From Antiquity to the Present: A Perpetually Evolving History of Green Spaces

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Abstract. The evolution of green spaces throughout history originated in the ancient world and extended through different eras. In this respect, this study aims to explore this historical evolution in detail, focusing on the temporal and geographical setting of the descriptions. This is made possible by a bibliographical search ensuring the fundamental elements and key references for analysing and understanding the changes in this green infrastructure across historical periods, despite the limited availability of information. As a result, ancient gardens were developed as spaces suitable for meditation, establishing the first harmonization between mankind and nature. The analysis continues with a particular focus on Renaissance gardens, marked by innovative aesthetics and a new interest in symmetry and order. The Baroque period is characterized by splendid and spectacular gardens, reflecting the scale of royal castles and palaces. The transition to landscape gardens reveals a more natural, romantic perspective, highlighting the natural perfection of the landscape. The study also looks at contemporary developments, where gardens are becoming multipurpose spaces that integrate ecological, artistic and wellness aspects. The history of green spaces has emerged as a rich and detailed chronicle, illustrating cultural, social and aesthetic developments over the centuries. This chronological journey highlights the influence of artistic perspectives and styles on the design and perception of green spaces, underlining their key role as a representation of the evolution of the human spirit and the human-nature interrelationship. Keywords: antiquity, design, evolution, history, landscape, layout, garden, green space.

1 Introduction

1.1 Artistic study of the garden: variety in nature and architecture

The garden symbolizes the original form of green space shaped by man, revealing itself as an artificial space, an artistic composition and a work inspired by nature with the inclusion of elements such as trees, flowers and bodies of water. The garden thus offers varied combinations of form, color and light, created purely for visual pleasure, in the manner of a musical composition that satisfies the listener. In short, the garden is a harmony of shapes and colours, a veritable visual symphony [1]. The garden takes shape through the use of elements borrowed from the plant kingdom. However, it also incorporates architectural components, acting as a bridge between the rigorous, ordered lines of human structures and the total freedom of nature. It represents a creation adjusted by man to his own proportions. It has evolved remarkably throughout its history [2].

1.2 Objective and scope of the research document

The present work, based on a wide-ranging literature search, focuses on a detailed analysis of the historical evolution of green spaces through different eras. The crucial aspect of this study lies in the temporal and geographical contextualization of the descriptions. Indeed, a thorough understanding of the history and geography of places is essential to grasp the specific compositional principles of a given era. Our working paper also highlights a comprehensive vision, offering an informed perspective on the multiple historical and cultural dimensions that have contributed to the current richness and diversity of green spaces.

2 History of green spaces

The art of gardening, which is deeply rooted in our cultural heritage, offers fascinating testimony to the evolution of lifestyles and social organization through time and space. Although initially perceived as a utilitarian element designed to meet food and medicinal needs, from the 16th century onwards, the garden acquired another dimension with an emphasis on the...
decorative aspect. Indeed, until the second half of the twentieth century, architects, landscape gardeners, gardeners and master gardeners focused primarily on embellishing gardens belonging to wealthier social classes [3].

In the 1970s, the realization of the importance of planning and preserving landscapes led to the advent of landscape design, driven by a shared awareness among decision-makers and the general public [3]. Therefore, referring to the assertions of Deconinck, M. (1982) and Larcher, J. & Gelgon, T. (2000), the history of green spaces provides an in-depth understanding of places through knowledge of their geography and history to grasp the compositional principles specific to a given era. Figure 1 shows a chronological summary of the main garden styles over time in the historical section.

The garden styles associated with different periods include the following:

2.1 The ancient world

The ancient era evokes the historical phase characterized by the earliest civilizations. Although most ancient gardens have disappeared, their appearance is well documented through the descriptions of historians and the artistic representations of painters and engravers. Variations in accounts or descriptions do not prevent us from grasping the essence of these exceptional historical gardens, which are renowned for their splendour. The central idea is that despite possible discrepancies in detail, the appreciation of emblematic green spaces remains constant and unchanged [3].

