

# Iconic Gardens of Renaissance, Baroque, Rococo and 19th Century



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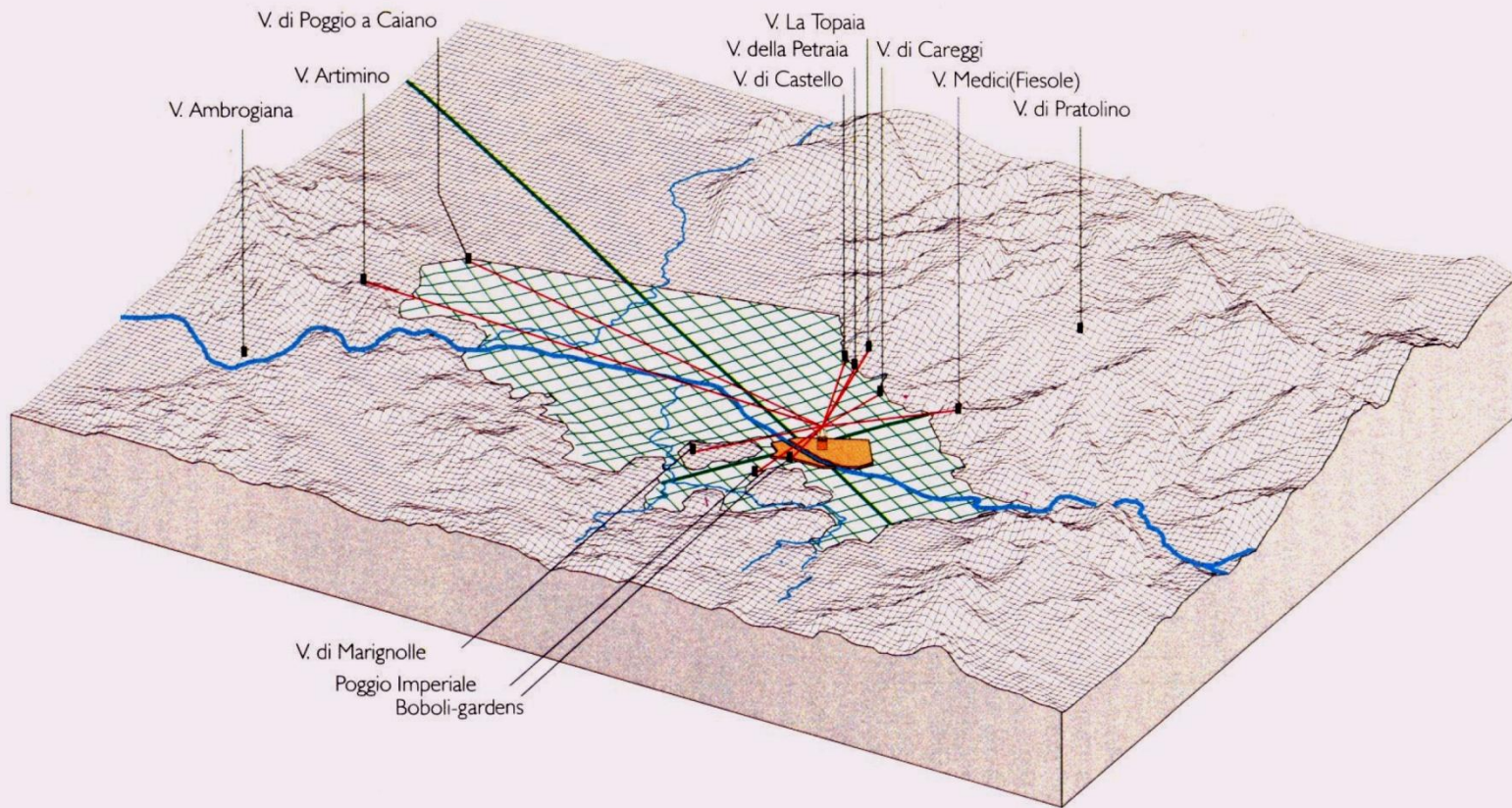
# **Villa Medici Fiesole – Design Principles of a Renaissance Garden**

- Cities controlled hinterland > transformation of fortified rural settlements into villas for landowning town nobility
- Villeggiatura to enjoy rural life
- Rural life only existed in the concept of urban life (town and palazzo)
- Villa was utilitarian for the status of the owner
- Rich social and ecclesiastical position of owners
- In 15th century villas became places for contemplation and sensuous pleasure
- “yesterday I went to my villa in Careggi, not to cultivate my land but my soul” (Cosimo de Medici)
- Nature takes a central position for contemplation > the Garden
- Nature, poetry, intellectual discipline to learn moral laws
- Development of villa went hand in hand with discovery of ancient literature (Virgil and his idea of Arcadia, Petrarch or Ovids Metamorphoses)

## **Villa Medici Fiesole – a short history**

- Villeggiatura in Tuscany found around town such as Luca, Pisa, Siena and Florence
- Rich citizens spend 4 month a year on the countryside
- In Florence family Medici was most important for villa building, in 15th century new generation of Medici came to power > new villas, should have a view on town (centre of power) and on property and preferably in each others field of vision, if not possible: paintings in interior (Cosimo I, Francesco I, Ferdinando I)
- Villa Medici Fiesole designed for Cosimo I and designed by Michelozzo
- Family owned till 1671



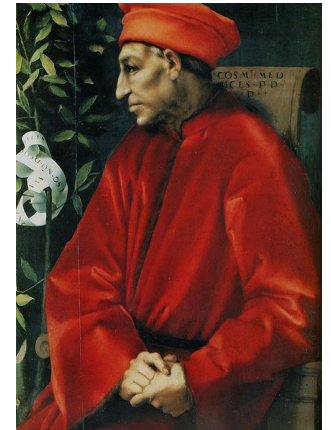


II FLORENCE The territorial arrangement of Medici villas along the Arno valley





Aerial photograph of Villa Medici Fiesole



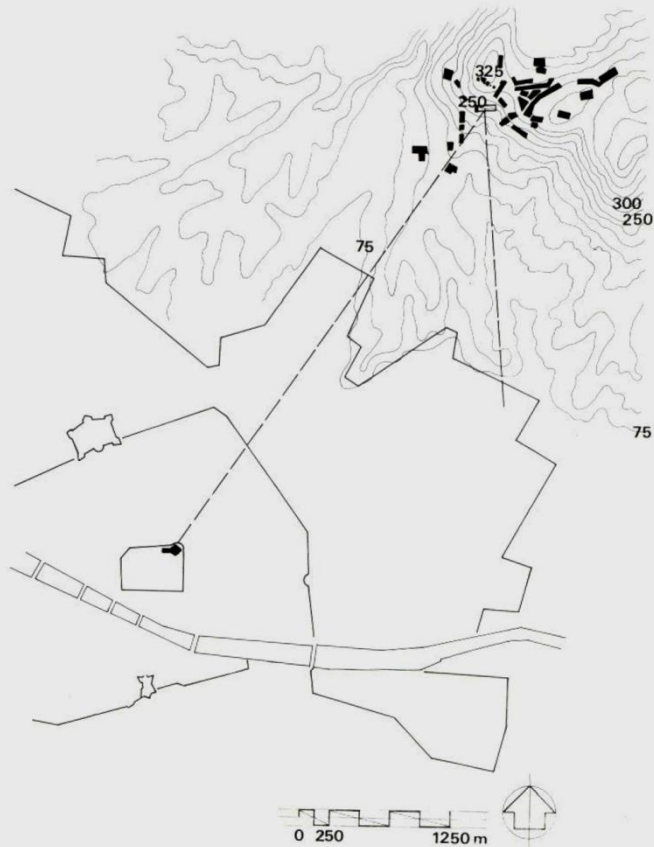
Cosimo Medici the Older



Mechelozzo De Bartolomeo

# site

Villa Medici, Fiesole.  
View of Brunelleschi's  
dome in Florence and the  
extended axis of sym-  
metry of the lower terrace



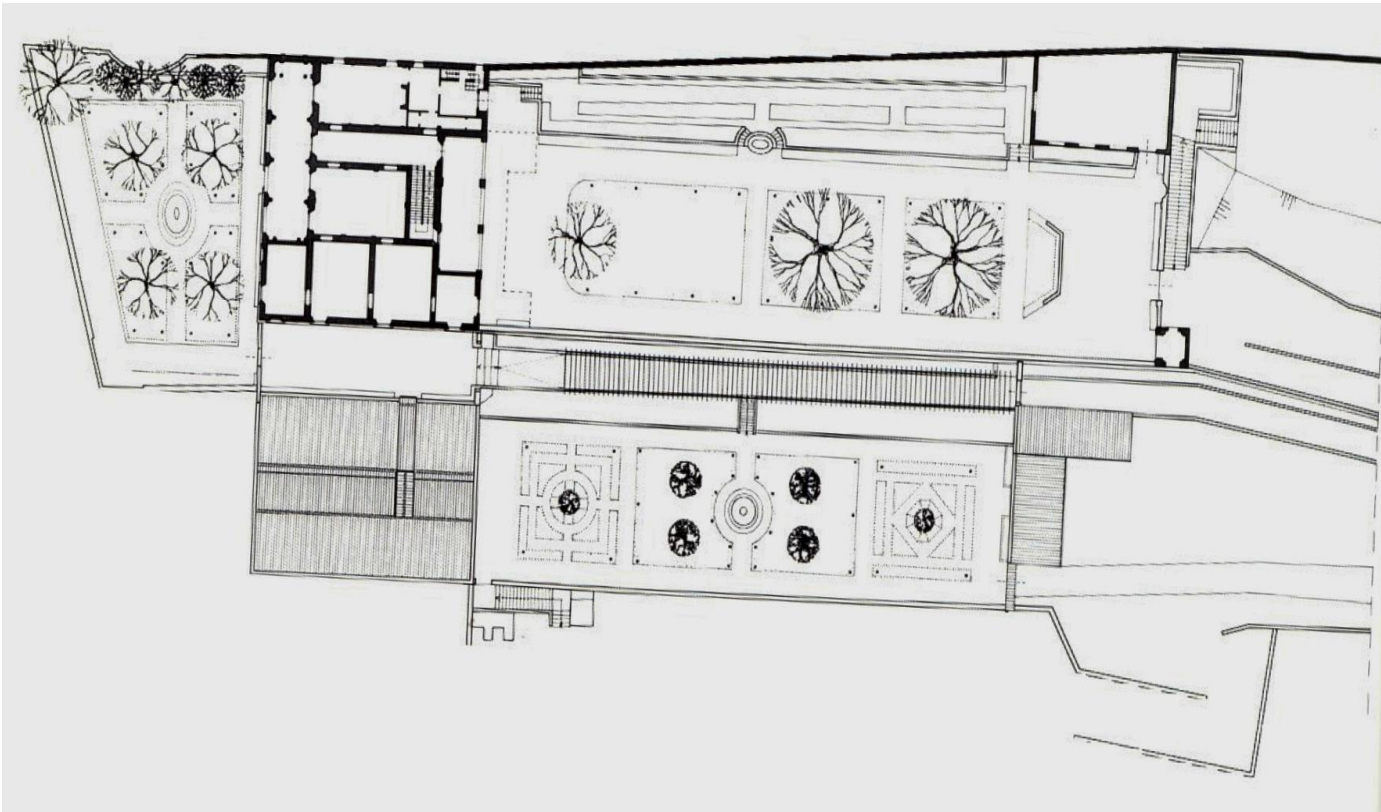
- white façade of the villa > outstanding over the whole valley
- view to Florence
- view over the Arno valley
- view over own property
- view to other estates

