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THE ROLE OF NATURE IN HISTORIC GARDEN FROM TURČIANSKA ŠTIAVNIČKA

ROLA NATURY W OGRODACH HISTORYCZNYCH TURČIANSKA ŠTIAVNIČKA

Abstract

Article is about the history and natural specifics and its influence to the composition and historic garden scene. As an example of research is chosen a historic garden in Turčianska Štiavnička, which is one of the most specific historic areas in Slovakia – but still not enough appreciated by professional community. Research is target especially to natural specifics like a relief, water and potential vegetation. It studies heir interest on garden historic composition progress.

Keywords: historic garden, landscape architecture, Revay, Turčianska Štiavnička, natural specifics

Streszczenie

Artykuł dotyczy historii i wpływu roli przyrody na kompozycję ogrodów historycznych. Jako przykłady poddane badaniom wybrano ogrody zabytkowe z rejonu Turčianska Štiavnička. Obszar ten stanowi jeden z bardziej wyjątkowych historycznych rejonów w Słowacji, nadal jednak niedoceniany i słabo przebadany. W przeprowadzonych badaniach skupiono się na naturalnej specyfice krajobrazu, takiej jak ukształtowanie terenu, woda czy potencjalna roślinność. Starano się określić ich rolę w przemianach kompozycji ogrodu historycznego.

Słowa kluczowe: ogrody historyczne, architektura krajobrazu, rodzina Revay, Turčianska Štiavnička, specyfika środowiska naturalnego

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1. INTRODUCTION

Historic garden is one of the phenomenons, which has arisen thanks to human wisdom and respect to the landscape. One of the specifics, which have got a marked influence on gardens development, has been the natural elements. Manor in *Turčianska Štiavnička* (established in 18th century) is an important demonstration of human aesthetic participation on land use in Slovakia.

This article is about the history, natural specifics and how they have influenced the composition and historic garden scene.

Historic garden in English style is situated in *Turiec* region, 12 km on the east from the town *Martin*. Its today's area is about 15,36 km². Since 1963 is signed in the Register of National Heritage. The father of this beautiful garden is Baron Simon Revay. Revay family came from *Sriem*¹. They came to Turiec in 1532. The emperor Ferdinand I. has given the title of district administrator in Turiec to František I. Revay after the battle of Mohács.

2. AIM OF RESEARCH

Research is target especially to three natural specifics – relief, water and potential vegetation and their role in garden history. They have mostly influenced the garden composition. The main scope is to search the historic garden not only as a closed composition, but as a component of the historic landscape. In case of Revay manor we could talk about the historic composed landscape. The garden is just a part of this whole unit.

3. PRESENT STATE OF RESEARCH

There is no a lot of authors who has target their research to historic garden in *Turčianska Štiavnička*. Most distinguished author is prof. Vreštiak: He worked in the garden meanwhile its restoration (1970-1973). Other authors have mostly appeared from his research (Mařovčik, Mařovčiková [2], Tomaško [4]). Author Novák [1] deals with the history of Revays fish farming. The fish farming has been regarded as one of the best in upper Austria-Hungary in 19th century. A lot of facts about the family are collected in National archive. The historic master plan of the garden has been unpreserved, but some facts have been available in maps of I., II., III. historic mapping and concretual maps.

Garden history

The first part of the garden was designed at the end of 18th century. It was designed as a simply meadow rectangular area, edged by lime trees. The manor-house has been situated on the front of this garden. Most of its future area was fenny in that time [5]. The Revays developed the garden composition from east to west. The composition was ended by a summer house on the western slope called *Filagória* [3].

An orangery in Empire style between was built between the years 1838 and 1841. This element was a first step to great garden development. Since this moment

¹ Sriem was the historic area in east Slavonia – in today's Serbia and Croatia.

the garden composition has strongly risen to the south. Since 1870 Simon Revay started to build a pond system, which influenced also the garden composition. The pond system has been mostly fit for fish business. On the other side, all technical works have been situated with the great sense of terrain and natural specifics. Most of the ponds (together seven) have risen on hillslope called *Teplíca*. The hill has bordered the garden east side. The rest – tree ponds have been built in the lower garden part – in visual connection to orangery.

Big water serpentine, which has connected upper and lower ponds, has been built between years 1870-1875 [1]. Eminent influence on today's garden design has got two gardeners, Gerhard Křivánek (1815-1896) and his son Gustáv Křivánek (1846-1931) [5].

The 19th century could be called as an eclectic era of the garden. It was accompanied by a figural art. Two fountains were built near the manor-house and orangery. Both of them were damaged through the Second World War.

After Simon Revay era (since 1880), the garden composition has consisted of two main composition units. Both of them have been oriented from the north to south side. The orangery has governed to larger one and a manor-house to smaller one. Both have been divided by the stream called *Kantor*. The stream has been one of the most important elements in garden composition. It has got its own water program (cascades) and also it has been the main inflow of lower ponds.