2.1.1 The gardens of Mesopotamia (3500 to 144 BC)

The original gardens originated in Mesopotamia, where their sacred character was marked by their proximity to temples and the use of their produce as offerings to the deities [2]. Babylon’s renowned hanging gardens have since been a source of wonder. Composed of cascading terraces planted and irrigated from the Euphrates by an ingenious system of hydraulic machines, these gardens fascinated visitors with their magnificence to the point of being ranked among the seven people of the ancient world [4].

2.1.2 Egyptian gardens (3000 to 1000 BC)

Later, in Egypt, gardens were also part of the landscape, with their restitution based on original frescoes. They are characterized by a flat layout adapted to the topography of the land and are surrounded by walls. Their layout follows a regular plan, whether square or rectangular, with straight paths and water mirrors adding an extra decorative touch [4].

2.1.3 Persian gardens (550 to 331 BC)

At a later stage, Persian artistic expression was revealed mainly through the achievements of the Achaemenid Empire, notably under the leadership of Cyrus II the Great and Darius I. Persia comprised present-day Iraq, Iran and Turkestan. The emergence of Persian parks is characterized by extensive, artistically ornamented spaces, adorned with a diversity of trees, some of which carry symbolic meanings. For example, the cypress evokes death, the almond tree symbolizes life, and the date palm embodies spring fecundity. These gardens also abound in flowers, roses and fragrant plants, creating a setting conducive to encounters and offering a pleasant sensory experience. These Persian gardens, referred to as "Paradises", exerted an influence on the Greeks and then the Romans [3]. Persian garden design is based on several key principles, including the use of regular layouts, the harmonious integration of four essential elements (water, shade, color and noise), careful consideration of the individual scale, and the deliberate absence of sculpture [2].

2.1.4 Greek gardens: philosophical gardens (320 to 300 BC)

During the period of the great philosophers (from 500 to 300 BC), including Aristotle, Plato and Socrates, gardens were planted in academies and high schools, transforming them into veritable parks. Botany was also born at this time. In this historical period, gardens were characterized by a simple composition, based on principles such as shade, rest, freshness and fragrance, with the presence of fountains and statues [3]. As a result, private pleasure gardens were rare in Greek cities and were limited mainly to a few sacred groves and plantations laid out around temples dedicated to deities. The green spaces available were more like natural gardens and were significantly marked by divine representations and associated structures such as temples and altars [2]. In this context, plants were mainly exploited in a religious context through the creation of sacred groves and the furnishment of altars. The age of Alexander the Great marked a key stage, when the Greeks discovered the gardens and parks of Persia and Egypt, propelling gardens to greater importance in social and religious life [3].

2.1.5 Chinese gardens

Chinese garden art originated in the second century B.C. during the Han dynasty and was shaped by scrupulously
maintained traditions. This art is deeply influenced by religious and mystical doctrines such as Taoism, Buddhism and Confucianism. Through these forms of expression and within their major religions, the Chinese have adopted a venerable approach to nature, seeking to concretize their imaginations and beliefs in gardens. As a result, cosmogonic representation, as a central and essential element of gardens, reflects the symbiosis between spiritual vision and the design of green spaces [2]. This conception of Chinese gardens is based on several principles. The garden is presented as a fascinating series of scenes, creating visual effects with masks, openings, focal points and perspectives. It is characterized by dominant elements such as mountains, hills and trees, while integrating dominant elements such as streams and ponds. It offers a representation of alternations between complementary scenes, highlighting contrasts between vertical and horizontal lines, mountains and plains, water and rocks, rough and soft, mystery and understanding, feminine and masculine. It incorporates bridges of various styles, such as arched, rustic or richly decorated, to ensure perfect harmony with the overall composition. An arrangement of rocks in the garden that allows light and shade to play their part judiciously [3].