## site

- Situated above Arno valley on a height of app 250 meters, 5km further on in this valley Florence is located
- Foreground is undulating
- On the site of villa steeper, south facing hilltop (325m) > southern façade is standing against it
- Garden is exposed to south
- Slope protects villa from cold north-east winds in winter, in summer cool breeze from the sea in the west
- The building is aligned in a certain angle in the slope > closes field of view from the east, building is orientated towards the Mugnone side valley and the distant line of Arno valley
- In transverse direction: scheme laid out like a balcony overlooking the source of the Arno valley in the south



# Plan



Villa Medici, Fiesole. North-south cross-section with view of the east façade

# Arcadian Idyll – Detailed Description of the Design

- Dominated by two directions:
- **east-west:** west terrace and lower Arno valley with the viale (entrance road), west loggia and east loggia with big upper terrace (moved southwards and curving the mountain slope)  
west terrace: grass parterre with box dwarf hedges and four column shaped trees (magnolia)  
east front (slopes upward easterly direction): natural stone paving and further up a grass parterre > terminated by small holy hedge running along the now eastern entrance of the garden  
parterre divided into three sections: First by the east front with trees  
further grass parterres with fruit trees, integrated in natural vegetation of olive trees and boscos (cypress) on the mountainside outside the garden  
**East-west series characterised by visual and mutual cohesion: parterres, hedges and boscos as pictorial gradations of naturalness**
- **south-north:** elements placed alongside axis: it links both terraces in geometrical order  
transverse axis begins in little spring on the northern terrace it ends at a round pond in the centre of the south terrace on halfway: stairs linking to the level of the pergola along the retraining wall with the lower situated south terrace > south terrace is subdivided into four symmetrical parterres > centre is made up by grass bordered with box, outer are filled with various clipped box patterns, calendula officinalis is planted in between the low box hedges  
Elements placed on axis form a water system (reflecting pond) > incorporation of water in tangible and pictorial way  
pergola and walls of coach house are overgrown  
**overgrown elements and water series has been integrated into geometrical and spatial plan of the estate > arcadian idyll provides environment of poetry and proportion**

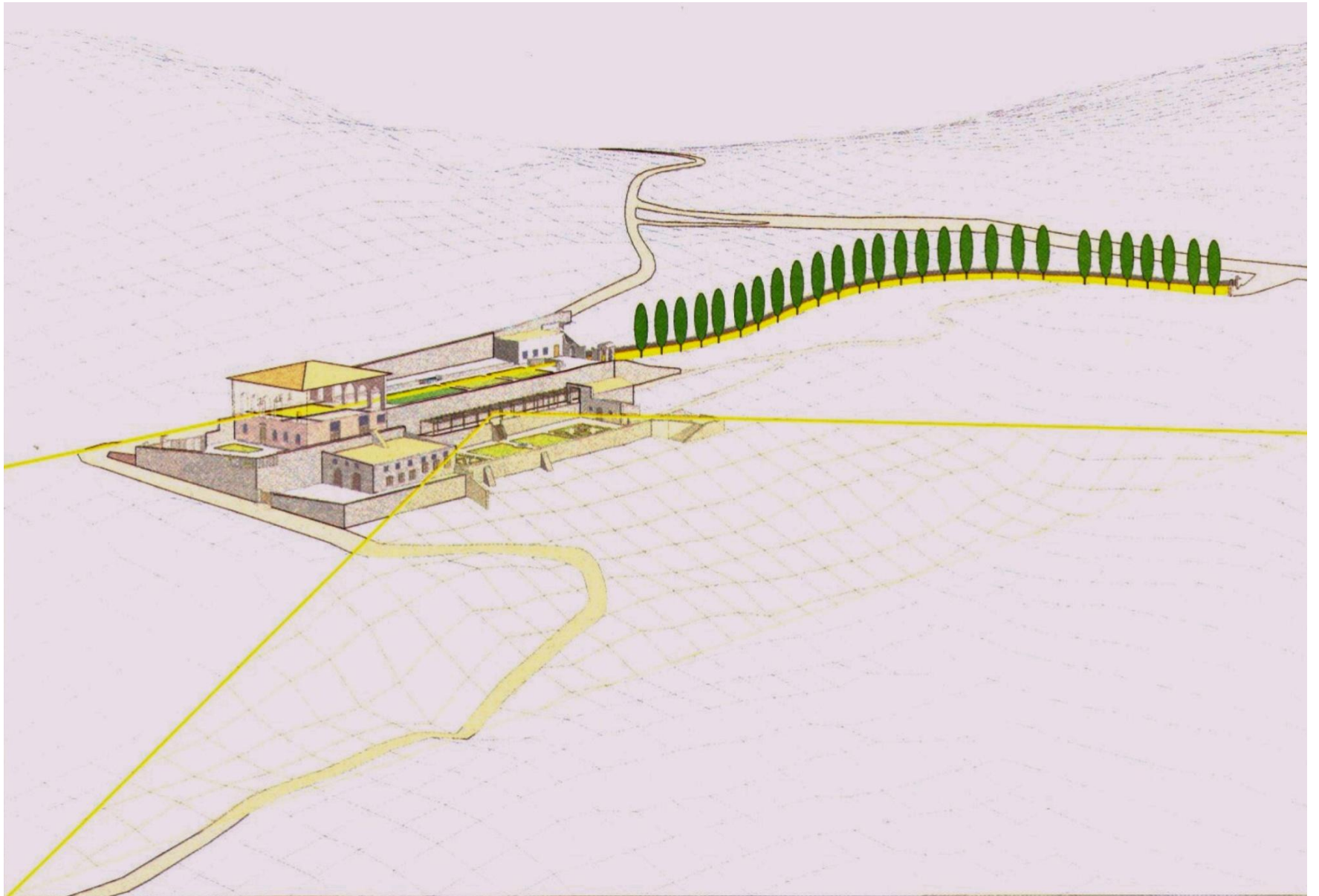






# The ideas behind

- substitution of symbolic paradise (middle ages) with pleasure of tangible nature
- Gods order is represent in nature > place to learn > place to come closer to god
- giardino segreto was a central principle of garden design
- Persian and Arab influences as result of Islamic expansion and crusades (idea of Islamic garden connected to that of medieval: geometrical hortus conclusus with fountain in the centre, water features were important)
- Unspoilt nature as part of programme, but significance of garden elements changed > meaning was given to the landscape in the relation to the villa rustica
- Mystical garden elements show the enjoyment of nature and intellectual activity
- in renaissance art and sciences still unified
- Study of proportions based on scientific measurement created framework for classical orders and proportions
- In the cosmographic diagrams (plans of buildings and gardens) the hidden order of nature was evident (plans reflected measurements of man himself and his surrounding universe)
- In the domain of the villa landscape was brought under control of the human intellect > mathematical model as new aesthetic

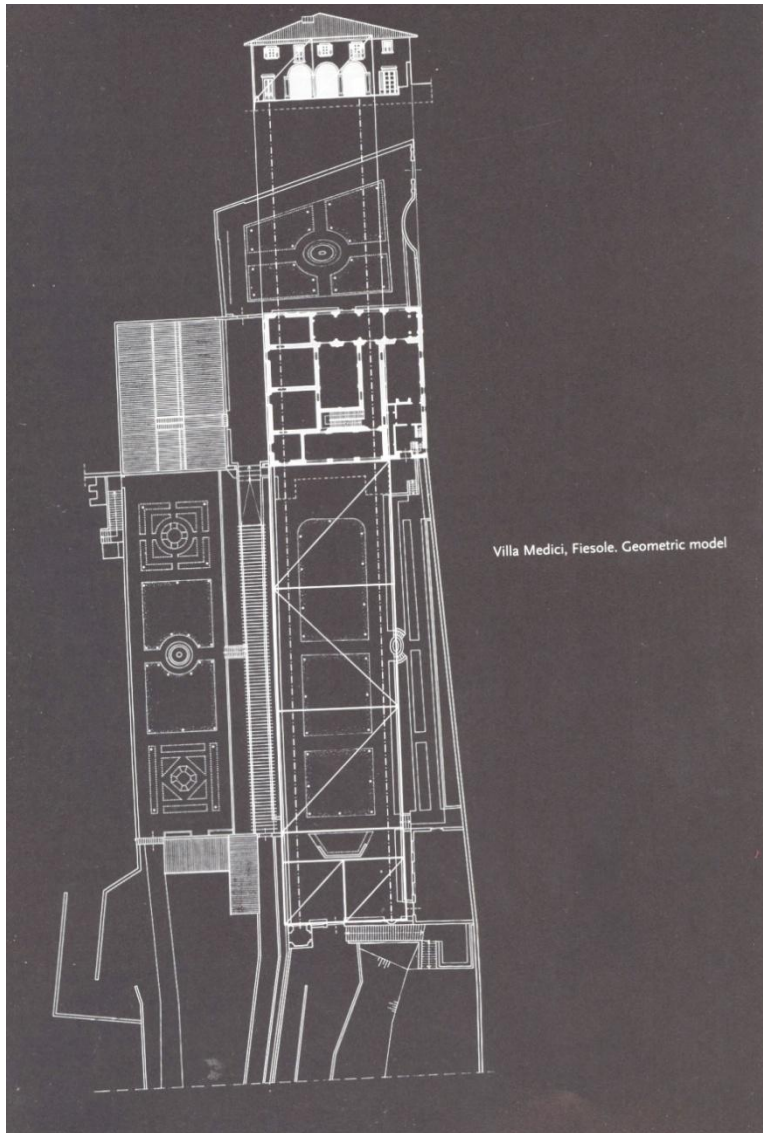


# Viewpoint, perspective, horizon

- Order in nature was revealed as a “divine model” > proportions had a subjective point of view from which they were picked
- Scientific perspective defined space: perspective as hidden mathematical structure that gives space and objects in it coherence > highly connected to the discovery of horizon (a vanishing point on it becomes the limit of the composition)
- Landscape became with experiments on perspective an integral part of art
- Perspective important issue of art and science (amongst others: Dürer, Alberti, da Vinci...)
- Intersection of two parallel lines in infinity = vanishing point
- In architecture and planning the issue was: creation of construction method that correlated view point and object depicted > Alberti developed “costruzione ligittima”, first construction method that combines front with and side elevations in one plan
- Stage management of natural space became architectural exercise > interrupted vistas important to feel enclosure in a cosmic scale (physical space is correlated with inner perspective of contemplation and poetry)
- Experience of space: villa projected against the background of the landscape and landscape integrated into the panorama of the villa > perspective as relationship of villa with its fore and back ground > landscape and panorama of horizon framed architecture of the villa > were related





