

Acta Horticulturae et Regioteecturae 1  
Nitra, Slovaca Universitas Agriculturae Nitriae, 2016, pp. 1–3

## RESTORATION OF THE LANDSCAPE GARDEN IN VEĽKÁ MAŇA

Attila TÓTH\*, Ľubica FERIANCOVÁ

Slovak University of Agriculture in Nitra, Slovak Republic

Restoration of the historical landscape garden in Veľká Maňa aims at the renewal of its compositional values and improvement of its position as a cultural and historical heritage site. In the restoration design, we strive to reconstruct and improve compositional and spatial qualities of the garden and at the same time to strengthen its cultural and social significance and position. The reconstruction plan aims not only at a renewal of the garden composition but also at finding the importance and adequate present and future uses of the landscape garden. The public part of the garden has a significant potential to become one of the community life and action centres in the village. The partial goals of the designed improvements in this part of the garden are: enrichment of the space with cultural and social functions, extension of the path system and an overall landscape architectural improvement of the garden space aiming at the functionality of the space in correspondence with the requirements and needs of present users.

**Keywords:** garden heritage, green infrastructure, historical green space, landscape garden, restoration

Landscape gardens or landscape parks (as referred to in Slovak terminology) at manor houses and mansions represent the most common form of historical green spaces in Slovakia. These were designed and established as English landscape gardens or redesigned from earlier garden design styles. However, there have been preserved also geometrical compositional structures at the parterres directly linked to the architectural landmark (Tóth and Feriancová, 2014). Many English landscape gardens arose by redesigning earlier formal gardens, because landscape gardens were considered contemporary and modern at that time while formal styles old and outdated (Kalusok, 2004). Although landscape gardens were designed according to new garden design principles, those parts of gardens situated close to the main architectural landmark were often preserved or newly designed in the geometrical style (Kluckert, 2008). Protection and restoration of dynamic vegetation compositions in historical green spaces represent the cornerstone of their preservation as significant cultural and historical heritage sites. They embody living witnesses to the local history and therefore represent a significant enrichment of our present open spaces. A comprehensive inventory and knowledge of these areas is the basic tool of their restoration (Rohrer, 2004; Rzepielová and Feriancová, 2013), which can be conducted using diverse restoration methods as elaborated by Tomaško and Supuka (2003). Manor houses and their gardens are inseparable complexes representing important green spaces in agricultural landscapes of Slovakia. Therefore, their documentation, assessment, preservation and restoration stand for crucial issues in contemporary landscape architecture taking into account current uses and preserving historical values.

### Material and methods

#### Wider relations and settlement characteristics

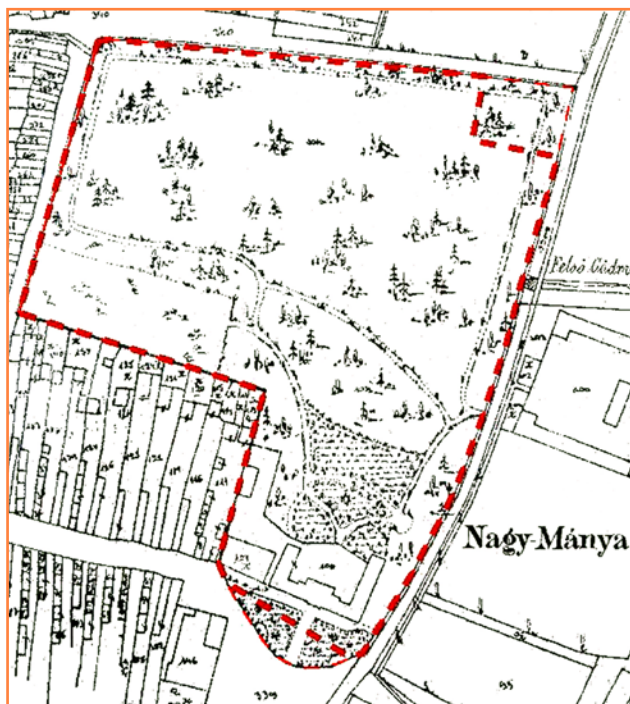
The rural settlement Maňa is situated in the south-western part of Slovakia, in the Nitra Region. It has an area of 2,159 ha and more than 2,100 inhabitants (census in 2001). Concerning geomorphology, Maňa is located in the hilly area of the Danube Lowland. The average altitude is 176 m (Trungelová, 2003).

