

THE AESTHETIC CRITERION – COMPONENT FOR DESIGNING URBAN PUBLIC GREEN SPACE. STUDY BASED ON TWO ALTERNATIVES FOR IZVOR PARK, BUCHAREST

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Abstract

The design of urban green space is based on a series of principles, criteria and determinant factors for the quality of the urban public space. These criterion and principles are defined by multiple aspects: physical, functional, ambient, aesthetic and ecological, each of which are important in the configuration of the landscape arrangement project. The current work addresses the problem of the aesthetic criterion in landscape design by studying comparatively two project alternatives, each having a distinct compositional style and each representing a certain type of aesthetic vision for the organization of the physical space. These alternatives belong to a mixt composition style specific for the urban landscape design of the 20th century.

Key words: urban green space, landscape design, aesthetic criterion

INTRODUCTION

Izvor Park covers a surface of approximately 17 hectares and is located in the central area of Bucharest close to the People's Palace, while being framed by the roads: Splaiul Independenței, Izvor Coșbuc Street, B. P. Hașdeu Street and Mihai Vodă Street.

The park was partially developed between 1987 and 1988 as the first version of land vegetal "furnishing", followed by the selection of one of the 22 designing alternatives created for the park in the same period of 1988.

The 1989 revolution has brought to a stand the final design development and construction of the park. For the completion of the study alternatives, both the landscape function and the general compositional shape of space organization were considered, while the aesthetic criterion represented an essential component in designing this urban green entity. In landscape design the aesthetic criterion has direct final correspondence in the visual and ambient quality of the physical space. Therefore the importance of approaching the aesthetic criterion when developing a design is of maximum interest for the landscape architects.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The research method used within the present work is that of comparative analysis of the two alternatives V₁ and V₂ in order to highlight the main aesthetic characteristics of both projects. These alternatives represent the actual study material of the work. It pursues the analysis of aesthetic composition elements which match two different aesthetic trends. Each of the two alternatives is the result of practical compliance within the project towards the landscape functionality attributed to this space.

The prevalent landscape function is that of promenade-rest, alongside the function of pedestrian transit and pedestrian connection between the adjacent roads of the site. The composition elements are alleys, water and vegetation, the latter being represented by ensemble arboreal vegetation, lawns, arboreal alignments and floral decorations (in alternative V₁). The park entrances and promenade alleys build the base compositional structure of the projects, which is further sustained by the other elements – water and vegetation – in the final aesthetic configuration of each alternative. In alternative V₁ water has a considerable presence, the surface of the water mirror holding approximately 40000 m² while

representing an important visual element of the designed space. In alternative V_2 water is present on much smaller surfaces in two circular basins located at alley intersections (small circuses); within this alternative water holds a surface of 630 m^2 .

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Stylistically, the two study alternatives each belong to a distinct trend: alternative V_1 (Fig. 1) is composed of a geometrical style (Stănescu, 2011). All the elements – alleys, water, vegetation – take regular geometrical shapes, resulted from the association of straight lines as they highlight the main characteristics of this particular style (Mostaedi, 2004): tracks of straight alleys, alley intersections under 90° angles marked with two decorative water basins which take circular shape. The surface of the water mirror is the dominant element of the composition and it also has rectangular shape with slightly smoothed edges. Vegetation is arranged wither in simple or double alignments along the alleys or in groups and bulks towards the outer areas of the park. Vegetation also

includes floral decorations with geometrical shapes located alongside the main alleys of the park, which they enrich aesthetically and visually.

Alternative V_2 (Fig. 2) is composed of a free landscape style characterized mainly by network of alleys and the layout method for the vegetation (Stănescu, 2011). The alleys comprise of free shapes which are sinuous, comfortable, with a pleasant aspect; the two circuses representing the alley intersections are marked by two decorative water basins, circularly shaped, each having the surface of 315 m^2 . The presence of water is much more discreet that in the other alternative, leaving more space for vegetation, which is the dominant characteristic of this design alternative. The central area of the park is reserved for wide spaces covered in lawn, while the outskirts are covered in groups and bulks of broadleaves and coniferous (Kluckert, 2005). There are also present alignments in multiple sequences in order to create a real protection screen for the park against the rest of the urban area.

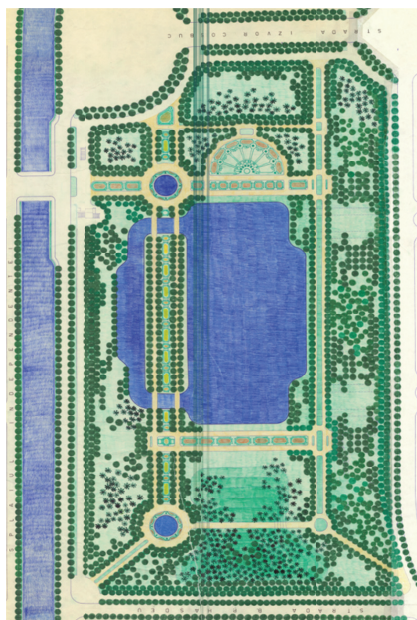


Figure 1. Alternative V_1



Figure 2. Alternative V_2

CONCLUSIONS

The current study was based on the analysis of two landscape design alternatives – V_1 and V_2 . Alternative V_1 was considering the geometric architectural style specific for the 80' in this urban area of Bucharest, which is located near the People's Palace and is considered to be a representative area of the city. Alternative V_2 is characterized by a free landscape style which is much less drastic and strict.

It can be concluded that the compositional aesthetic principles applied in these projects prevail over the functional elements, but do not cancel them, but on the contrary sustain them.

The alternatives studied fall under two distinct style trends which are essential components of the aesthetic criterion in landscape design.

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