In the seventeenth century, Sir William Chambers, referenced by J.-L. Larcher and T. Gelgon (2000), made some enriching observations on Chinese gardens, describing three tableaux that make up the various scenes in these gardens. The first, marked by the harmony of natural forms, encompasses pleasure through water, plants, minerals and animals. The second, described as terrible, features narrow valleys, steep paths, disturbed rocks, dark forests, deformed trees, frightening animals, ruins, caverns and dark colours. Finally, the third painting, called the surprise, is based on contrasts such as dark and light colors, calm and noisy, serenity and anxiety.

2.1.6 Roman gardens

Moreover, in the second half of the 2nd century BC, a new art of gardening was born in the Roman Empire, bearing the Latin name art topiaria, or topiary art, which literally translates as "landscape art". In Rome, pleasure gardens were specially designed to create privileged spaces and harmonious compositions that integrate architectural and natural elements, with the aim of providing a pleasurable experience for the inhabitants [2]. Following the conquest of the Greek territories, the Romans imported the concept of the public garden into their own culture. These green spaces multiplied generously around Rome, forming a diversified green belt that encircled the city. This belt encompassed peripheral parks, the sumptuous gardens of wealthy villas and the family gardens of middle-class Romans, commonly known as "hortus" [2,4]. In this respect, the multiple gardens that frequently surround Roman villas usually consist of a central pool, trees, flowerbeds and arbors. Vegetable gardens and orchards extend to the outskirts of the city. These pleasure gardens, or hortus, tended to include a hortulanus or a topiairius, the latter being responsible for pruning the groves according to the art of the topiary [3].

Roman gardens, influenced by Persian pleasure parks, incorporated structures inherited from Greek sacred gardens, such as palaces and promenade porticoes. These structures, built alongside funerary complexes or places of worship, helped to make parks and gardens essential to Roman social life as thermal baths. Two types of garden stand out: those accompanying villas and palace gardens [2]. The Romans had a marked affinity for agricultural activities, and in the Roman countryside, cultivated land played a predominant role, benefiting from careful upkeepers. As a result, by the end of the Roman Empire, Italy had given the impression of an immense garden [3].

2.1.7 Japanese gardens

The Japanese empire, when it began at approximately 660 B.C., was composed of a substantial number of islands. In ancient Japan, under the influence of Shintoism, gardens, known as Shima or islands, inevitably incorporated water features and islands, reflecting the country's distinctive and unique characteristics. Around temples, the ritual consists of using sand and pebbles, which are washed and bleached by waves from the sea. These materials are carefully spread around the temples, acting as a gesture of respect or offering to Shinto deities. This practice reflects the deep connection between nature, spirituality and artistic expression in Japanese garden design, illustrating an ancient philosophy rooted in the earth and spiritual beliefs. [3].

Japanese gardens succeed in artistically depicting natural features such as hills, ponds and watercourses through the skilful use of elements such as rocks, trees and sand. The aim of these gardens is to create landscapes that appear natural, avoid artificial appearances and seek to reproduce panoramas similar to those that might be found in nature. Harmony and natural aesthetics are key aspects of Japanese garden design [5]. J.-L. Larcher and T. Gelgon (2000) present the philosophy behind Japanese garden design to better understand the subtle art that animates these enchanting spaces in Japan. These gardens fall into two main categories: Tsuki-yama, artificial hills or mounds; and Hira-niva, flat gardens. The organization of these spaces is then divided into three distinct forms: Shin, which is the classic, most descriptive form, devoid of dreams; Gyo, an intermediate, semiclassic form; and therefore, a more rustic and oversimplified form, favouring very bare symbolism.

Fig. 2. Ryoan-ji temple in Kyoto: A typical representation of a Japanese dry garden or rock garden [5].
The first two categories, Tsuki-yama and Hira-niva, encompass four distinct garden types: rock garden (Figure 2), water garden, scholar garden and tea garden. Each type of garden reflects a specific approach to design, with its own aesthetic and symbolic characteristics [3].

