

THE LOCATION AND CONDITIONS OF THE CALLIGRAPHIC PARKS IN MATWIJOWCE, HORODYSZCZE AND RYBCZYŃCE IN UKRAINA

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Summary

Calligraphic parks – it is a large group of realizations, unfortunately almost unknown in the history of the landscape. Hundreds of them were designed on the turn of 19th century, but only about one hundred still exist. They are recognized as the most subtle forms of the naturalistic style. The characteristic shape of curved paths, streams and the lakeside – calling associations with Polish calligraphic writing, recognized as a canon of beauty – was distinctive for this style. Some of the parks were realized in the territory of the Ukraine. The description of their location and *status quo* may contribute to their restoration and to better management of the surrounding landscape.

Keywords

garden art • naturalistic parks • calligraphic park

1. Introduction

Calligraphic parks constitute a very large but little known group of realizations. They are recognized as the the culmination of a naturalistic style. Hundreds of calligraphic parks realizations created in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, presented homogeneity of form and similarity of compositional approach, visible both on the plans-designs, and in the reality. Characteristicly, smooth outlines of the paths and the banks of the stream and ponds were exposed against the great lawns. This system of lines was the main feature of this style¹. In described realizations appeared a clear, geometric kernel: inn – residence – living room, around which developed free environment [Ciołek 1978, Kulus 1990, Bogdanowski 2000, Baster 2011, 2012].

¹ Outline of paths of some calligraphic parks sometimes evokes associations with the shape of a pretzel, hence, in some studies they are jokingly called “pretzel gardens” or “prezel garten”. According to the author the name „calligraphic parks” is more accurate, because of the much greater number of realizations of such a character. The similarity of line shapes on the park map to the polish calligraphic writing, that in their outlines one can find the shapes of whole letters. See: Baster [2011, 79–83].

Time has treated the calligraphic parks mercilessly, even though only a century has passed since their creation. It is estimated that to the present day approximately only one hundred of the realizations have survived, although they represent a different state of preservation. Often their locations are only indicated by old trees with seemingly random places of plantings – silent witnesses to the past glory of these parks². The existence of many of these realizations is known only from oral history and/or written works, and the appearance is deduced only from the published plans [Bogdanowski 2000, Majdecki 1964a, 1964b, 2009].

2. Objective and the research methods

The main goal of the study was to deepen the knowledge about the composition of calligraphic parks (especially the viewing relationship with the surrounding landscape) and description of the maintenance of selected projects. After the research was carried out in situ, including interviews with residents of the localities, the location and condition of the three existing park and manor realizations located on the territory of Ukraine was presented. Also their plans – designs created according to the ideas and concepts of pre-war planners were presented. They were published in contemporary works [Majdecki 1964a, 1964b]. The result was a comparison of the composition of parks created one age ago, with the current design of the famous, or at least well-known and interesting realizations.

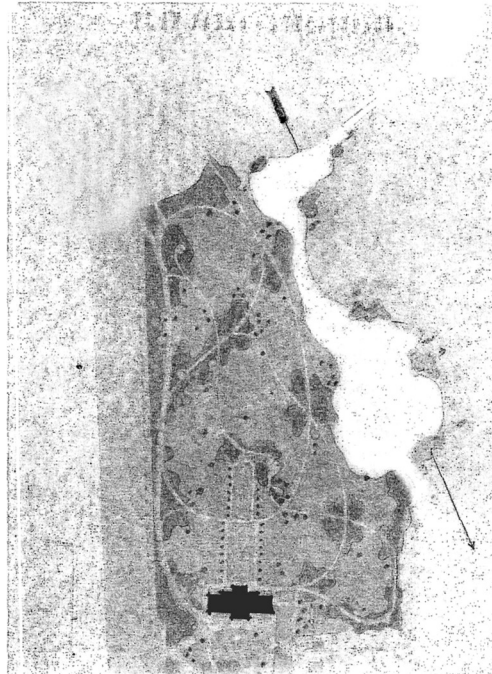
3. Location of the parks

Inquired Rybczyńce village is located in what is now western Ukraine, outside the inter-war Polish boundaries. This particular location was identified by the author, thanks to the records in the work of Roman Aftanazy and was confirmed during interviews with the residents [Aftanazy 1994a, 1994b]. However, they only had the information that the park was in their village but was completely destroyed decades ago – with all the trees. Thus, to determine the exact boundaries or even the location of the park turned out to be impossible. There remains no trace of the park and one can only guess at its original location by the single rural road leading through the village of Rybczyńce (visible on the historic map), on a completely undeveloped, swampy areas near the current housing (Figure 1).