After Simon Revay death, under Julius Revay (Simon's son), some objects has been built in the garden, but the composition hasn't changed. In that era the tennis court (in the south garden part) and a fountain in Art Nouveau style have risen [5].

Under the last baron, Ladislav Revay, to whom belonged the manor since 1920, the figural gardening has been eliminated. Ladislav has also established great rosary in front of the orangery. It has consisted of about 160 rose species [5]. The southern part of the garden has been illusionistic lengthen by lime trees alley in south direction to castle *Sklabiňa*.

Revays have left their manor in *Turiec* in 1944, after shooting incident with partisans. They have never come back. During the war the manor-house have been used like a hospital. After the war all area has declined – mostly used for farming operations (fish farming). In 1970 the professionals from the Comenius University in Bratislava started the garden restoration. After the 1989, the all area has been privatized. Because of uncertain proportionate ownerships the garden has started to decline again.

4. DESCRIPTION OF RESEARCH

Garden research appear from the actual literature, which is supplemented or corrected by own research. As a main research sources are used historic founds from State archive in *Bytča*, historic photographs of Slovak National Library in *Martin*, Slovak Institute for Remains and other photographs from private collections. Other searched sources were historic maps – mapping sections from I., II. III. military mapping (1769, 1819, 1882), the concretual maps from years 1855 and 1868 and special maps from the years 1952, 1955, 1957, 1973 and 1990.

The scope of research is target to garden composition and how is it influenced by natural landscape specifics – landscape relief, water and potential vegetation.

5. THE RESULTS OF RESEARCH

Garden composition in relation to the landscape relief

This specific mostly influences the garden composition. Historic garden is sensitive inserted into the *Kantor* valley, which is spread from the *Turčianska Štiavnička* to the south – 3,3 km. Garden composition is naturally bordered by slope lines of mountain range *Velká Fatra*. Difference in elevation between lower and upper garden site is about 60 m. Walleye's horizon is lined by wood. Thanks to the rugged topography, the composition is enriched by lots of bird's-eye views crossing the west site with east site. Most of elements are composed in contour lines (Ill. 1). Terraced layering is an identical mark of this garden.

Garden composition in relation to the water in landscape

Water net has a major value in garden composition. A dominant water element of garden is *Kantor* stream. It springs in *Velká Fatra* Mountains and flows along the *Kantor* valley. Additional two springs, which flow from a hill *Sviňacia*, meet a *Kantor* stream in southern part of garden. One of them never freezes. That is the reason why Baron Simon Revay built in these area also two water mills. Mills were used for flour grinding. It could be provided during all year, because a warm – never frozen water. These technical works also fit the composition and raised the Genius loci of the garden. The mills have been demolished at the beginning of 20th century, because of light railway building for wood production.

One of the streams, which have flowed from the *Sviňacia* hill, has been designed as a great serpentine. Special path has run by the serpentine line, from the lower part of garden to the great seven *Teplica* ponds (built in 1873) (Ill. 2). After The Second World War the serpentine has been damaged. It has been restored again in 2001, but not at all of its previous scale.

Teplica ponds are not a part of the garden now. All the area is private, but it is still in visual and compositional connection with a garden.

Streams haven't been only the utilities for Revay economy, but also important element of garden aesthetic. Also the pond system has got the same role (seven ponds in area *Teplica* and three ponds in a lower part of the garden). Water lines have mirrored the surroundings and helped to underline the English style of the garden – mythical Arcadia land.

Garden composition in relation to the potential vegetation

Wood was the main article of Revays economy. They owned many woodlands areas in *Turiec* region.

For this vegetation zone has been significant beech (*Fagus sylvatica*) and fir (*Abies alba*). All the composition is based on common tree species. During the garden designing have become original wood as a part of composition. This tree layer is the oldest one. It forms something like a traverse amongst to garden and woodland. It is also a great importance for ecological sustainability.

The second layer is based on the tree species, which are introduced, and common tree cultivars, for example *Liriodendron tulipifera*, *Quercus rubra*, *Thuja plicata*, *Ginkgo biloba*, and cultivars of *Fagus silvatica* 'Asplenifolia', 'Atropunicea', 'Pendula', and 'Roseomarginata'. The textures, habits and colours are inseparable part of the garden composition.

The third layer has been linked to this heritage in 1973. In these years the introduced and collecting trees species has strongly increased. Lot of trees have been unfortunately set in conflict with the composition. The result is visible especially at the present.

6. CONCLUSION

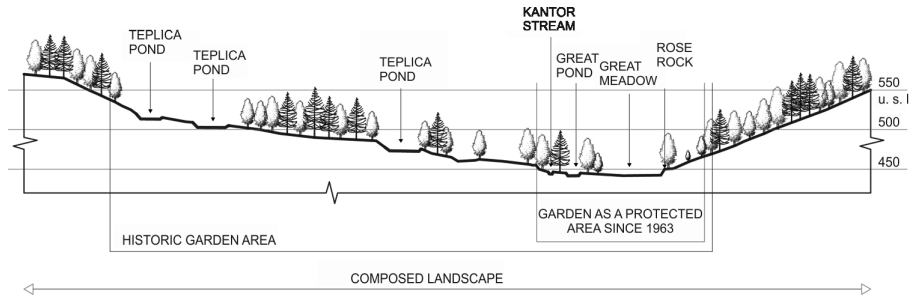
An unrepeatable landscape masterpiece can be created by lot of specifics. They can influence the landscape scene. Historic composed landscape is one of the phenomenons, which has arisen thanks to human wisdom and respect to the landscape. Revays manor in *Turčianska Štiavnička* is a great demonstration of human aesthetic participation on land use.