2.2 Gardens from Antiquity to the Renaissance

The unification of the Roman Empire established a uniform culture throughout the ancient world. After the division into two distinct empires, a double heir to ancient gardens emerged, with influence in both the East and West [4]. In the West, after the fall of the ancient world, the art of pleasure gardens went through a long eclipse. Christian doctrine, with its rejection of the concept of "secular luxury" associated with gardens, did much to marginalize this art form. During this period, the garden lost its importance in Western culture due to its distance from any religious context. However, after the “Renaissance” and its spiritual change, the garden enjoyed a revival, regaining a prominent place in the culture of the time [4].

2.2.1 Gardens of the Middle Ages (5th to 15th centuries)

In this context, monasteries play a crucial role in medieval medicine, influencing the selection and use of plants for medicinal purposes.

The use of medicine during this period was based on the curative properties of medicinal herbs, which are used for remedies. It was common for every medieval monastery to have at least one herb garden (Figure 3) [6,7].

![Fig. 3. The medieval gardens of the Tour de Bridiers [7].](image)

In other words, during the 15th and 16th centuries in Europe, gardens did not completely disappear. However, gardens were predominantly utilitarian in nature, taking the form of orchards, vegetable gardens, courtyards and grassy inner courtyards adorned with flowers and coping stones. This description suggests that late medieval gardens were more concerned with practical functionality than with purely aesthetic or decorative elements [4].

**2.2.2 Hispano-Arabic and Hispano-Moorish gardens**

Following the fall of the Western Roman Empire, a significant period was marked by the emergence of Islam, with key events such as the propagation of the Islamic faith through the revelation to the Prophet Mohammed in 610 AD of the existence of Allah and the period of Arab conquest that followed. [3]. Islam has a holistic nature that encompasses both the religious dimension and the way of life. The influence of Islam goes beyond social, racial and national affiliations, extending profoundly into the arts as well. The flourishing of Islamic culture after the sixth century is explained in part by the convergence and assimilation of the cultural heritages of Mesopotamia, Rome, Persia and Greece [2].

Islam stands out for its privileged link with gardens, placing it in first place among all religions [8]. In the Quran, paradise is described as a set of gardens where water flows uninterruptedly, in accordance with Allah's words in Surat An-Nahl, verse 31: “Gardens of perpetual residence, which they will enter, beneath which rivers flow. They will have therein whatever they wish. Thus, does Allah reward the righteous ». In the Islamic conception, the garden finds its origin in the paradisiacal representation detailed in the Quran, where the earth is described as enjoying a generous irrigation of water, honey and milk; God said: “Is the description of Paradise, which the righteous are promised, wherein are rivers of water unaltered, rivers of milk the taste of which never changes, rivers of wine delicious to those who drink, and rivers of purified honey, in which they will have from all [kinds of] fruits and forgiveness from their Lord, like [that of] those who abide eternally in the Fire and are given to drink scalding water that will sever their intestines?” Surat Muhammad, verse 15". The eternal gardens of Paradise are enriched in shady spaces, invigorating streams, fountains and succulent fruits [2].

According to Almighty's directives, as set out in verse 25 of Surat Al-Baqara, verses 31-33 of Surat Al-Kahf, and verses 136, 195 and 198 of Surat Aal-Imran, the gardens will be splendid, crisscrossed by gushing streams of water mixed with the bewitching aromas of camphor and ginger, as expressed in Surat Al-Insan, verses 5-18. In addition, these gardens will be an inexhaustible source of fruit, offering a succulent variety throughout the year, following the words of Allah in Surat Al-Muminun verse 19 and Surat Ar-Rahman verses 52 and 68; also, the majestic, rare and beneficent trees will create an extensive and generous shade, as indicated in verses 99 and 141 of Surat Al-Anam and verse 35 of Surat Ar-Rad. The description of these gardens, crisscrossed by streams and adorned with various fruits, is a symbolic representation of paradise and is frequently evoked in several other suras of the Quran.