#### Historical analysis of the landscape garden in Veľká Maňa

The historical analysis is based on the interpretation of historical sources (maps, photographs, chronicles and other documents), see Figure 1.

Using historical analysis, it has been found out that the classicistic manor house was built in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century. The garden composition was designed in the Landscape Garden style. The entrance to the manor house has been accompanied by a partially preserved horse chestnut (*Aesculus hippocastanum* L.) alley and led through a carriage underpass to the courtyard. The manor house and the church built on a hillock have been the main architectural landmarks of the village ever since. The garden bordered directly the open agricultural landscape until the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The paths and the courtyard were covered with gravel. The landscaped part of the garden space consisted of lawns, meadows and groups of bottomland hardwood trees supplemented with sequoias (*Sequoiadendron giganteum* (Lindl.) Buchholz), plane trees (*Platanus × acerifolia* (Aiton) Willd.), Scotch pines (*Pinus sylvestris* L.) etc. The ring

Contact address: Ing. Attila Tóth, PhD., Slovak University of Agriculture in Nitra, Faculty of Horticulture and Landscape Engineering, Department of Garden and Landscape Architecture, Tulipánová 7, 949 76 Nitra, Slovak Republic, Phone: +421 37 641 54 23, e-mail: [attila.toth@uniag.sk](mailto:attila.toth@uniag.sk), [at.attilatoh@gmail.com](mailto:at.attilatoh@gmail.com)



**Figure 1** Historical cadastral map from the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century: The landscape garden consisted of two main compositional parts – 1) regularly designed parterres at the front and garden facade of the manor house, 2) the northern landscaped part of the garden which included a vegetable and flower garden in the western part  
Source: Archive of the Monuments Board of the Slovak Republic in Bratislava

road along the garden borders provided views to the central part of the garden and to the surrounding open land. There was also a vegetable and flower garden with a greenhouse of wooden construction. Surface water has always been an integral part of the garden in the form of a meandering brook and regular floods. From the front parterre of the landscape garden, a significant part has been cut by a local road. In the 1970s, some parts of the landscape garden have been cut away and built up (Tóth, 2012).

### Current state analysis of the landscape garden in Velká Maňa

The current state analysis is based on 1) field studies and analyses including the inventory and assessment of woody plants, stands and other compositional elements and 2) studies of historical and planning materials and sources, including the Urban study of the municipality centre (Šarafin et al., 2008), see Figure 2.

By analysing the current state, the necessary knowledge of following characteristics has been acquired: urban situation, transport structures, function, composition and vegetation. The architectural landmark of the landscape garden is represented by the classicistic manor house, which has served as a social care facility since 1975. Due to this use, the garden is divided into two parts – the public (used by the inhabitants) and the private or institutional (used by the facility). The farmyard with farm buildings is one of the preserved compositional elements, currently used as a

garage and a storage place. On the main compositional axis, there is a pool built in 1934 at the former garden parterre with lawns, rose and perennial beds. The main compositional axis has been also disrupted by a playground. In the public part of the landscape garden, there is a gathering space where folklore festivals take place each June. This use brings life into the garden and represents therefore a significant potential for preservation of the landscape garden for future generations (Tóth, 2012).

## Results and discussion

For restoration of the landscape garden, we have applied the renovative philosophical approach and implemented the hypothetical style-reconstruction method based on the historical cadastral map and the 2<sup>nd</sup> military map, historical photographs and descriptions (Tomaško and Supuka, 2003). The proposed reconstruction contains some new elements supporting the functionality of the garden and considering the needs of its contemporary users (e.g. extension of the former path system in the northern part of the garden in accordance with the former morphology). Within the restoration plan, the views to the front and garden facade of the manor house are renewed. The garden courtyard and parterre are designed using solitary trees, lawns and



**Figure 2** An extract from the transport analysis: The landscape garden consists of two operational parts – 1) the northern public part and 2) the southern private (institutional) part (separated in the plan by a narrow red line). Compared to the historical map (figure 1), the composition of the landscape garden has significantly changed (area, vegetation cover, path system, compositional elements etc.)  
Source: Analysed and drawn by Tóth (2012)