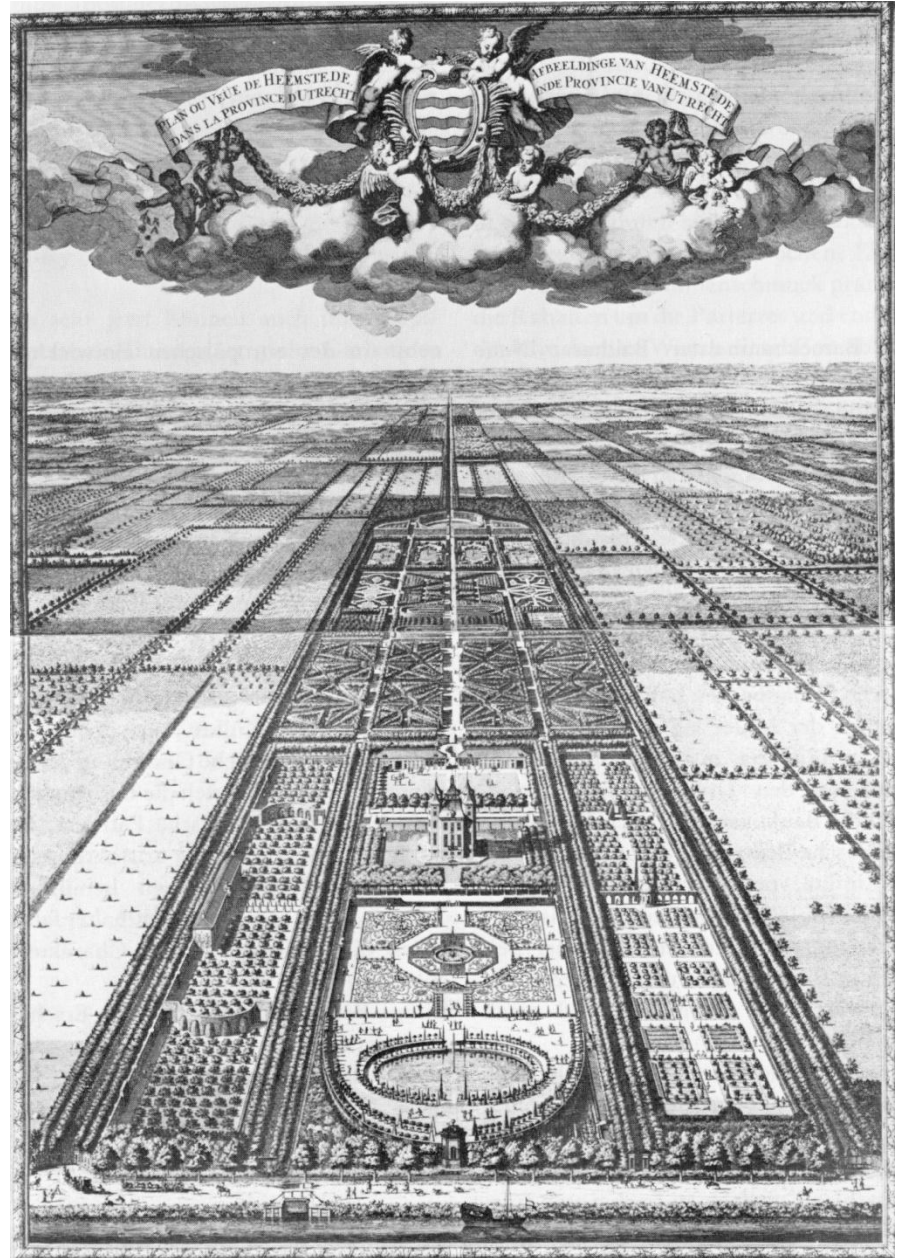


## Geometrics

- Characterised by dimension A (=4,9 m) functions as margin and defines depth of the loggias
- multiples of A make up the ground plan of the building and the garden
- Whole shape is based on a geometrical system following A > hypothetical system of the squares > ground floor plan is following it
- It is a dimensional scheme in which proportions of house and garden could be controlled mathematically
- Geometrical basis of plan important for integrazione senica of villa in the landscape

## **Baroque & Rococo French formal gardens**

The charm of a garden lies in  
the arrangement of its parts



# What is a French formal garden?

**A representative garden of the baroque age.**

Main characteristics:

- Greater dimensions and clearer spatial unity than Renaissance garden.
- The central axis is dominant – unobstructed and extends to the horizon.
- The effect of *perspective ralentie*, produced by a composition of large and complex forms opposed to elemental geometric forms from Renaissance gardens.

Prime function:

- to please the eye
- garden as a land of illusion – theatrical scenery

Secondary functions:

- practical use – kitchen gardens, planted with sainfoin, vines, vegetables, fruit trees in quincunxes, melon beds.

Until the end of 18th c. these parks were indicated on the maps showing the rights of the king and certain lords over woodlands (*cartes de gruerie*).



# Tools and principles

Main aim:                    **All parts must harmonize**

To reach this aim gardeners were struggling with the same problems as military engineers:

**How to keep long continuous lines, regulate the proportions, retain long visual axis.**

Engineer's principle: **The world is composed of opposing parts, without which nothing can survive.**

Tools to ensure control:

- **A supply of mathematical instruments** – During the 16th c. Bernard Palissy lists those instruments, used in the construction of his garden: compass, ruler, set square, plumb-line, bevel and astrolabe. Later in 17th c. bevels were fitted with a gauge becoming pantometers; levels were improved with the use of field glasses.
- **The geometric design** – knowledge of perspective, new developing theories of vision and light, the use of Oriental patterns and shapes.
- **Theoretical models** - it was enough for architects and engineers to follow the models offered by Boyceau, Mollet or Abbe du Breuil.

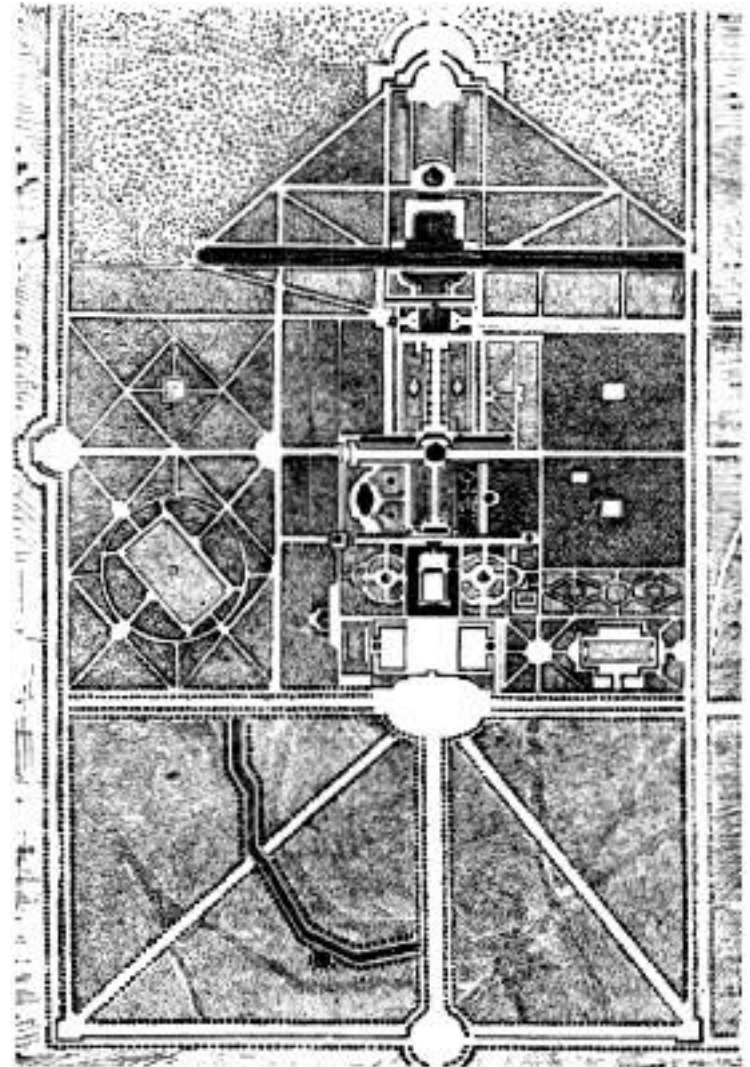
# Designing the prototype

The first truly French garden –  
**Vaux-le Vicomte**

The existing residence was enlarged  
and altered in 1656.

Combination of:

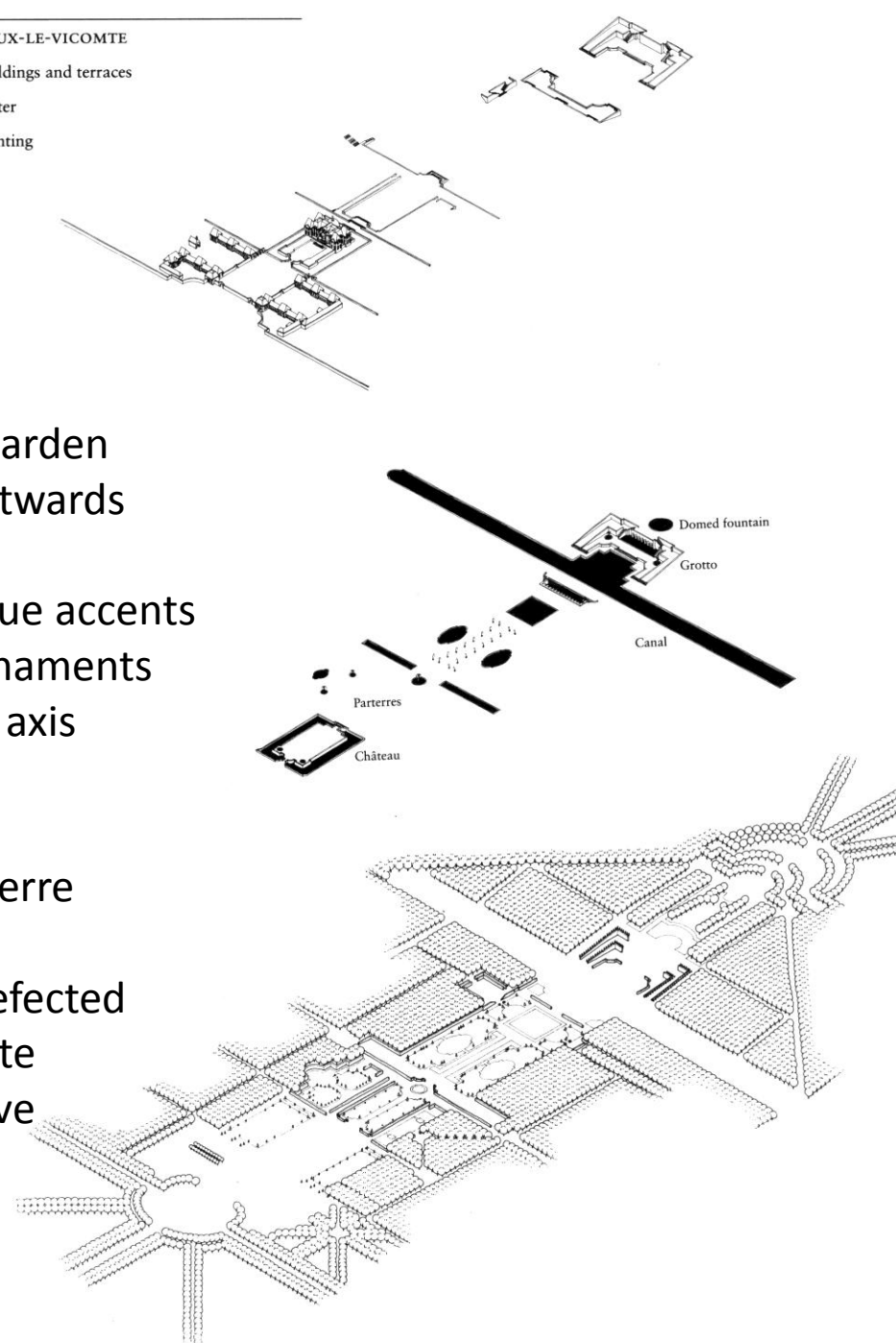
- Architecture, Louis Le Vau
- Interior design, Charles Le Brun
- Landscape design, **Andre Le Notre**



# Design elements

- **Allee d'eau** – alley of water
- **Atlantes** – pillars as male figures
- **Bosquet** – "closet of greenery"
- **Cascade** – artificial waterfall
- **Embroidery Parterre** – most noble part of a garden
- **Etoile** – circular plaza with allees radiating outwards
- **Escaliers** – stairs
- **Fabriques** – small buildings used as picturesque accents
- **Flower Parterre** – flower planting in artful ornaments
- **Grand Canal** – ribbon of water on the central axis
- **Grotto** – rustically designed cave
- **Kitchen Garden** – garden for vegetables
- **Lawn Parterre** – placed behind the main parterre
- **Modelling of terrain**
- **Miroir d'eau** – a pool in which a building is reflected
- **Patte d'oie** – semicircular plaza, 3 paths radiate
- **Perspective Ralentie** – decelerated perspective
- **Plants & trees** – mostly evergreen yews
- **Term** – pillar which has a bust of divinity
- **Topiary** – practice of shape-making of plants
- **Water Parterre** – a main parterre with pools

VAUX-LE-VICOMTE  
· Buildings and terraces  
· Water  
· Planting



# Garden par excellence – the palace of the Sun

**Versailles** – the centre of Louis XIV kingdom from 1682 till 1715.

The estate 93 ha of gardens, beyond them was the Petit Park of some 700 ha, surrounding it all was the Grand Park – more than 6500 ha. The wall was 43 km long with 22 gates.