The design of this type of garden aims to realize the vision of an ideal place, often associated with the idea of "paradise". This aspiration led to explorations in other fields, influencing aesthetic, artistic and mathematical considerations in garden design. However, engravings
and travel accounts survive as sources that preserve information and enable the history and design of these gardens to be reconstructed, although many Islamic gardens have been lost over time [2].

On the one hand, Byzantine gardens are deeply influenced by the religion from which they are derived and are indisputable symbols of power and grandeur. On the other hand, Persian gardens are characterized by enclosed spaces of regular shape, are embellished with animated figures, and frequently feature a central kiosk from which cross-shaped paths extend. The monotony inherent in this geometric layout is softened by the abundant flow of water; the intoxicating scents of jasmine, carnation, lavender and lemon trees; and the colourful palette of flowers, foliage and earthenware coverings. The resulting image is a harmonious, aesthetically pleasing garden where the aquatic elements, carefully arranged geometric shapes and plant diversity create a lush, pleasing atmosphere. This garden style reflects the Arab cultural influence of the design of "patios" in southern Spain during the conquests, adding a distinctive touch to the landscaped environment [4]; for illustrative purposes, the gardens of the Alhambra, the Generalife, the Alcazar in Seville and Madinat al-Zahra. [3,10].

2.3 Renaissance and Baroque gardens

2.3.1 The Italian Style

The Renaissance period, marked by the creation of the most emblematic gardens in Italy and France, saw the emergence of complex geometric compositions. These gardens were adorned with elaborate floral motifs, creating a multitude of artistic themes. [3].

According to J.-L. Larcher & T. Gelgon (2000), the gardens of this period were based on the following design principles:
- Layout according to relief, using slopes and natural springs;
- The art of perspective was introduced through a main axis and symmetrical paths converging on a central element;
- Monumental scale coexisted with individual scale, creating a balance between grandeur and intimacy;
- Considerable emphasis was placed on water, integrating elements such as cascades, jets, fountains and basins to enrich the overall aesthetic of the garden.

The ideas and contributions of Leon Battista Alberti (1404-1472), a great writer, philosopher, mathematician and architect, played a decisive role in the evolution of gardens, marking a shift towards a style more characteristic of Renaissance Italy. Mention of his multiple skills underlines the holistic approach taken to garden design at this time, when philosophical, mathematical and architectural considerations converged to shape the art of gardens. This illustrates the complexity of the transition from medieval to Renaissance gardening styles, with Alberti representing a key figure in this evolution [8].

During the 16th century, the rediscovery of the aesthetic principles of the Greco-Roman civilization stimulated the evolution of the art of perspective, both in the artistic realm of painting and in garden design. The Belvedere Gardens at the Vatican are mentioned as a symbolic starting point marking the beginning of a new era in the history of gardens. This period was characterized by the growing influence of geometry and architectural skills in garden design. This meant that the planning and creation of green spaces were increasingly influenced by geometric and architectural considerations, as demonstrated by the example of the Belvedere Gardens. These changes have profoundly influenced the way gardens have been designed, marking a significant transformation in their aesthetics and structure [4].

As a result, the emblematic elements and motifs of the Italian Renaissance are fully evident at the Belvedere, with terraces, staircases and balustrades, while the walls delimiting the various floors are adorned with sophisticated decorations, including recesses that offer niches and grottoes, adding sculptural and decorative dimensions. In addition, the Belvedere is enriched by the presence of statues, water features and fountains, which are characteristic elements of Renaissance art. The emphasis on water highlights its increasing role over time in these compositions, suggesting a dynamic development in the way water is integrated and exploited to accentuate the beauty and elegance of the place [3,4].

Landscaping projects during this period included the Villa Castello and Boboli Gardens in Florence, the gardens of the Villa d'Este on the hill of Tivoli, and the Villa Lante in Bagnaia (Figure 4) [11].

