conclusion that the landscape seen from the perspective of human-animal relations can have a therapeutic effect. It is noteworthy that this kind of "mobile being-in-the-world" and the shared experience involved in it create emotions unknown tolonely walkers or volunteers.

Both soldiers and horse riders perceive the landscape as unstable and dynamic. Its transformation depends on the movements made by humans and non-humans—a fallen tree is an obstacle for a running soldier, and thick brush forces a rider to change her route. Meanwhile, as Tilley and Cameron-Daum prove, anactive and bodily experience of the landscape is not the only one people may have on the heaths. One of the last groups of interest described by the authors are the airplane modellingamateurs, for whom the landscape is, instead, a permanent and static place. It is perceived solely as terrain where only the flying plane model is in motion. They do not pay attention to changes in vegetation, animals, or archaeological remains since they are focused only on the weather conditions on which theirairplane models depend. As Tilley and Cameron-Daum write, aviation amateurs perceive their landscape as "fixed and almost unchanging, physically, in presence and in memory" (2017, 285).

A striking difference between the way the abovementioned groups (including anglers who also decide to stay in one known and unchanging place) perceive their landscapes may also be noticed in the maps prepared by them. Maps are another extremely important asset of Tilley's and Cameron-Daum's publication. As a part of their research project, they asked the representatives of the groups of interest to sketch their own, personalized Pebblebed maps. A quick look at a dozen or more maps clearly proves the adequacy of the theses set at the beginning. Each map is different, and it is often difficult to find any common points that appear on more than one map. Many of the prepared sketches have notes, some of which are very emotional, and the specific landmarks highlighted on them bear names related to the subjective experience of their authors' experience of "being in the landscape." The idea of "mapping" a landscape experience bears many similarities with the project of sensuous geographies proposed by Paul Rodaway (1994, 5) who defines geography "as earth (*geo*-) drawing (-*graphe*), that is, a description of the earth and human experience of it, considering issues of orientation, spatial relationship and the character of places. 'Sensuous geography' therefore refers to a study of the geographical understanding which arises out of the stimulation of, or apprehension by, the senses." Tilley's and Cameron-Daum's achievement consists in offering a material illustration of a theory that functioned mainly *in abstracto*. The maps prepared by the participants in the project are effectively descriptions of the landscape and the subjectivehuman experiences described by Rodaway.

Despite all its merits—which are far more numerous than just those mentioned above—the reviewed book has a few shortcomings. The first issue that I would like to focus on is the unresolved problem of the "landscape economy." The authors pay attention to, among others, an intriguing group of stakeholders, namely the employees of a quarry occupying the outskirts of the heathland. They point out that its presence was treated with reluctance by the local inhabitants and Pebblebed goers, who even sought to get rid of it, motivating their attitude with the fact that the quarry was a lousy addition to the landscape and that large trucks carrying stones posed a threat to the local residents. As an aside, it may be noted that it ultimatelyturned out that the quarry had in fact had a positive effect for the heathland as it helped soil remediation. The conflict may be seen as an example of a clash between global interests and local ones. As one of the quarry workers commented, "as soon as the extraction begins, nobody likes it, nobody wants to have a quarry under the door. Everyone wants to live in brick houses, ride on well-paved roads, but nobody wants to see a quarry" (Tilley and Cameron-Daum 2017, 156). Despite being mentioned in the book, the universal problem of perceiving the landscape as a resource has been somewhat neglected. The researchers cut off the discussion, indicating that it is a "meeting between industry, local government and environmentalists," whereas it involves a lot of very important issues oscillating around economics, aesthetics, commercialization, industrialization, and landscape resources (Berleant 1997,

9—24). Perhaps this issue, which may be associated with the Heideggerian concept of "Ge-stell," has been intentionally avoided due to the multitude of problems it generates. It is hard to believe that Tilley, who repeatedly referred to the German philosopher in his other publications, did not see this interpretative potential.