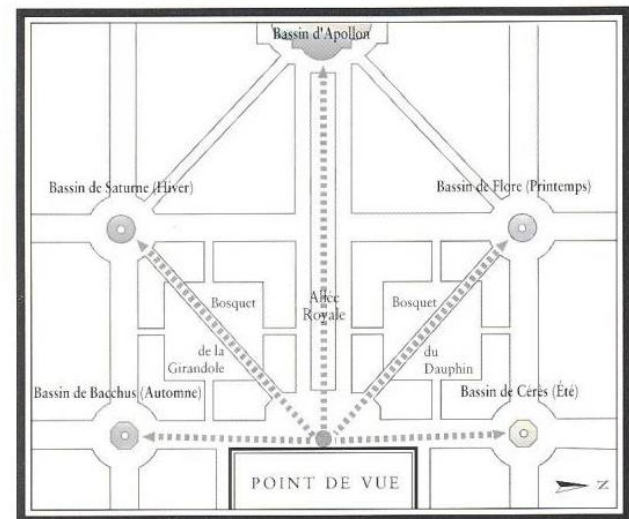
The main axis passed through the centre of chateau.

On the east side – it radiated into 3 avenues.

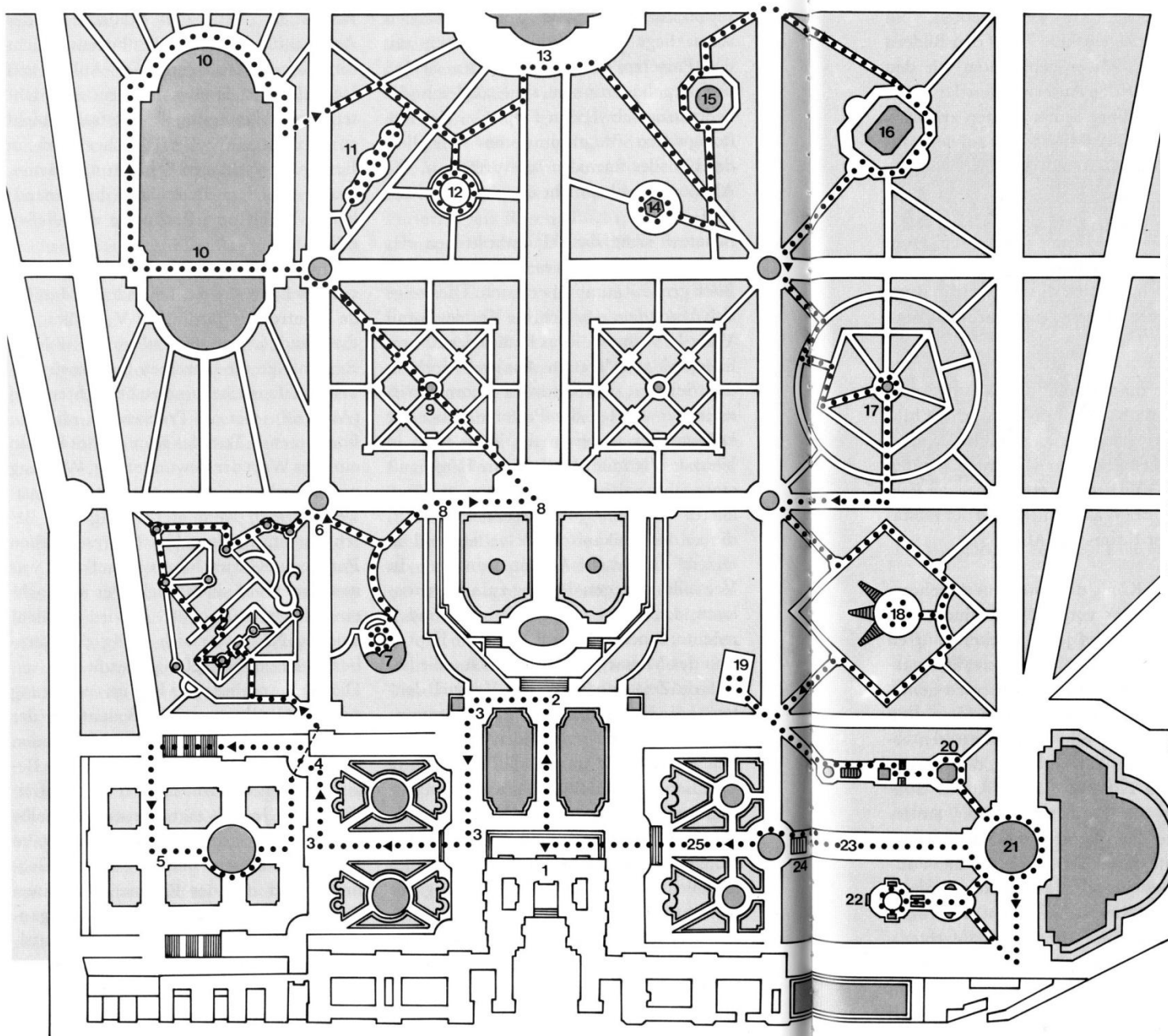
On the west side – it took the form of a long avenue – Allee Royale, extended by a long mirror pond, the Grand Canal.

Free access to the gardens with exceptions of some basquets, which were open or closed to public according to the king's whim.

After the fall of monarchy in 1792, the gardens were dedicated by the First Republic to public enjoyment.







- 1 Vestibül des Schlosses (S. 102)
- 2 »Le Parterre d'Eau« (S. 103)
- 3 »Le Parterre du Midi« (S. 105)
- 4 Apollo und Antinous (S. 107)
- 5 Orangerie (S. 107)
- 6 Labyrinth (S. 108)
- 7 »La Salle de Bal« (S. 109)
- 8 Weg zum »point de vue« unterhalb des »Parterre de Latone« (S. 110)
- 9 »Le Bosquet de la Girandole« (S. 111)
- 10 »L'Île Royale« (S. 111)
- 11 »La Galerie d'Eau« (S. 112)
- 12 Kolonnade (S. 112)
- 13 Apollo-Brunnen (S. 113)
- 14 Bad des Apollo (S. 116)
- 15 Enkelados-Brunnen (S. 117)
- 16 »La Salle du Conseil« (S. 118)
- 17 »La Montagne d'Eau« (S. 118)
- 18 »Le Théâtre d'Eau« (S. 118)
- 19 »Le Bosquet du Marais« (S. 120)
- 20 »Le Bosquet des Trois Fontaines« (S. 120)
- 21 »Le Bassin du Dragon« (S. 120)
- 22 »Le Bosquet de l'Arc de Triomphe« (S. 123)
- 23 »L'Allée des Enfants« (S. 123)
- 24 »La Fontaine du Bain des Nymphes« (S. 124)
- 25 »Le Parterre du Nord« (S. 124)

**The king's itinerary:**  
 6 tours were devised for royal guests between 1689 and 1705.

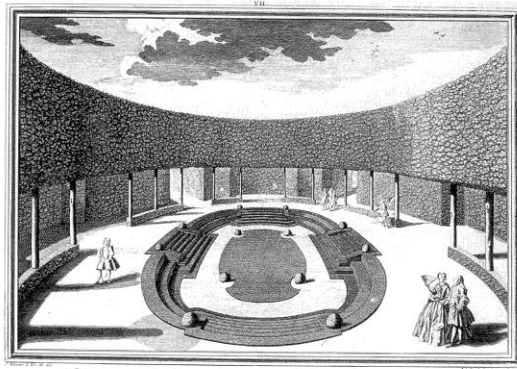
# Theorizing the garden

*La Theorie et la pratique du jardinage, ou l'on traite a fond des beaux jardins appelles communement les jardins de plaisance et de la proprete avec les pratiques de geometrie necessaires pour tracer sur le terrain toutes sortes des figures: Et un trait d'hydraulique convenable aux jardins.*

In 1709 Antoine-Joseph Dezallier d'Argenville published the treatise that codified the French formal garden.

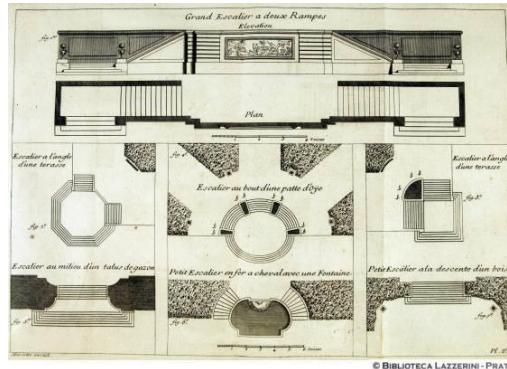
Prime importance – adaption to the site and the terrain within economic limits.

Establishment of criteria – quantified proportions which permit corresponding variations.