After translating the Polish name directly into Ukrainian and noting it with the Ukrainian alphabet, finding of Matwijowce did not cause any major difficulties; it is a small village located near Krzemieniec. Locating the remains of the park itself causes

² Walerian Kronenberg designed the park in Matwijowce [ukr. Matwijilc'i] in 1910, and one year later the realization in Rybczyńce [ukr. Rybczyńc'i]. The design of the park in Horodyszczce [ukr. Horodyszczce] was created by Stefan Celichowski in the years 1909–1914. They were, therefore, some of the late calligraphic realizations, although its form resembled previous projects on Polish territory. In the aspect of form precision, they can be compared, to outlines of the most famous realizations, like Czesławice or Białowieża.

certain difficulties, since in the middle of buildings no existing trees or crossing of the roads suit historical plan. The place indicated by the inhabitants – behind the last residential buildings – confirms the comparative analysis of archival material and the current state (Figure 2). Roads and ponds visible on the plan survived unchanged.

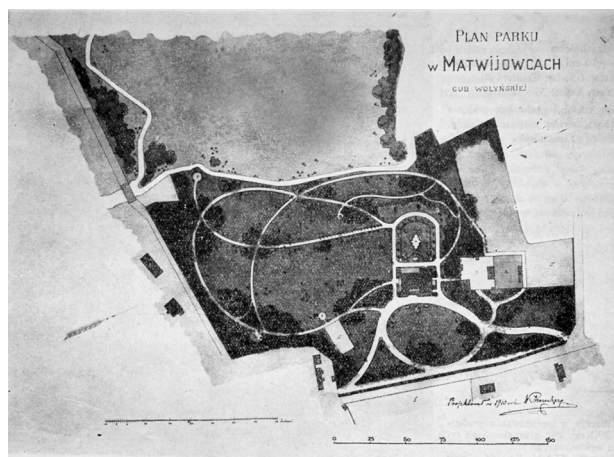


Source: Majdecki 1964a

Fig. 1. Layout of calligraphic park realization in Rybczyńce

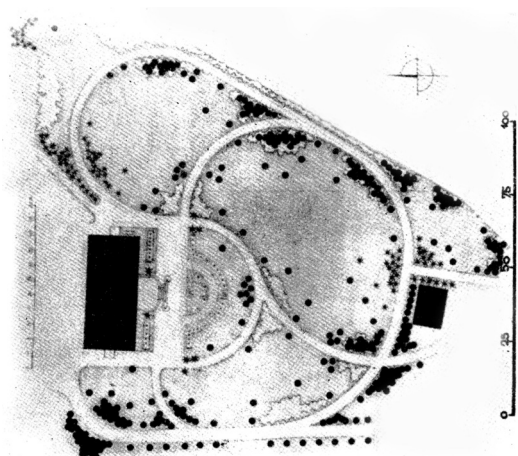
Getting to the right Horodyszczce village turned out to be an even more difficult task, requiring comparison of the few pieces of available information, found in several written sources [Majdecki 1964a, Aftanazy 1994a, Kuczarenko 2003]. In the Ukraine there are about thirty villages named Horodyszczce, most of them close to the Polish borders, several in the same area [Kuczarenko 2003]. It has been determined, that it is a small village currently located on the outskirts of Luck. Even that approximate location turned out to be insufficient – in that area there are located several villages with the same name, Horodyszczce I and Horodyszczce II are a few kilometers away. Also, elements of the landscape did not provide the desired hints, because in the reviewed area there are a large number of lakes, ponds, meadows and avenues created by the old trees. The key message was the record in an aforementioned work of Roman Aftanazy: “Apart from Horodyszczce the marshal had another two neighboring estates: Ozdów and Bajów” [Aftanazy 1994a, s. 132]. Indeed, to this day there is the Bajił village, adjacent

to the sought Horodyszczce I (Figure 3), to which the author was eventually directed by people from nearby Horodyszczce II.



Source: Majdecki 1964a

Fig. 2. Layout of calligraphic park realization in Matwijowce



Source: Majdecki 1964b

Fig. 3. Layout of calligraphic park realization in Horodyszczce

It should be noted, that calligraphic parks were usually located just outside the village³. One can with a high degree of probability say, that the location has carried with

³ This observation results also from the study in situ of calligraphic parks in Poland.

it almost mostly benefits. Probably very important were the owners feelings, that they already live in a landscape of green, and on the other hand they can benefit from the advantages and services of the location⁴ (Matwijowce, Horodyszczce, Rybczyńce). The important role played designing external views not only of the meadows and of the wall of surrounding forest, but also of the fields and pastures, which greatly added variety to admired space (Matwijowce, Horodyszczce). To the opposite side the prospects were designed to expose the most beautiful parts of the location together with the features of an open surrounding landscape, what, contrary to appearances, would be difficult for the location of the park within the village or town (Matwijowce). The described exposure of the surrounding landscape was particularly important in what is now western Ukraine, because of the beautiful, stretching to the horizon views, full of worth seeing natural elements of the environment. It also excellent formed part of a trend to use the achievements of many forms of art in parks designing, for optimal grasp of the beauty of nature [Bogdanowski 2000, Rodiczkin and Rodiczkina 2005, Baster 2011, 2012].

