Chapter 9-Expanding Cities and New Social Institutions: The Democratization of Landscape Design

*Scientific revolution undermined the desire to promote authoritarian rule for monarchs, substituted a belief scientific principles geared to improving everyone’s lives, then reverted somewhat into a Victorian sense of a new class system (my words)*

1. Introduction
   1. Squalid living conditions next to the new middle class elite including cholera, overpopulation, crime. It was a response from Jeremy Bentham and James Mill and the establishment of the doctrine of utilitarianism, greatest good for the greatest number of people. Other thinkers included:
      1. **Charles Darwin**
      2. George Perkins Marsh and **Man and Nature** (1864) warned of the limits of what we could do to nature under the idea of religious subjection of the land
      3. Industrial Revolution and the fulfillment of Goethe’s prophecies in **Faust II**
      4. **John Ruskin** and his search for truth in aesthetics, reviving artisanship in the face of industrialization. Supported by the transcendentalists like Thoreau and Emerson
      5. Nietzsche and Freud and their radical modernity no longer looking to the past
   2. Consequences were the development of the public park movement and the phenomenon of the gardenesque
   3. development of new “rural” cemeteries - Pere-Lachaise in Paris, Mt Auburn in Boston and Brooklyn’s Greenwood
   4. the garden movement develops – the taste of the times was towards domesticity
   5. New technologies
      1. macadam pavement
      2. railroad steam engine
      3. the conservatory and glass houses
      4. Edwin Budding’s lawnmower
      5. Portland cement, asphalt pavement, wrough iron,sheet glass, renewal of cast iron, tiles etc in ornamental work
   6. Garden became the lab for horticulture, garden encyclopedias
      1. debate in England between Robinson and Gertrude Jekyll of the arts and crafts movement and Sir Reginald Bloomfield resurrecting the geometries
      2. rural values and suburban areas became generally confused
      3. discussion played out in city planning with the gilded age fighting the picturesque
   7. Landscape Design in Victorian England where the natural history horticultural pursuits proved to be valuable – such as tobacco. Tow main systems of organizing the natural world at the time included Linnaeus and Jusseau.
   8. Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew
      * 1. **Joseph Banks** was the director who encouraged many field working naturalists and enlisted travelers and military
        2. development of the Wardian case to preserve specimens (small glass greenhouses)
        3. Kew garden became repository for dried specimens
        4. in 1841, became Royal as it was becoming run down
   9. **John Claudius Loudon** was a progressive thinker who also managed to give physical expression to his thoughts and idealism. He was a metro planner before there was such a thing and helped to incorporate:
      * 1. role of infrastructure
        2. greenbelts
        3. emphasized comfort and practicality over style
        4. developed many of the ideas of the gardenesque
        5. botanical display was his passion trying to incorporate science art and nature
        6. early investigation and development into greenhouses
        7. 1839 laid out 11 acre Derby Arboretum for the use of the general public – first public park of sorts and a great success
           1. Mounds
           2. Walkways
           3. Horticultural display with ID signage and pamphlets
           4. Jussieu system of organizing around form, color, size and so forth
        8. early advocate of horticulture for women
   10. Victorian Gardens were ***unreservedly eclectic, continuing the picturesque tradition and showing off the new horticulture***
       * 1. incorporated both Victorian gothic and neoclassical elements
         2. reemergence of the terrace
         3. efficiency of maintaining – lawnmower and new techniques
         4. trend towards imaginative historicizing, going well beyond the archeology, making it better than ever
         5. William Barron and the use of B&B plants
         6. reincorporation of fountains
         7. color theory became the basis of the philosophical artist horticulturist
         8. formal design ideas
            1. congruity
            2. curvaceous
            3. paying attention to the lay of the land, water in low areas
            4. eschewing purely associative features
            5. mounding
       1. **Joseph Paxton**
          1. learned his trade at Chatsworth, independent from strict aesthetic theory and synthesized artificial and natural characteristics, foremost fountain engineer of his day
             1. Emperor Fountain at Chatsworth
             2. Developed a greenhouse there as well
          2. his efforts were especially valued by real estate developers and sanitary officials
          3. developed Birkenhead as a private real estate venture with proceedings from property sale used to take care of the park which also got money from selling hay and giving grazing rights
             1. developed separate path system for horse drawn carts
             2. conflicts even now with the use of development of parts of the site for formal sports
             3. scenic emphasis
          4. Ornamental pavilion became standard issue
          5. parks became equated with art and natural history museums and libraries
          6. developed Crystal Palace in Hyde Park later moved to Sydenham in London
          7. **Andrew Jackson Downing** (1815-1852). **A Treatise on the Theory and practice of Landscape Gardening** (1841) His was the story of the Americanizing of these influences recognizing the changed social climate and geographic scale of this country. He became the “**apostle of taste**”. He recognized the need to accommodate a new nation with a scope unprecedented in Europe and with the development of democratic governance that was fundamental to his thoughts expressed in a kind of domesticity. His more domestic and democratic notions were overrun after the Civil war by the Gilded Age.
             1. Botanical background