Bosquet

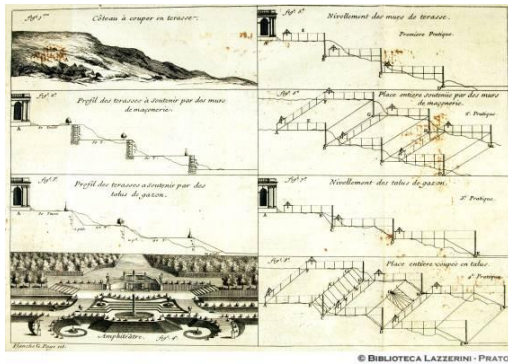
Prospect dans l'interieur. Bosquets



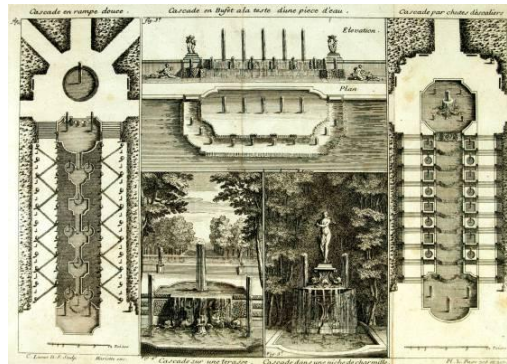
Escaliers



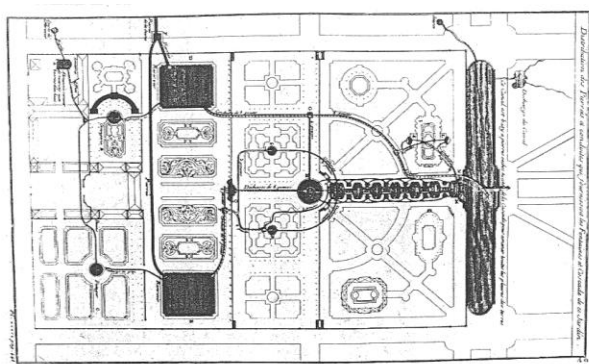
Labirynth



Method of levelling land for the laying out of terraces



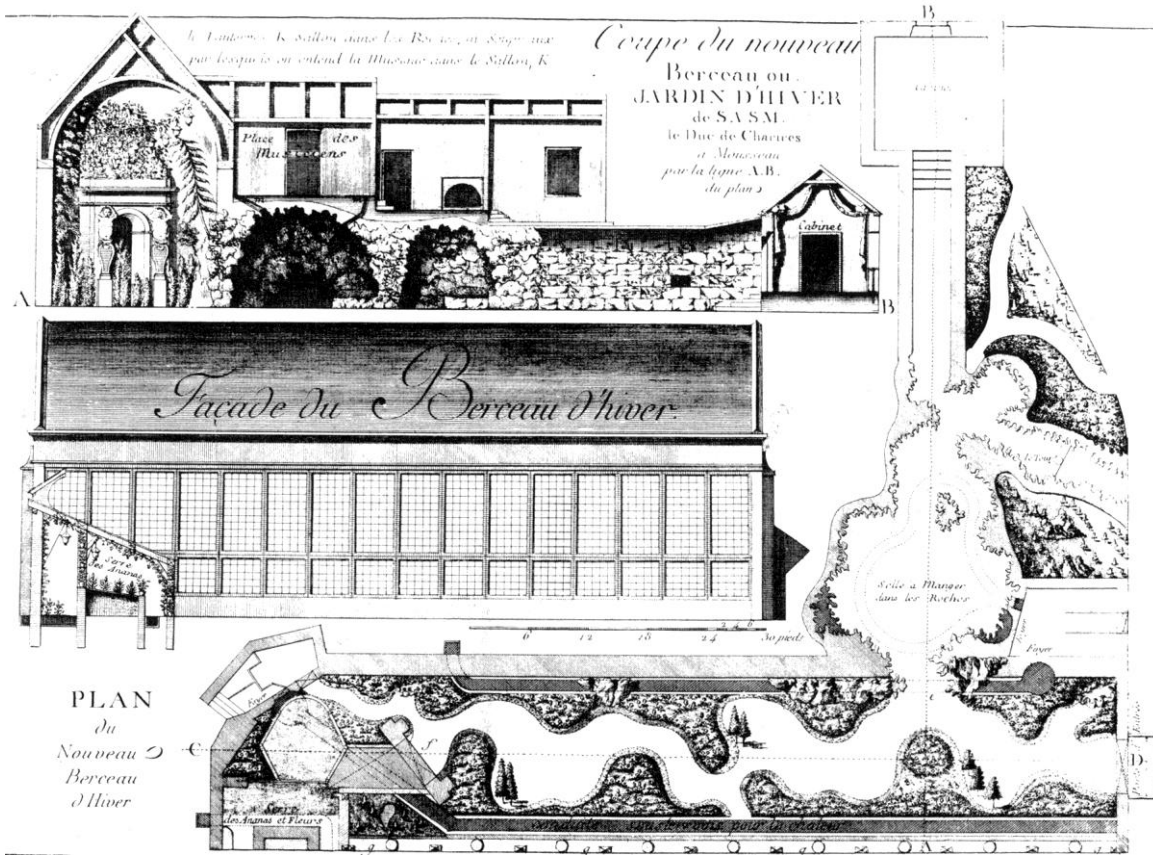
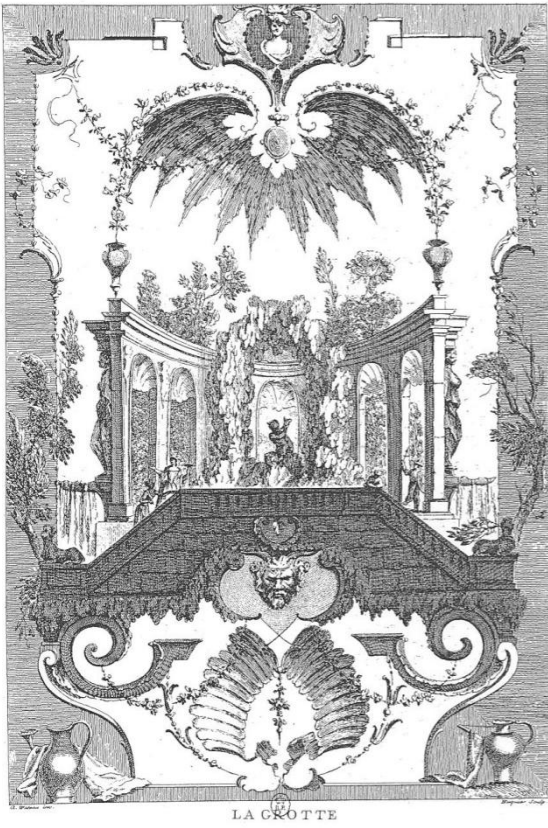
Cascades



System of water distribution in the park



# Grotto

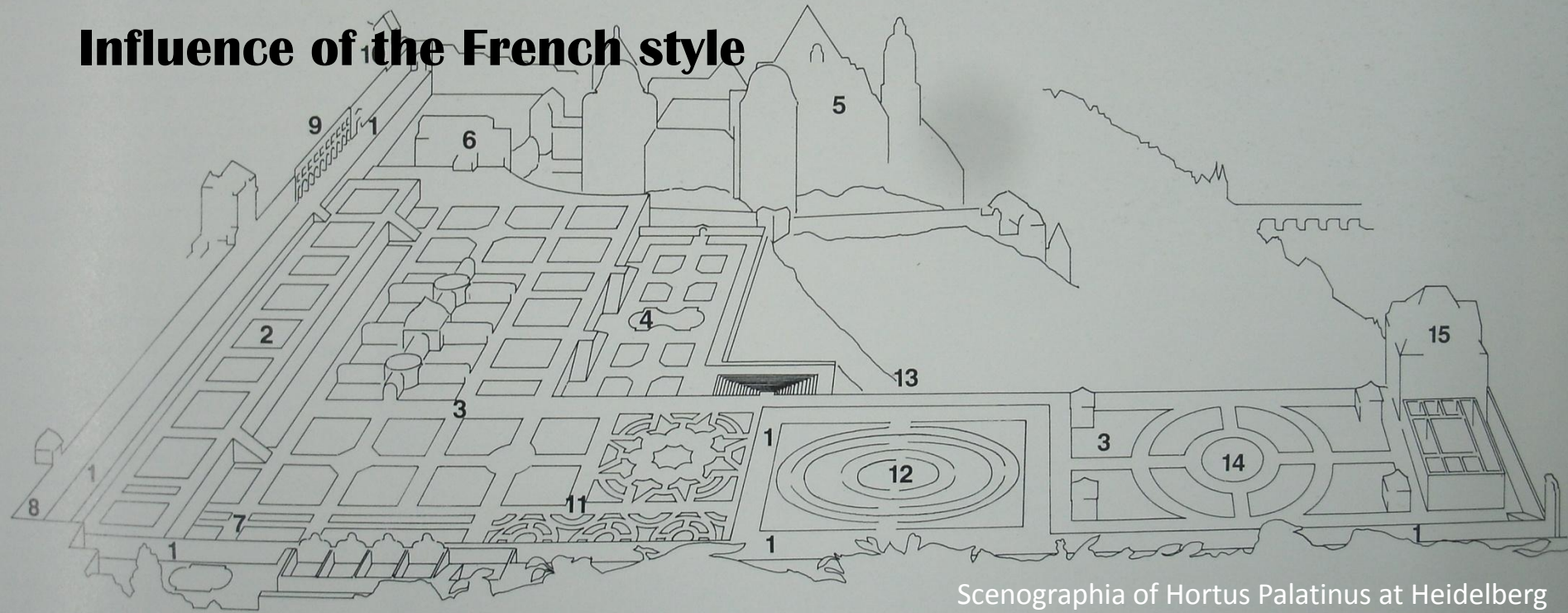


Plan for an artificial, naturalistic grotto in the Parc de Monceau. 1782.

The grotto was seen as one of the first great achievements in the gardens. In 1672 Andre Felibien devoted to it *Description de la grotto de Versailles*.



## Influence of the French style



Scenographia of Hortus Palatinus at Heidelberg

Whole of Europe followed French sources in the field of garden design.

- In Germany from 1690 onwards till 1770. Berlin-Charlottenburg, Kassel-Weissenstein.
- In Russia from 1714 onwards : Peterhof, Park of Kuskovo.
- In Spain from 1721 onwards: Royal gardens at La Granja, Botanic garden in Madrid.

During the second half of 18th c. French garden design was criticized of exaggerated symmetry and magnificence. This negation was followed by the critique of absolutism.



# Kadriorg

22 July 1718 – Tsar Peter I and the architect Nicolas Michetti chose a place for the palace, its annexes and the regular park.

The residence is a gift to Empress Catherine I.

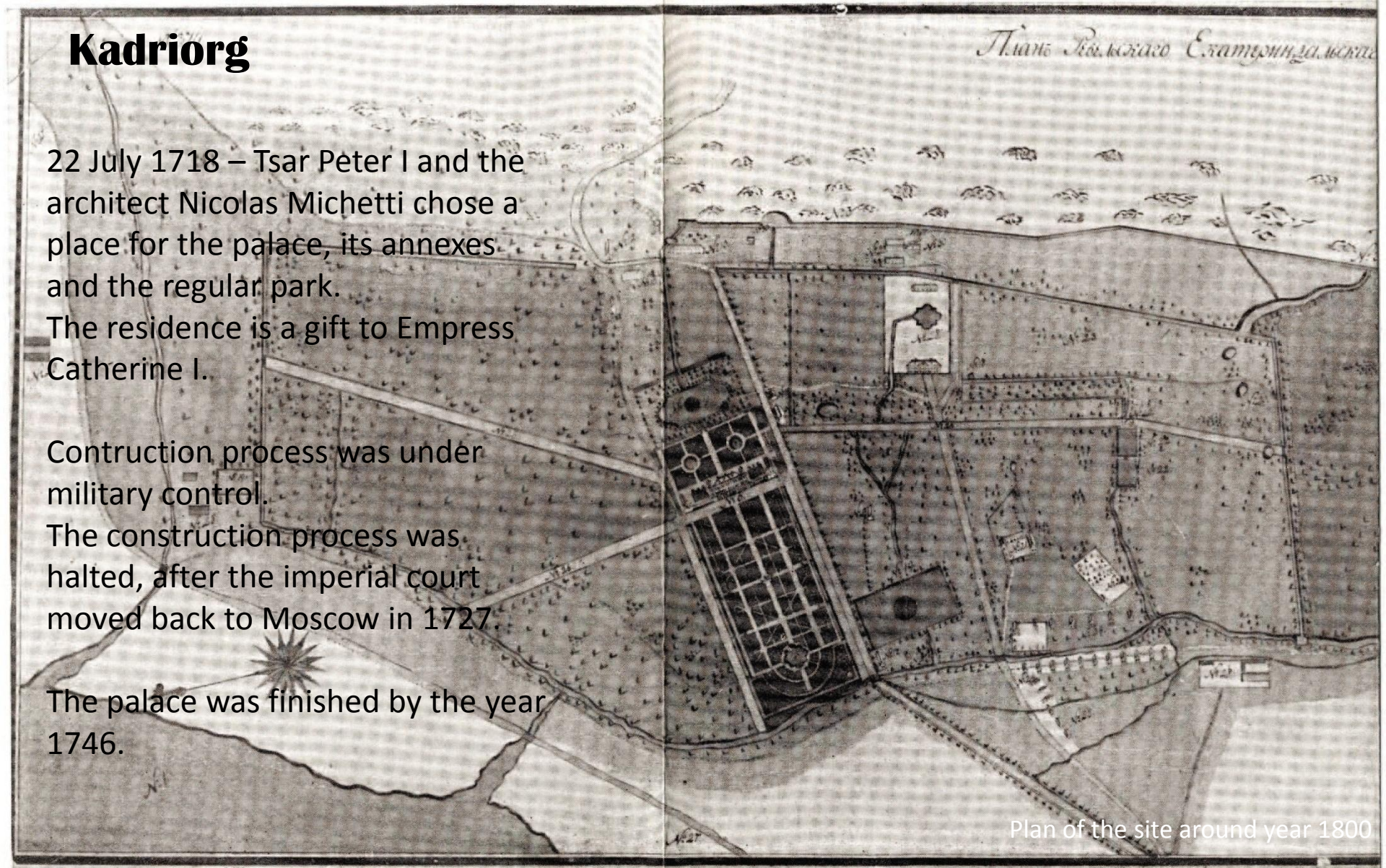
Construction process was under military control.