A similar problem is posed by the analyses of conflicts offered by the authors, who only signal them but do not try to indicate potential solutions. A trivial problem—dog excrement in the heaths—is quite symptomatic in this respect. Almost everyone who visits Pebblebed complains about this animal generated pollution. Soldiers describe with disgust how they crawl over dog feces during exercises; environmentalists contend that they have a terrible effect on the heathland soil; strollers—especially retirees—go even further in their criticisms, adding dramatic stories about dogs let off their leash. In fact, the disapproving attitude towards dog owners turns out to be one of the few issues that unites all the groups. Tilley and Cameron-Daum, however, downplay the behavior of dog owners and do not explain why they ignore the rules set for heathlands and what it says about their landscape experience.

According to the authors, these and other conflicts result directly from people's ignorance about the landscape they are in. They illustrate this lack of knowledge with the results of a survey conducted in Pebblebed. Visitors at Pebblebed are not able to indicate the nature of the landscape (natural or anthropogenic), do not know the history of the place (although many respondents are aware of the presence of archaeological remains), do not know what species of plants and animals are under special protection, etc. It is therefore rather difficult to blame dog owners for not removing their pets' waste, since the institutions responsible for the heathlands do not explain to them why the excrement is not only inconvenient for other people but also very harmful to the ecosystem. Ignorance and insufficient involvement in spreading awareness of the character of the place proves, in fact, that the landscape belongs to nobody (Tilley and Cameron-Daum 2017, 1), and hence no one really wants to assume responsibility for it. At the same time, however, after reading the worrying results of the survey, one can ask provocative questions—what exactly makes people go to Pebblebed? To what extent do people's answers reflect their real motivations? Unfortunately, the researchers leave these questions partially unresolved. In some cases, they point out very specific reasons why people visit Pebblebed—for example, they mention the therapeutic values of the landscape motivating women that go to Pebblebed for a horse ride. They also point out the co-maintenance of the landscape by cyclists, for whom it becomes a place of embodied social practices.

What is also surprising in this comprehensive study, especially considering Tilley's academic background, is the lack of interest in archaeological and historical sites-and only very short mentions of archaeological research conducted there. If one thinks about the holistic perspective presented by Tilley and Cameron-Daum, then

the marginalization of the perception of the archaeological landscape and, in a wider perspective, the issue of its future management is quite astonishing. In Pebblebed, Tilley, who in the 90s was known as a fierce critic of institutions popularizing archeology (Tilley and Shanks 1992), had a great opportunity to propose a model that would incorporate the archaeological heritage into a material landscape experienced by public visitors. This lacuna is likely to be strongly felt by, above all, archaeologists for whom the publication may seem distant from Tilley's previous research. Additionally, the value of archaeological and historical remains is completely pushed aside in the reflection on the landscape experience. Such an approach also surprises with regard to the declared concentration on the material aspect of the landscape, which in Tilley'sother publications (e.g., Tilley 2004) was co-constituted by material remains from the past.

In *An Anthropology of Landscape: The Extraordinary in the Ordinary* Christopher Tilley and Kate Cameron-Daum decide to undertake holistic studies of the Pebblebed landscape, moving theoretical inquiries to a practical level. In reality, they illustrate what Tim Ingold (2011, 47) wrote about defining the landscape as a palimpsest—that is, as a form that arises from the crystallization of situated experiences. They do not focus on issues that have already been discussed by numerous authors—definitions, aesthetics, memory, or history—but they bring out the active, causative, material aspects of the landscape in motion, animated by the human and non-human beings that participate in it. Thus, they follow the strategy of researching the cultural landscape proposed by Nycz (2017, 89) that "consists … in transforming the relationship between the subject and the world (its landscape aspect) from an observational one to a participatory one; from static to dynamic (interactive); in general, from a relationship based on the opposition of 'ready-made' individuals external to each other to an internal differentiation of the mutually interacting elements of the cultural landscape to which the acting subject belongs." According to Nycz, this transition requires "support …offered by theories of perception and action that are based on this holistic-relational approach" (2017, 90).

In spite of the abovementioned noticeable but minor lacunas, Tilley's and Cameron-Daum's multi-level and in-depth analyses allowone to conceptualize better one's relationships with places, spaces, and landscapes where one does not function as an egocentric user, but as an actor (among many others) who co-creates them and co-lives with them. I am convinced that their holistic studies can significantly contribute to an increase in people's sensitivity towards landscapes, help develop shared responsibility for the experienced landscape, and inaugurate a new, interdisciplinary path in landscape studies.

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