![Fig. 4. Panoramic view of Villa Lante in Bagnaia, featuring an Italian garden and the fountain of the Moors](image)
were created as university gardens, with the primary aim of cultivating plants and teaching medical botany to doctors. The Botanical Garden of Pisa, established in 1543 by Luca Ghini, was the first of these areas, followed by the Botanical Garden of Padua in 1545. Overall, this period was characterized by the emergence of innovative botanical gardens, which exerted a major influence on the evolution of botany and medical training to incorporate a broader objective involving the acclimatization and cultivation of exotic plants [12].

2.3.2 The French Style

During this period, French kings and lords, attracted by the ingenuity and diversity of gardens, also expressed a desire to own their own green spaces. Nevertheless, French Renaissance gardens bear little resemblance to their Italian counterparts, with a few rare exceptions [4]. In this context, the Italian style continued to influence garden design well into the classical era. With the transfer of political influence in Europe from the House of Habsburg to France, the gently undulating landscapes surrounding Paris, embellished by numerous royal castles, provided garden designers with a sublime natural setting: majestic trees, soft green meadows adorned with flowers and tranquil stretches of water. These natural elements were artistically integrated into the design of the gardens, reflecting the beauty and harmony of the Italian style while adapting to the French context [2].

To this end, the French garden is a majestic creation characterized by a regular, symmetrical design and pruned trees. It expresses a Cartesian approach to art, guided by two fundamental principles. First, the unity of execution enables the visitor to grasp the whole composition at a glance. Second, grandeur demands that the eye be able to extend beyond the boundaries of the park. In this approach, nature is subjected to the imperatives of composition, highlighting a rigorous artistic and architectural vision characterized by order, symmetry and perspective [4].

Fig. 5. Palace of Versailles [16,17].

Le Nôtre, a French architect and garden designer, contributed to the evolution of garden design in his homeland. His role emerged as the creator of the emblematic French garden style, characterized by dynamic geometric elements, a marked taste for symmetry and refined floral diversity. Each element is judiciously arranged and enlivened by the strategic presence of basins, fountains and sculptures. Some of the gardens created with Le Nôtre's significant contribution include Vaux-le-Vicomte and Versailles (Figure 5). These gardens have acquired considerable renown and have been considered a major reference in the field of European landscape architecture for many years [2].

2.3.3 The English Style

The evolution of English landscape gardening can be traced back to the Renaissance, but it was not until the 18th century that it truly took off. In the 17th century, English made a significant contribution to the development of the Anglo-Chinese style in Europe. This change in perspective profoundly reshaped the way gardens were envisioned, bringing new elements that revealed an aesthetic revolution. The Oriental impact gave rise to the Romantic movement, the origin of the landscape style in England. This style is characterized by a preference for diversity and a deep respect for nature, values considered intrinsically moral in this artistic and cultural evolution [2]. The distinctive feature of the English garden lies in its complete opposition to the French or Italian styles. Unlike the latter, the British do not seek to impose control over nature but rather to imitate it authentically. Thus, the English garden is distinguished by a more natural, spontaneous approach in contrast to the more formal methods of other European gardening styles [2]. English gardens are distinguished by their graceful asymmetries and harmonious integration of natural elements such as dales, hills and watercourses. In addition, they encourage plant diversity, whether for native or exotic species, by enriching the colour palette in a varied and abundant way [4].

The special features of these gardens, according to the findings of J.-L. Larcher and T. Gelgon (2000), include the following:
- Progressively revealed perspectives;
- The elimination of visual barriers and fences;
- The prohibition of straight lines, favouring undulating forms;
- The natural, free and dense arrangement of trees;
- The design of curved paths adapted to the terrain.