The construction process was halted, after the imperial court moved back to Moscow in 1727.

The palace was finished by the year 1746.

*Планъ Павловскаго Екатерининскаго*

Plan of the site around year 1800

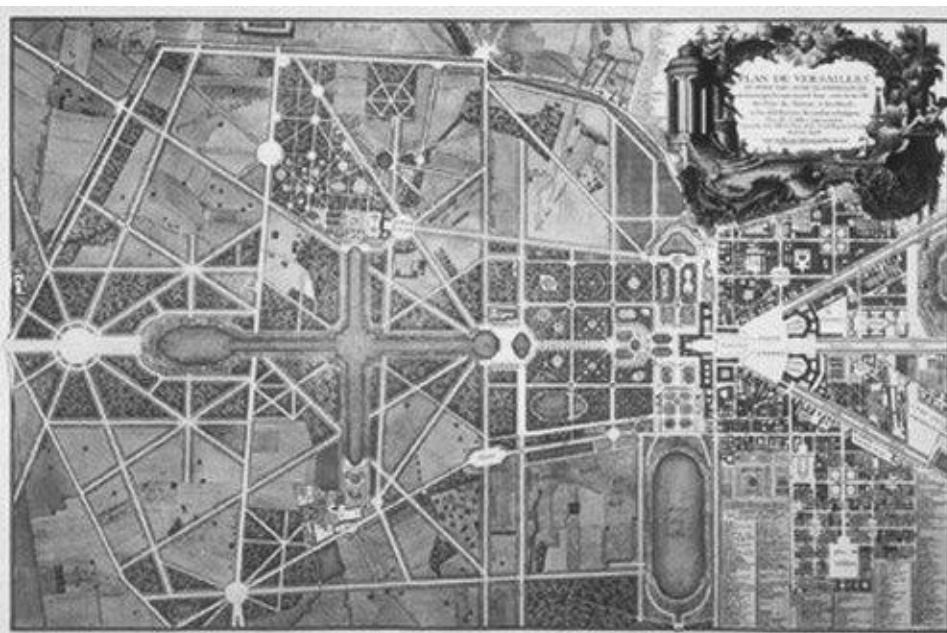




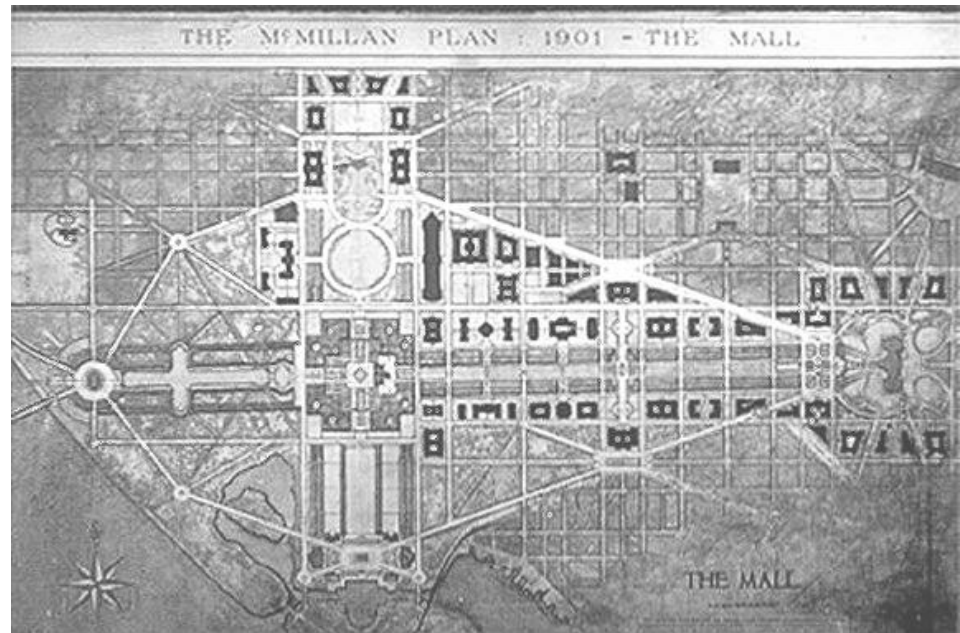
# Beyond gardens

*Let the design of our parks serve as the plan for our towns.*

Abbe Lougier, 1755



Plan Versailles by Andre Le Notre, from 1680s onwards



Plan of the city of Washington by McMillan, 1901.

American baroque aesthetic – monumental network of streets and squares (French formal garden influence) and soft, romantic urban parks (English garden influence).





## Overview –

### The Park and the People: A History of Central Park

Summary from last time – industrialization, urban growth

What is a public park?

Idea and motivation for Central Park

Design competition

Design principles of Vaux and Olmsted

The Park and the People

Public park vs. societal realism

Training the "Ignorant" How to Use a Park

Rules and usage

Park designed by people



## Summary

Radical social changes and the increasing of industrialization in the 19<sup>th</sup> century → new demands for the design and functioning of parks → Public Parks in the United States as a role model

Industrialization faster, urban problems more urgent and already bigger than in Europe (Wengel, 1985, p. 257)

United States had no strong urban tradition, growth of cities was viewed with regret by many people:

Thomas Jefferson: cities as “ulcers of the body politic”, “mobs” of the great cities as a potential threat to good government and urban environment as destruction of “the manners and spirit” of the people. (Zandt, J. , van: The City, p. 110)

Mid 19<sup>th</sup> century: installation of public parks for the city population: NY, Washington, Philadelphia, Chicago

Concept of public parks emerged as a response to problems as sanitation and urban growth

Public parks to endeavor improvement of life situation and quality (Mosser, Teysot)

Nature and recreation as balance to the negative outcome of urbanization

## What is a public park?

17<sup>th</sup> century: London public have been admitted with regulations to royal grounds, such as Hyde Park, and more and more royal gardens were opened to public use in the next two centuries

German towns turned old fortifications into public parks

Late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> century: public parks increasingly became identified with cities

Early 19<sup>th</sup> century: municipality and national governments had begun to establish landscape public parks that presented the romantic ideal of rus in urbe – country in the city

Two types of public space: gardeners designed parks produced by landscape

unstructured  
particularly  
enjoy themselves  
community life

vernacular concept of public open space –  
playgrounds where the common people and  
adolescents could exercise and play and  
and at the same time participate in  
(Jackson) - unstructured parks in

Public park = social institution or space, an aspect of the city rather than just a natural or designed landscape

Public institution as two dimensions:

**political character as property**

property rights

government ownership

removal from real estate market

**cultural character as open space**

unrestricted access

socializing and recreation

People who claim access to the public space constitute the cultural public

The public of a public park has a cultural and spatial as well as a political and property based dimension

Public spaces territories open to all visitors

**Open, nonexclusive spaces**, parks assume their **character** not through political powers of ownership or control but **through patterns of use**

## Idea and motivation for Central Park

originated from the interest of New York's wealthy elite who were delighted during their European travels with the parks of London, Paris or Vienna

Mix of motivations:

Display of city's (and their own) cosmopolitan and cultivated stature

Reach equality with European culture

Advance commercial interest – enhance real estate values, grounds almost entirely useless for building purposes – irregular topography, rocky and uneven surface (no interest for private development and cheap land)

Improve public health

Political interests – provide jobs



Bird's eye view of New-York & Brooklyn, 1851



1830's and 40's parks as lungs for the city - healthful benefits of fresh air and exercise, symbol of physical and moral wellbeing

better housing, sanitation and more downtown public spaces would have had more direct approach to living conditions of the working class



New York City 1842: "New-York"



## Design Competition

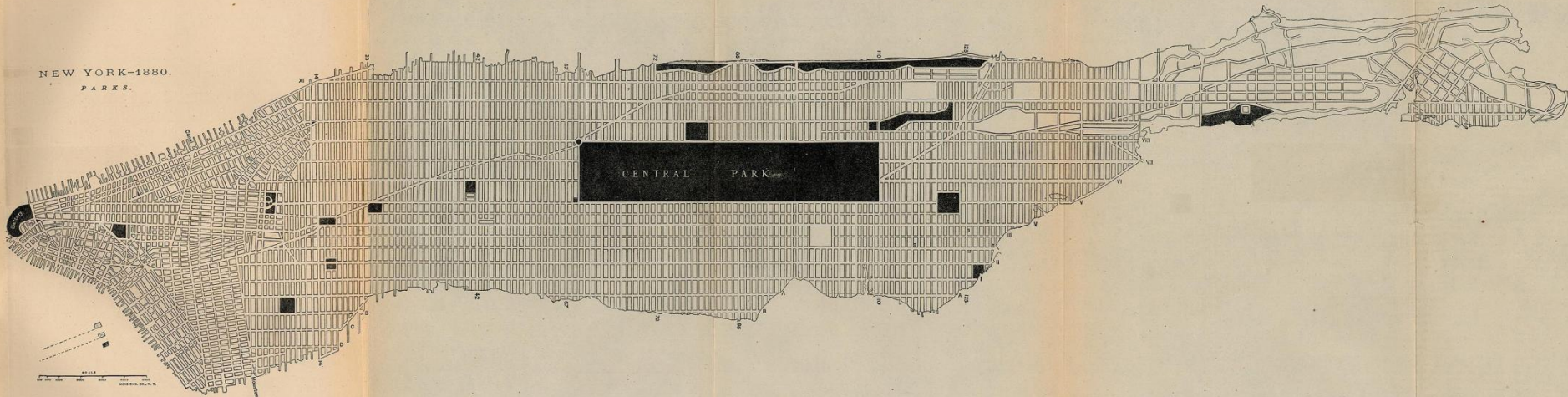
Frederic Law Olmsted: agronomist, social scientist and writer

Calvert Vaux: English architect and landscape designer

1858: Competition for the design of Central Park won by Olmsted and Vaux  
(Greensward Plan)

Central park at these times at the city border, but Olmsted saw it already surrounded by urban agglomeration and developed from this point of view his design principles