A lot of famous collectors many feeding the frenzy in England and Europe

Thomas Nuttall 1786-1859

David Douglas 1798-1834

Bartram

David Hosack and botany for medicinal uses

Francois Andre Michaux (1770-1855)

Andre Palmentier (1780-1830)

* + - * 1. preserving the idea of living in nature even in the face of smokestacks and industrialization

refined the ideas of the beautiful and the picturesque

used Repton’s principles – **UNITY, HARMONY, VARIETY**

tempered picturesque with the practical

rural vs suburban, citizen initiative

verandas and American Gothic architecture

* + - * 1. He was the editor for the *Horticulturist magazine*  where he argued for a public park in NYC, brought Calvert Vaux over here from France, and worked on a project at the public grounds of the capital as an attempt at a public park, delayed in the politics of the upcoming war. It is interesting to see the transition from philosophy and writing to design.
  1. Commemorative Landscapes and Rural cemeteries
     + 1. commemorating heroes
          1. Trafalgar Square and Nelson’s monument
          2. Trajan’s Column in Paris for Napoleon
          3. Volksgarten in Germany
       2. cemeteries
          1. tree planting was considered an encouragement of latent tendencies towards pantheism
          2. creation of such a thing required a significant change in social values involving the secularization of death and the granting of dignity to the individual life as well as the right of associative sentiment on the part of family and friends
          3. first was Pere-Lachaise in Paris

tapis vert

famous people led to its acceptance

* + - * 1. Mount Auburn in Boston, associated with the transcendentalist movement there. Sentiment of the day was not the maudlin exercise of excessive emotion, jus the granting of human emotion with pleasurable melancholy – “a sweet surrender of individual existence”

Took a while to get it going, most of what we value today was the second half of 19th c

Didactic landscape with contemplative notions of landscape

Other examples include Laurel Hill in Philadelphia, Green Wood in Brooklyn, Cave Hill in St Louis

It also asserted an influence over existing grave yards as they actually started planting trees

* + 1. FLO and Vaux as park Builders and City planners
       1. Central Park
          1. Background- NY was involved for decades in a struggle for a park. Downing was a part of that, a desire to be competitive with European cities was as well. Art was becoming commoditized. Immigrants were heading here in vast numbers making public health issues. Mayor Wood in 1854 set aside some property
          2. Had to begin immediately zoning the periphery to control use and keep value, cost overruns immediately just in acquiring the property. They spent $5 million getting the land and that was supposed to cover everything including construction.
          3. Set up a commission to remove the graft of local politics if not the penny pinching
          4. Began site prep and clearing right away, Olmsted was on site engineer at this time assisting Viele
          5. Developed what came to be called the greensward plan

Developed a sense of landscape that went beyond horticultural embellishment and grasped its social efficacy. Architecture and art were also subservient to the overall effect of tranquility and rugged rural scenery. Emphasized shifting panoramas that tried to harmonize. His experience with English countrysides as a young man came into play – “green, dripping, glistening, gorgeous”

Sunk the traverse roads, developed a sense of space through grass and ponds

Always had to work around the rectangular aspects of the site. Started with 750 and developed 843.

Established architectural ideas that carried through

Set up spaces for neighborly activity (families and friends) and gregarious activity (strangers)

His spaces because the were not designed for just one use have been infinitely more adaptable over the years

He engaged the sentiments of both the picturesque and the romantic, trying to convey a sense of social responsibility – a people’s park a la Birkenhead only American

FLO was involved as designer of the grading improvements, supervised planting and managed and administered the policies for its use. Later he choose to work on admin with the red Cross during the Civil war.

* + - 1. Prospect Park Brooklyn 526 acres
         1. Many of the same design ideas
         2. b/c they were involved earlier, they were able to control more the view and water shed
         3. similar topo features

ice polished escarpments

large boulders

this time naturally rich soil

* + - * 1. no traverse roads
        2. more scope for lake and reflections and creation of spaces associated with that
      1. City Planners
         1. Separated traffic in Prospect and encouraged the development of parkways out into the city – tried to connect it to the beach on the Atlantic thereby dealing with the various boroughs more comprehensively predating the metro planning
         2. Attempt to alleviate the strict grid and its health and livability issues
         3. Working with the developing separation of work and living space, attempting to make green the connection
         4. Buffalo’s parkway system
         5. Riverside Ill and more parkways
         6. Boston’s Emerald Necklace with Elliot
         7. Biltmore with Hunt and Gifford Pinchot (founding head of the US Forest Service)
         8. Jackson Park, site of the Columbian Exposition and a neoclassical embrace (with a small island to consider)
         9. Issues with the entrances to Prospect Park