According to Deconinck, M. (1982), the formation of a mixed style gave rise to a proliferation of parks and gardens throughout Europe, each reflecting the unique vision of each princely court. Although styles varied from country to country, all preserved the essence of the fundamental principles derived from English, French and, ultimately, Italian traditions. The harmonization of the great garden themes, inherited from Antiquity through the 18th century, resulted from the balanced coexistence of various influences, creating a stylistic diversity characteristic of the period. Developments in garden design in the second half of the 18th century, mainly under English influence, led to the emergence of a new garden style based on a compositional approach. However, despite its artistic development, the social structures of the time limited this art to the private estates of aristocrats [2].
2.4 Landscaped and contemporary gardens

2.4.1 The 19th century Gardens

At the beginning of the 19th century, there was little noticeable change, with the trends of the previous century still predominating. Configurations derived from mixed Anglo-Chinese gardens gradually evolved into "landscape parks", as they are known today, characterized by elegant curves, undulating lawns and a marked interest in the diversity of exotic plant species. These parks reflect a persistent desire to achieve a harmonious composition [4]. The 19th century was marked by a period of profound change linked to three major revolutions—industrial, urban and democratic—which took place in Europe and the United States. These revolutions, combined with a new Romantic sensibility, helped redefine the relationship between public and private spaces. As a result, a new form of urban art was born, encompassing the creation of public gardens and parks. These spaces have helped shape the urban experience, offering a balance between nature, relaxation and the growing need to promote an enhanced quality of life in expanding urban centers [2].

During this period, the industrial revolution had a major impact on rapid urbanization and the significant transformation of lifestyles, leading to rapid population growth in urban areas, with consequences such as air pollution and deterioration in quality of life. To meet these challenges, the creation of new green spaces, in the form of public gardens, has become an essential and strategic response to allowing a city to breathe and avoid asphyxiation. These green spaces have been specially designed to meet the growing needs of the urban population due to their primary importance as essential means of promoting hygiene and sanitation in densely populated areas, thus establishing their predominance in terms of collective utility. These spaces have thus helped improve the quality of life of city dwellers by providing spaces for relaxation and greenery within expanding urban areas [3]. In France, the major restructuring of Paris initiated by Napoleon III and led by Baron Haussmann focused on integrating public parks into an ambitious urban plan. This initiative, considered the world's most significant parks program, was primarily motivated by the need to improve sanitary conditions and modernize the city. The ambition was to transform Paris into a healthier, more pleasant metropolis [2].

To realize this vision, the urban plan called for the opening of spaces, notably through the development of vast public parks such as the Parc des Buttes Chaumont and the Parc de Montsouris in working-class neighborhoods and the Bois de Boulogne and the Parc Monceau in residential areas. The aim of these initiatives was to offer Parisians an environment with better air quality and to provide them with spaces for leisure activities. However, this trend has spread internationally, with examples such as Hyde Park, Regent's Park and Victoria Park in London and Central Park in New York. In Brussels, under the influence of King Leopold II, parks such as Woluwé (Figure 6), Forest, Duden, Josaphat and Elisabeth were laid out.

Worldwide, wide avenues and promenades were created to compensate for the lack of green space resulting from the rapid growth of cities [2,4].

In the late 19th century, under changing social notions and faced with the massive urbanization of urban areas, various individual and collective responses were formulated to address the apparent incompatibility between desires for space, contact with nature, access to services and urban intensity [13]. The "garden city" is emerging as a solution to the growing need to harmonize nature with an ever-increasing urban environment [4]. Ebenezer Howard, a preurbanist culturalist sociologist, introduced his innovative ideas on urban planning in 1898 with his book "Tomorrow, a peaceful path to real reform". In this work, Howard proposes a novel vision of urban development radically different from traditional urbanization. His concept was of a radioconcentric city characterized by a structure of concentric circles, the outer circle of which would be a belt of parks, while the central core would house a public garden surrounded by the main public buildings (Figures 7 & 8). Between these two zones, areas would be reserved for housing and industry. The garden cities of Letchworth and Welwyn are cited as the first concrete realizations of this urban planning vision, putting Ebenezer Howard's concepts into practice [2].