"New York - 1880 Parks" From Report on the Social Statistics of Cities



# Design principles of Vaux and Olmsted

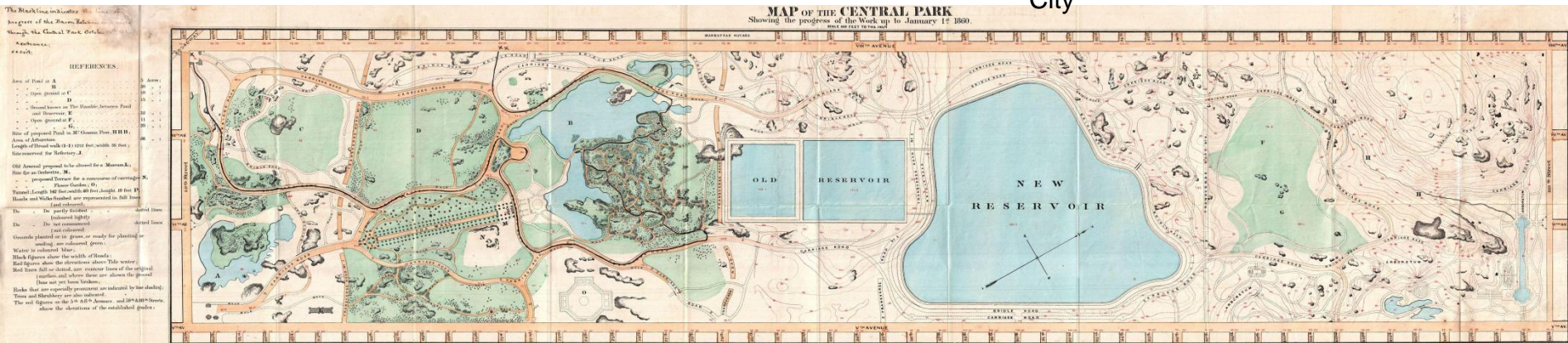
Visions of Olmsted and Vaux: Central Park as a pastoral retreat in the English landscape tradition from the pressures and aesthetic monotony of the growing city (Rosenzweig, Blackmar, 1992, P. 3)

Olmsted's vision drove the overall design while Vaux concentrated his attentions on bridges, buildings, and other structures within the park

The park itself was designed as a whole with every tree, pond, and bench meticulously planned. Olmsted: "Every foot of the parks surface, every tree and bush, as well as every arch, roadway, and walk have been placed where it is for a purpose."

Olmsted insisted on seeing the multidimensional project as a single work of art, which he was mandated to create

1860 Pocket Map of Central Park, New York City

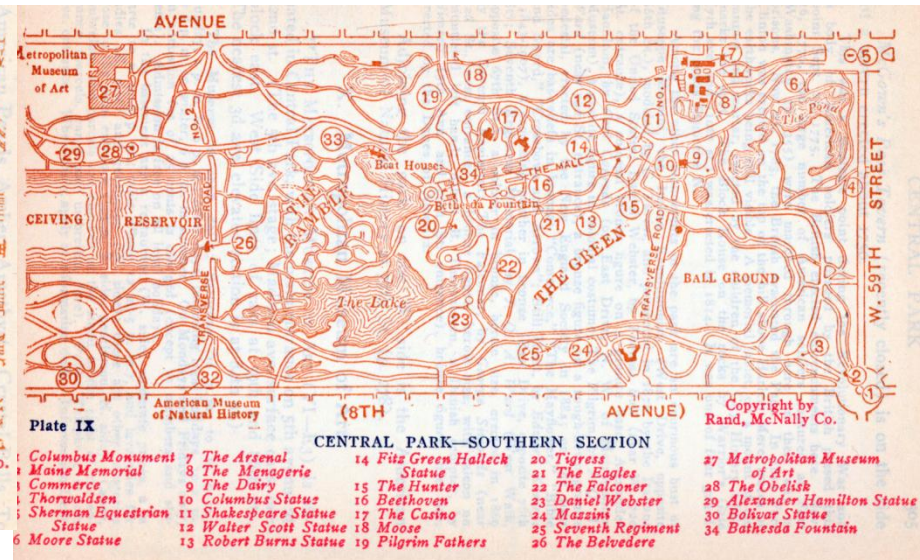
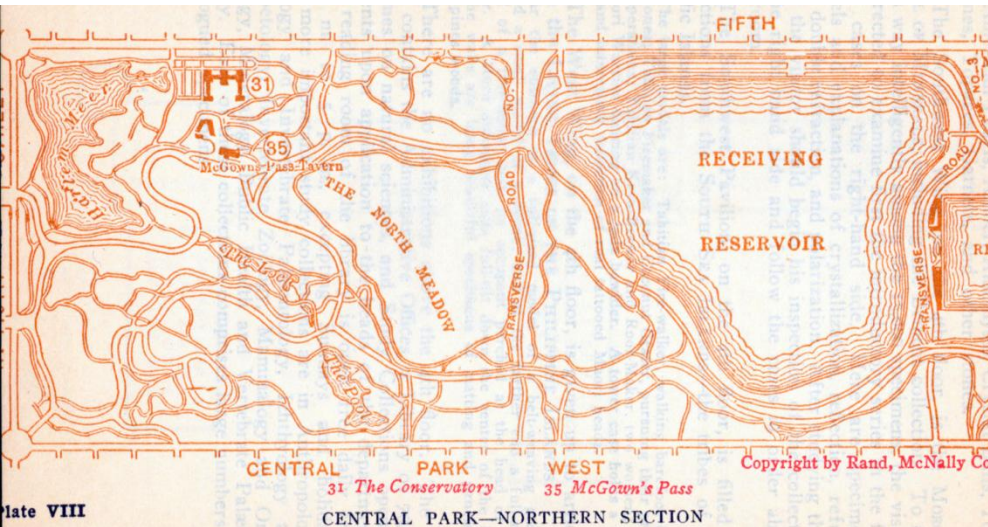




Installation of a parade field, wide views, lakes for boat trips and ice-skating, flower gardens, promenades, walking and riding path as well as an arboretum

To avoid mutual restrictions the paths partly were compiled without crossroads

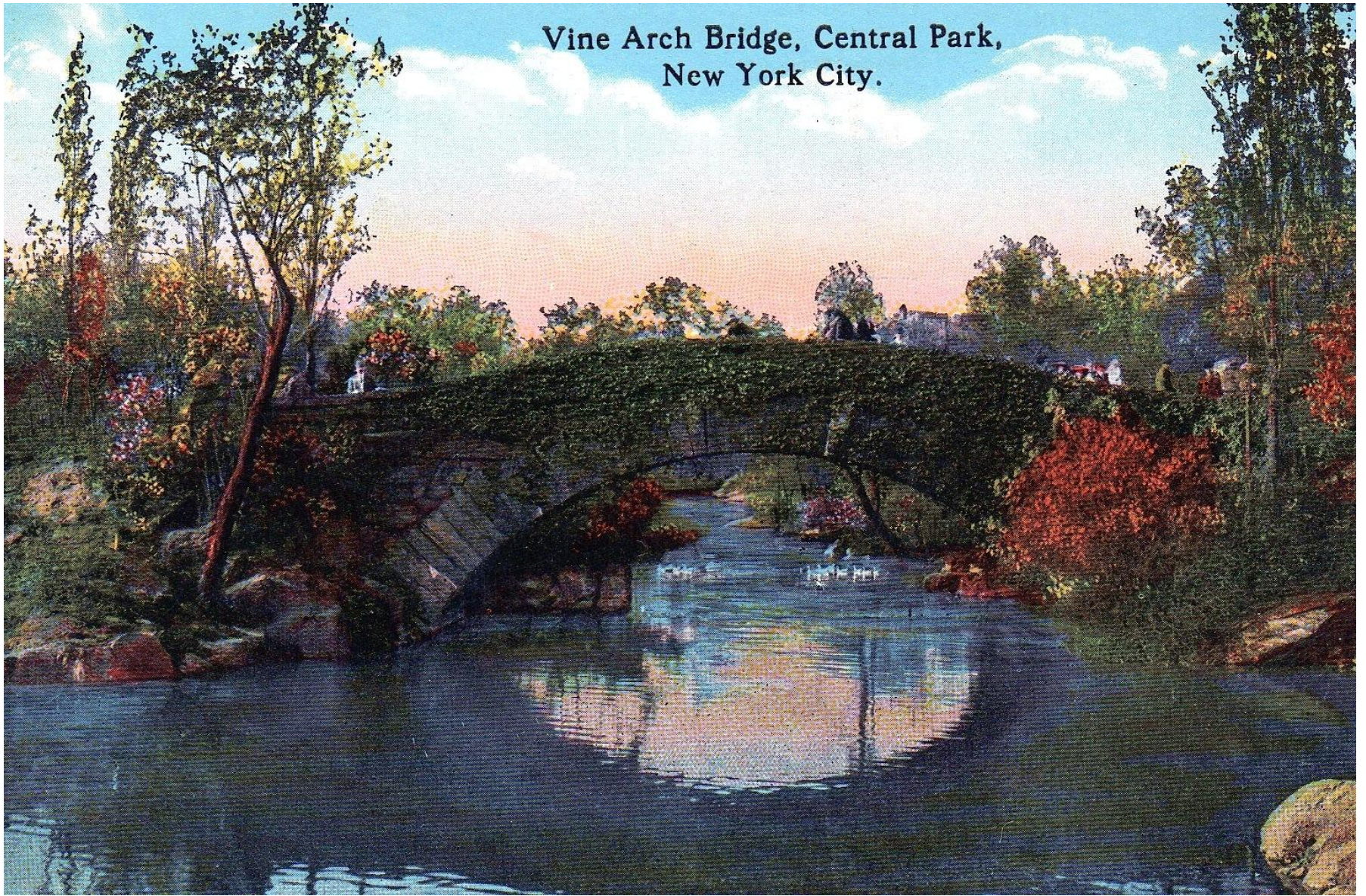
Creation of Central Park orientated on formal landscaped European gardens rather than on vernacular traditions