In case of garden masterpiece in *Turčianska Štiavnička* – the landscape composition – thanks to landscape relief – sinks to the surrounding woodland. The composition elements are convexly layered up the terrain. All the aesthetic value and the identity consist in that sophisticated overlays. Lower and also upper situated garden parts (thanks to visual connection) form ideal three-dimensional views. It seems like ideal, amply rugged micro landscape in the landscape. Its detail is circumscribed by surrounding range horizon, but in some places, the views interfere till *Malá Fatra Mountain*, which is a tithes kilometer far from here. By ideal words we can say, that the garden composition gets a possession of landscape.

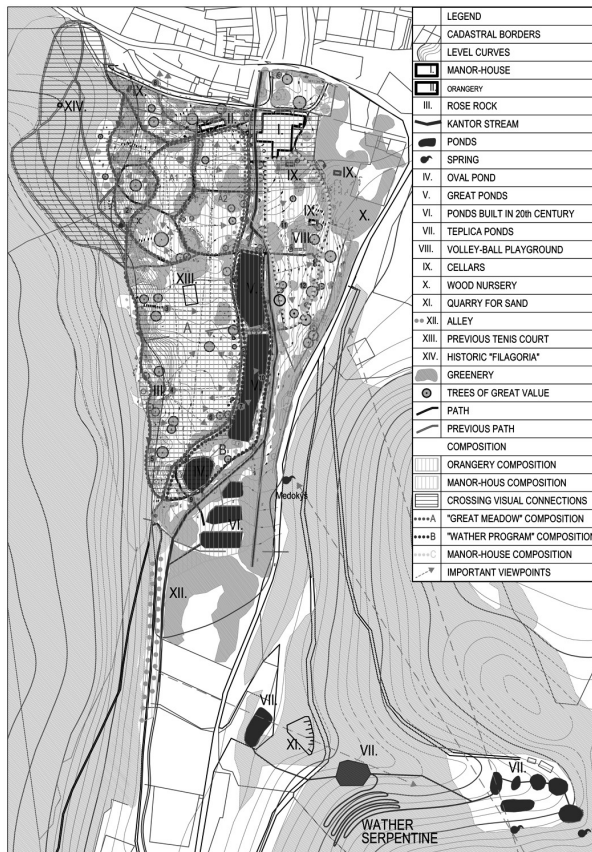
The water is such as significant phenomenon in garden composition as a previous landscape attribute. It is very interesting to see, how naturally it becomes an identical member of garden composition. In case of *Turčianska Štiavnička* – the ponds, flourmills, lumber-mills, which are run by water – all of these, indicate the strong economic addition of this natural element. But the water does not mean just the economic factor for this manor. It is patronized to the aesthetic element, presented by great ponds systems, water cascades and waterfalls, water serpentines – all with the motion to maximize the terrain use. The composition evokes also many audio perceptions not only visual presentation. It bears witness of Revays sense for a detail.

Integral parts of the composition are plants. In this garden is used the natural forest as significant and also neutral element (later used as production forest). The composition from the lower garden part falls into upper part, which is presented by woodland. The forest is promoted to "Compose forest" with lots of idyllic paths to nearest localities (for example *Teplica ponds*, *Bôrová*, castle *Sklabiňa*) and views. Plant species use has typical concentric character. In lower garden part dominates gardened or introduced plants, upper garden part is represented by most of common plants and woodland character.

Even though a historic unique and functional landscape pattern is today almost the memory, it's clear that the work with terrain, water and visual tricks is really excellent. Revays composed the landscape hand in hand with commercial land use. That is an immense value of this historic landscape masterpiece. It seems like a special landscape in the country. All functional is also aesthetic. This great idea is a challenge for our society in time of globalism, consume and ecological problems.



- III. 1. The cross section (from west to east) represents a terrain dynamic and its influence on the garden composition. Garden is closed by Kantor valley. The composition is diffusive infiltrated to surrounding natural woodland (source: M. Heinrichová)
- II. 1. Przekrój pionowy (z zachodu na wschód) uwidaczniający dynamikę ukształtowania terenu w kompozycji ogrodowej. Ogród znajduje się w pobliżu doliny rzeki Kantor. Kompozycja przenikająca w otaczający teren zalesiony (oprac. M. Heinrichová)



- III. 2. An analyze of garden composition (source: M. Heinrichová)
- II. 2. Analiza kompozycji ogrodu (oprac. M. Heinrichová)

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