4. Current state of parks

Of the whole foundation in Matwijowce the outline of its boundaries remained unchanged, determined by the local roads. Most of it now is a collective farm area, located at the end of the village. The smaller part is not fenced nor monitored by anyone, part of the surrounding landscape. Currently in the collective farm area it is impossible to find the remains of the old park and the area is fenced and inaccessible. Also it is difficult to see the center. Outside the company area remains a primary trees stand, though overgrown with self-seedings young trees, as well as a water channel and ponds, which initially did not have a smooth outline. The great lawn, located on the slope between the channel and trees, still exists today, which enables easy observation of the nicest features of the surrounding landscape. Thanks to this extensive ponds adjacent to the park are partially visible. It is also possible to find a good place to watch the dome of a nearby church and most of the buildings of the village Matwijowce (Figure 4). These scenic links of surrounding land give some idea as to the beauty of this park, in the past.

The realization in Horodyszczce is now totally neglected and forgotten, and people do not call it a park. Neither the manor nor the park paths exist, and most the helpful item in locating the park are extensive marshes surrounding the realization and dike, mentioned in the work of Roman Aftanazy [Aftanazy 1994b]. They explain, by their existence the name of the park and village “Horodyszczce” – an inaccessible and defensive place. The realization has not been built-up, parceled, split or diminished; although it has radically changed its face, the surrounding landscape seems to be untransformed. Most of the trees survived until today, but there is also a certain amount of self-seeding. The park has features of a place which has not been cultivated for many years – largely

⁴ It can be concluded that it was a kind of equivalent to the popular now idea of living in the suburbs, in residence-garden possessions, while simultaneously working in the city and using its services and with different kind of beauty than in rural areas.

overgrown with shrubs and vines, but not constituting mayor obstacles to move on the site (Figure 5). Clearly outlined is the main landscape interior – in the middle of the old ring road. Visible from a distance alleys attract attention on both sides of the interior, created by ancient trees growing in the border of the original realization. Scenic relationship with the surrounding landscape are not readable. As in many other realizations – also in Matwijowce – existing stands, devoid of other forms of environmental park, lost their composition meaning. Thus, perfectly captured on the project of realization calligraphic character did not survive even in rudimentary form [Baster 2011].



Photo by Baster 2008

Fig. 4. Matwijowce. Great lawn, trees stand in the boundary, channel and ponds



Photo by Baster 2008

Fig. 5. Horodyszczce. Fragment of the great lawn with the trees stand in the boundary and surrounding swamps

5. Summary

Undoubtedly it is a great joy to have an opportunity to find the remains of the old, beautiful realization Matwijowce and admire a few, designed a century ago panoramas. The chance of restoration all or at least part of the realization, in order to capture its calligraphic character and original plan of composition, seems to be eventually wasted – too much of it was destroyed. However, it is possible to repave ancient paths outside the collective farm area and to integrate the stand. This will enable the restoration of the best external views and admiration of the surrounding landscape according to the idea of pre-war planners.

Paradoxically, in Horodyszczce, the marshy surroundings of the park helped it to survive, and attempts to recomposition may prove to be surprisingly successful. In an uncomplicated way, it is possible to restore the view and ties with the nearest, unchanged for the years landscape. The undeveloped area of the park with the preserved tree stands, requires relatively little work to restore the whole original beauty and character of the project.

In the future perhaps it will be possible to determine – using advanced techniques of geoinformatic, the former location of the park in Rybczyńce. The open question will remain, whether or not to restore the park, of which nothing survived (even one tree and not a single other element of the composition). And perhaps that is why it is worth it?

6. Conclusions for cadastre and geoinformatics

After the above-mentioned studies *in situ*, it is concluded, that some areas – seeming featureless – have considerable historical value, as perceived also in the aspect of the tradition of the place. Also, some elements of the surrounding landscape, which served a specific function a century ago (e.g. a historic representative concourse, covered with asphalt pavement – Figure 6), seem to be much more valuable, than is apparent from a cursory overview. Excellent definition, designation and presentation of these areas may become easier due to modern geoinformatic techniques. It is necessary to express the hope, that in the future, it will contribute to the recomposition of many forgotten calligraphic parks and a suitable shaping of their surroundings, “pulled in” to the whole composition.



Photo by Baster 2008

Fig. 6. Horodyszczce. Historic representative concourse, covered with asphalt pavement

7. Conclusions with regard to the problems and issues relating to parks

1. The names of places where calligraphic parks were created, can be found in the literature in Polish, but they have Ukrainian names now.
2. Knowing only the approximate location of the park (or only the Polish name) is combined with the need to find the right location, because in given area there are sometimes even a few of the same name.
3. As a result of having only incomplete information, often contained in various sources, even the use of the deductive reasoning may not be sufficient to find the right place and the calligraphic park.
4. In the course of an investigation one can meet people who can affirm the existence (and destruction) of a park in the given location. Usually not on the basis of their own knowledge but only on the basis of oral history of the elderly.
5. Sometimes, residents and local authorities do not even realize the fact that, the old trees located in the small village are the remains of a former manor-park realization. Even more unknown is fact that this calligraphic park composition had a strong relationship with its surroundings, which improper management permanently prevents the recomposition of the park, according to the theory and objectives of pre-war planners.

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