Central Park, 1916

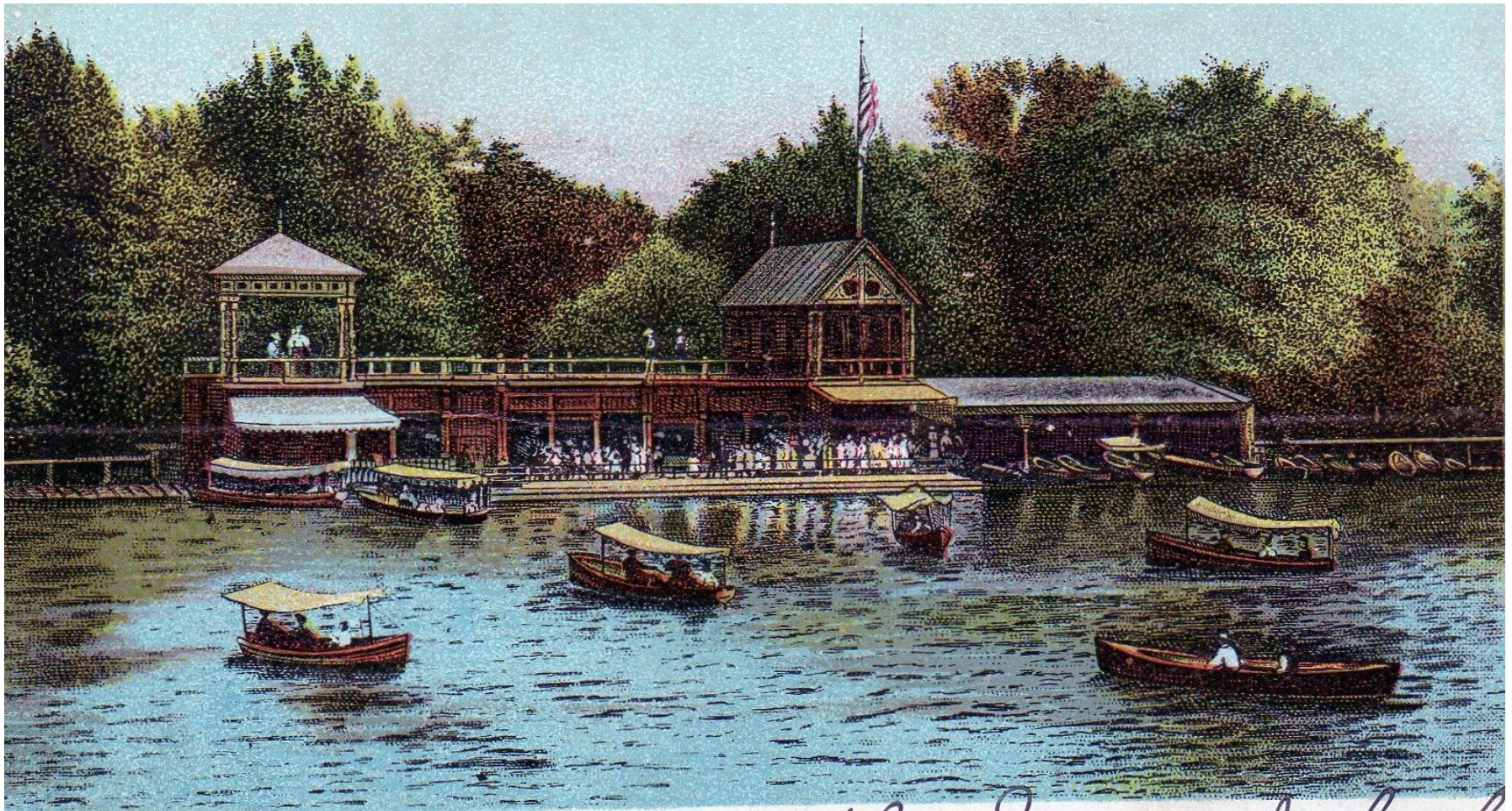


Vine Arch Bridge, Central Park,  
New York City.



Gapstow Bridge, Central Park, 1896?





C.V.120-BOAT HOUSE, CENTRAL PARK, NEW YORK.

*Dear James. I think  
Mamma + I will go down to the beach Sunday if  
it dont rain or nothing happens to prevent us. Alice*

Boat house, Central Park, 1907



## The Park and the People

Historians have shared the tendency to study this public space apart from the city's people and isolated from the city's life and conflicts - examination as work of landscape art

Different perspective of the park's history – one that puts people in the center and relates the park to the city



Central-Park, Winter: The Skating Pond, 1862

## Public park vs. societal realism

Central park as a public space as a remarkable experiment and challenge of creating a territory open to all people in a capitalistic and socially divided society

CP has not always been a nonexclusive public space - it has not always been equally accessible to all New Yorkers

When park opened in 1850's wealthy and middle-class New Yorkers flocked to its drives, paths, concerts, and skating ponds

Selected cultural public of park goers created an "elite park"



Riding, Central Park



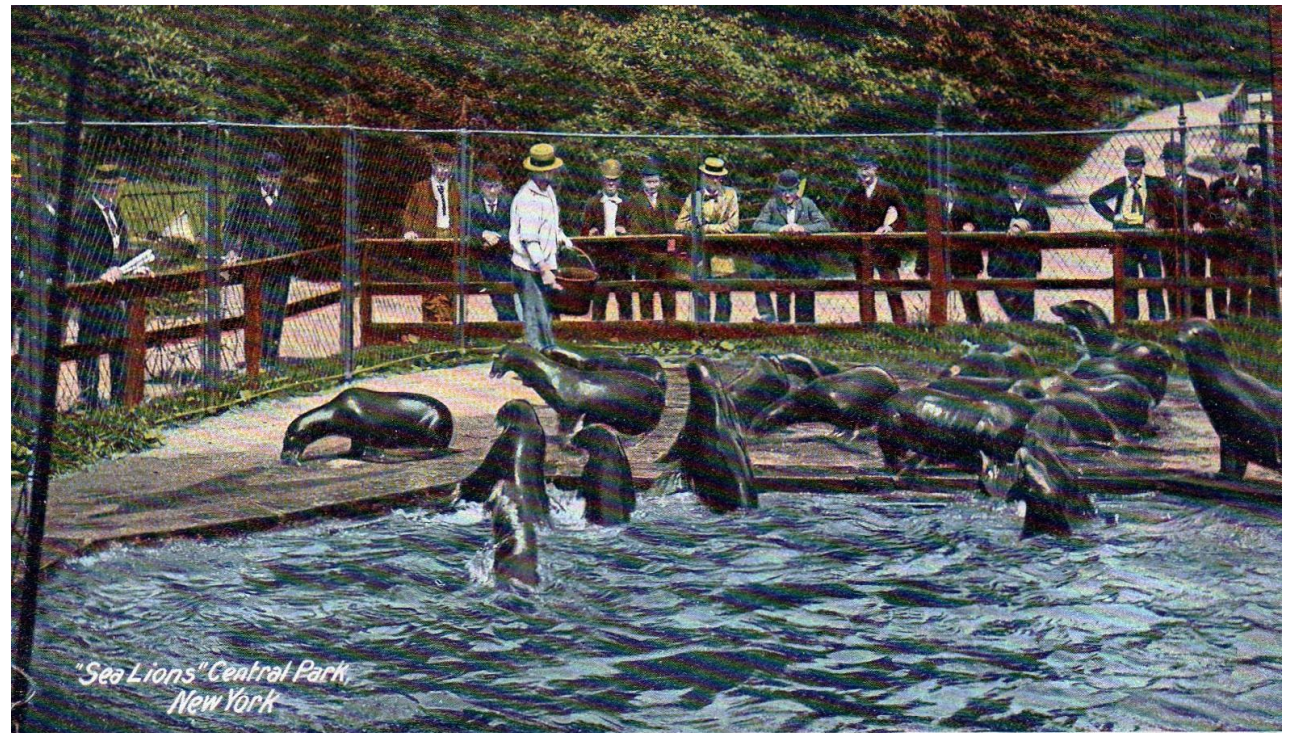
The Mall, Central Park, 1905



Informal rules or codes of social conduct can determine whether particular groups want to use different public spaces and whether they feel welcome

Long work hours, low wages, the cost of public transportation and distance from downtown neighborhoods restricted working class New Yorkers from the use of CP and in their limited leisure time they preferred commercial and less regulated pleasure gardens that accommodated their family habit of public socializing

Formal, prescriptive rules can control access – rules that forbade commercial wagons prevented baker's and butcher's family to trips to CP



Sea lions, Central Park,  
1891?



## Training the "Ignorant" How to Use a Park

Olmsted: "A large part of the people of New York are ignorant of a park, properly so-called. They will need to be trained to the proper use of it, to be restrained in the abuse of it, and this can be best done gradually, even while the Park is yet in process of construction."

1858: Implementation of park keepers

Park keepers as teachers rather than policemen: "The chief duty of the Park Keepers, is by timely instruction, caution and warning to prevent disorderly & unseemly practices upon the Park, and thus as far as practicable to avoid occasions for arrests."

Military salutes and clothed in uniforms (similarities to aristocratic Windsor forest keepers?)

Rules for proper movement through the park, reflected the emphasis of the Greensward plan on the visitors' relationship to the scenery – entrance only at specified gateways, use the paths (not the grass)

Signs directed the movement of individuals through the landscape

## Rules

Playgrounds restricted to schoolboys who could produce a certificate of good attendance and character from a teacher - working-class youths were largely excluded, since relatively few of them went beyond elementary school in this period

Similar rule for school girls to play croquet

Stringent rules governing park use --for example, a ban on group picnics, no music instruments, no swimming, no fishing --discouraged many German and Irish New Yorkers from visiting the park in its first decade

1850s New York experienced an athletic boom: cricket, prizefighting, boating, ice skating, gymnastics, foot racing, horse racing, and especially baseball - but baseball and cricket clubs were not allowed in CP

Fight over Sunday in the park:

New York Sabbath Committee: “New Yorkers might follow Europe in the art of landscape gardening, but founding a great Park, after the style of the Bois de Boulogne or the Prater did not carry with it the Sunday pastimes of Paris and Vienna.”

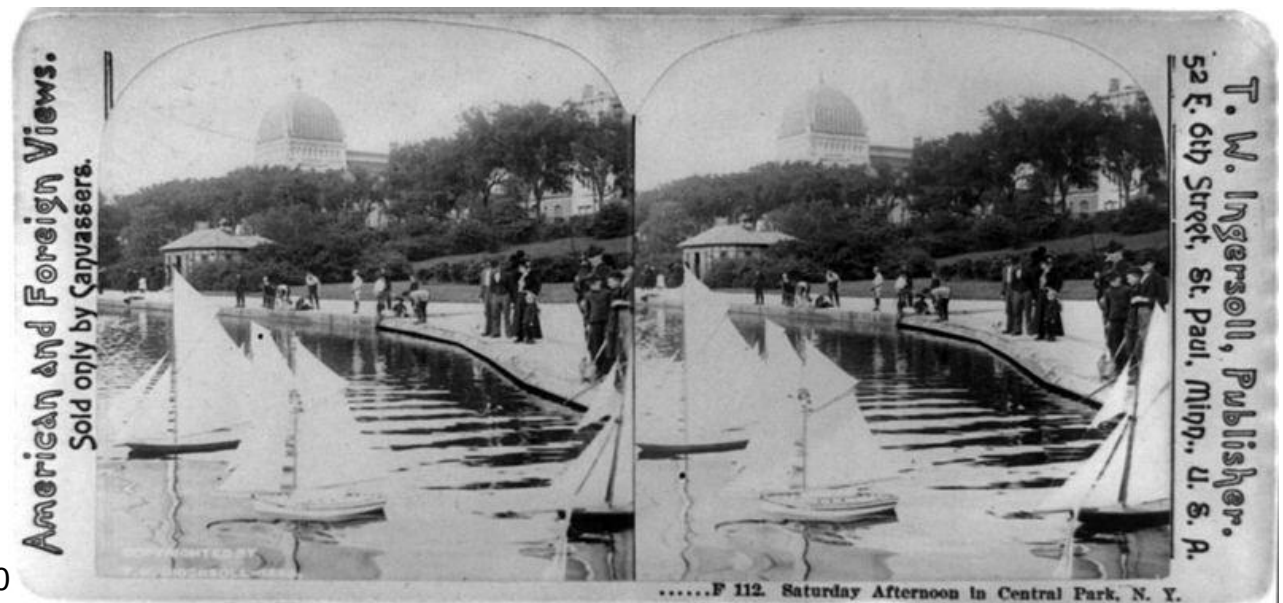
Ongoing debate about the political status of CP as public property and its cultural value and use as an open public space

Can such spaces accommodate people of different classes and cultures?

When New Yorkers struggled to define CP as a public park, they also struggled about the meaning of democracy

Most important pressure for change came from patterns of everyday use, as park became increasingly accessible and appealing for immigrants and working-class

“Keep-off-the grass” rule and restricted use on Sunday where abolished through political pressure



Saturday afternoon in Central Park, 1900



## **Park designed by people**

Park goers created their own paths (desire lines), turned meadows into playing fields

Park responded to the pressure of new uses

New park features as children playgrounds, statues, restaurants, the zoo, tennis courts or other sports facilities were enthusiastically greeted by park users and distracted attention from the natural scenic effect

Through vernacular process the meaning (proper or not, planned or not) of the park evolved

Still a natural landscape it became also a social institution and city space

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