First experimented with in the Anglo-Saxon nations, this urbanistic vision gained importance over the course of the twentieth century, particularly in France and Belgium [4].
2.4.2 Contemporary gardens (20th and 21st centuries)

The period from 1910 to 1945 was marked by a succession of wars and economic and political crises. During this troubled period, the creation of new gardens and public parks was not a priority because of the wartime context. Economic challenges and political instabilities gave rise to different priorities, relegating the creation of green spaces such as public gardens and parks to a secondary plane. However, despite the challenges encountered between the two world wars, several initiatives were taken to design and create more modest green spaces, such as squares and small parks, in Paris [3].

The postwar period was characterized by a growing recognition of the importance of green spaces for the balance and quality of urban life. This postwar period also generated a growing demand for diversified ornamental plant production. This evolution can be interpreted as a response to the need to rebuild and revitalize urban environments devastated by war by integrating more green areas and plant diversity into urban planning [3].

The evolution and growing popularity of the concept of green space over recent decades reflects a sometimes obsessive desire to introduce natural elements into urban environments. The term 'green space' encompasses various small green areas, such as playgrounds, squares and neighbourhood gardens. Although these small green spaces have developed significantly, the continued existence and need for parks and large gardens should not be overlooked. These vast spaces offer a greater dimension, providing a real sense of isolation from urban life. Over the course of the 20th century, gardens and parks became accessible spaces. This accessibility was motivated by the need to cope with urban expansion, despite the pressure exerted on natural spaces. Example: Central Park in New York [2,4].

After the postwar period, there was an evolution in approaches and conceptions of garden design towards the contemporary garden. This evolution reflects a transition towards more modern and innovative designs in landscaping [14].

In the 1970s, the high demand for public green spaces and private gardens, combined with the growing presence of unusual plants and the involvement of unqualified landscape gardeners, sometimes led to the creation of schemes that lacked thoughtful design and, in some cases, were of mediocre quality [3]. During this period, widespread recognition at all levels of public and community authority of the importance of preserving the environment, appreciating landscapes and restoring historic gardens led to positive action. The now-recognized skills of landscape architects were harnessed in collaboration with those of architects, urban planners and ecologists to make a constructive contribution to the evolution and management of heritage in various sectors [3].

At this point, a number of architects and landscape designers left their mark on the evolution and dissemination of new ideas concerning the art of gardens and landscape design. These figures included Bernard Lassus, Jacques Simon, Jacques Sgard, Alain Provost, Gilles Clément and Alexandre Chemetoff [3].

In the 2000s, the emergence of the notion of sustainable development left a deep imprint on contemporary garden design. This sustainable approach places importance on preserving natural resources, reducing environmental impact and creating ecologically, socially and economically balanced spaces [14].

3 Conclusion

An analysis of the history of green spaces reveals a rich and varied framework of detail shaped by human creativity and cultural evolution over the centuries. From the first ancient gardens, symbols of esteem for nature, through Renaissance gardens, transformed into works of landscape art, to the emergence of contemporary gardens, each era has left its own mark on these verdant spaces. They have become a cultural and scientific heritage whose conception and evolution have been articulated around a set of values and considerations. They ensure a wide range of functions for these spaces; beyond aesthetics, they represent social and environmental links. This chronicle persists as a privileged indicator of the shared history with nature through the enduring nature of green spaces, continuing to evolve in sync with the aspirations of each era.

References


9. Quran, (Surat En-Nahl, verse 31), (Surat Muhammad, verse 15), (Surat Al-Baqara, verse 25), (Surat Al-Kahf, verses 31-33), (Surat Aal-Imran. verses 136, 195 & 198), (Surat Al-Insan. verses 3-18), (Surat Al-Muminun. verse 19), (Surat Ar-Rahman. verses 32 & 68), (Surat Al-Anam. verses 99 & 141) et (Surat Ar-Rad. Verse 35).