**Figure 3** The restoration plan of the historical landscape garden includes a restored garden parterre, a reconstructed and improved path system; a reconstructed meandering brook with pedestrian bridges, a new gathering space for the folklore festivals, a public meadow and other improvements of the garden space  
Source: Designed and drawn by Tóth (2012)

perennial beds, while the unsuitable conifers are removed. The playground is removed from the main compositional axis to the periphery of the garden. The border between the public and the private part of the garden is modified in order to enable the reconstruction of the former path system. Additionally, this improvement makes a part of the meadow accessible to the public. In the northern part of the landscape garden, a new cultural and social gathering space has been proposed for the folklore festivals which stand for the most significant annual event in the village and represent therefore a tool for preservation of the historical landscape garden. We propose to reconstruct the regulated brook into a natural meandering shaped brook with less steep banks. Within the restoration plan, the public part of the garden divided by the regulated brook gets interlinked by three wooden pedestrian bridges integrated into the path system. Besides these improvements, the plan includes the design of a unified fence based on historical ironworks in the manor house. The private and public parts of the landscape garden are divided by a transparent mesh fence in order to provide visual linkage and perceptual unity. The design includes unified park furniture (e.g. benches). The project revitalises the vegetation structure of the landscape garden by arboricultural interventions. The valuable long-lived trees represent the basis of the revitalised landscape garden composition, see Figure 3.

A more comprehensive restoration of the landscape garden is limited by several factors: 1) some parts of the former garden have been cut off (a significant part of the front parterre in the

south and built-up plots in the north); 2) the landscape garden is divided into two operational parts with different ownerships (public, private / institutional); 3) there is a lack of adequate historical materials and sources. The implemented public space improvements in the village centre have not efficiently utilised the spatial potentials of the public space at the front parterre of the manor house. The historical legacy of the front parterre should have been more highlighted in the public space design in order to reconnect the landscape garden with the village structure. The built-up plots in the northern part of the public park should be perceived as a warning against further dividing of the landscape garden. The public part of the garden faces potential interventions and facilities related to the folklore festivals. These interventions have to be carried out carefully and sensitively, complying with the historical value and legacy of the space.

### Conclusion

The restoration of the historical landscape garden in Veľká Maňa is based on available historical sources and aims primarily at a comprehensive reconstruction of the garden using the tools of contemporary landscape architecture. Besides restoring the historical legacy, the plan also considers the needs of present users of the garden.

### Acknowledgement

This paper has been elaborated within the research project KEGA No. 001SPU – 4/2014 Green Infrastructure and Urban Agriculture and KEGA No. 008SPU-4/2016 LandArch Studio – Innovation of Teaching Structure, Content and Tools of the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic.

### References

- KALUSOK, M. 2004. Zahradní architektura. Brno : Computer Press, 2004. 192 s. ISBN 80-251-0287-4.
- KLICKERT, E. 2008. Gartenkunst in Europa: Von der Antike bis zur Gegenwart. Königswinter : Tandem Verlag GmbH, 2008. 496 p. ISBN 978-3-8331-5583-3.
- ROHRER, J. 2004. Gartendenkmalpflege – eine Pionierfachstelle in Zürich. In 12 Gärten: Historische Anlagen in Zürich. Zürich : Kontrast Verlag, Grün Stadt Zürich, 2004. pp. 8–9. ISBN 3-906729-29-X.
- RZEPÍELOVÁ, M. – FERIANCOVÁ, Ľ. 2013. Obnova historického parku v Turčianskej Štiavničke. In Veda mladých 2013: recenzovaný zborník z medzinárodnej vedeckej konferencie doktorandov a mladých vedeckých pracovníkov. Nitra : SPU, 2013. s. 47–54. ISBN 978-80-552-1081-0.
- ŠARAFÍN, M. a i. 2008. Urbanistická štúdiá – Centrum obce Maňa: obnova kultúrno-historického odkazu v dotvorení verejných priestranstiev. Bratislava : Ateliér Domova, 2008.
- TOMAŠKO, I. – SUPUKA, J. 2003. Obnova historickej zelene. Nitra : SPU, 2003. 76 s. ISBN 80-8069-190-8.
- TÓTH, A. 2012. Návrh rekonštrukcie historického parku pri kaštieli vo Veľkej Maňi : projekt. Nitra : SPU, 2012. 37 s.
- TÓTH, A. – FERIANCOVÁ, Ľ. 2014. Compositional Analysis and Preservation Measures for Garden Heritage Conservation. In Štěpánková, R. (ed.): Zborník príspevkov zo študentskej vedeckej konferencie FZKI 2014. Nitra : SPU, 2014. pp. 192–197. ISBN 978-80-552-1217-3.
- TRUNGĽOVÁ, V. 2003. Mikrogeografická charakteristika katastrálneho územia obce Maňa [online], [cit. 2013-06-16]. Dostupné na internete: <http://www.obecmana.sk>

