ECLAS CONFERENCE PORTO 2014

LANDSCAPE: A PLACE OF CULTIVATION

BOOK OF PROCEEDINGS

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LANDSCAPE: A PLACE OF CULTIVATION

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Rethinking Ecological Design

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landscape design | ecological concepts | ecological design principles | ecological design theory

Ecological approaches to landscape design emphasize the importance of ecology and advocate a direct application of knowledge from ecology as science in design. The basis of this research is based on the belief that thorough knowledge of many natural, social, artistic and technical disciplines is needed for successful landscape design, and ecology is only one oft hem. In that context the objective of research was to clarify the possibilities of direct application of ecology as science in landscape design.
The obtained results to a large degree dispute the critical or significant influence of ecological factors (concepts and principles of ecological design) on landscape design and therefore it can be claimed that the examined principles of ecological design have always been, to certain extent, the subject of landscape design.

1. INTRODUCTION

Sustainability signifies a primary and fundamental goal of contemporary society and likewise a basic orientation for urban planning and landscape design. In that respect different landscape design approaches have been formulated: ecological design (Van der Ryn and Cowan, 1996), sustainable landscape design (Calkins, 2005; Franklin, 1997), green building (Calkins, 2005), design for ecological democracy (Hester, 2006), eco-design (Shu-Yang et al., 2004), even ecological engineering and eco-revelatory design are considered new design sub-disciplines (Johnson and Hill, 2001).

In spite of using different terms for the new design approach, these approaches emphasize the importance of ecology in design or even consider ecology as the point of origin (Forman, 2001; Nassauer, 2001) and not just another factor that affects design. Although ecological awareness has always had a fundamental role in landscape design, ecological design advocates for direct application of knowledge from ecology as a science in design, and therefore represents the basic difference between contemporary (ecological) approach to landscape design and previous approaches.

Designed landscape can be defined as a physical space structure adapted to demands that come out of needs to solve social, spatial, political and other different problems. Accordingly, the basis of this research is based on the belief that, due to issue complexity, thorough knowledge of many natural, social, artistic and technical disciplines is needed for successful landscape design, and ecology is only one of them. In that context the objective of research was to clarify the possibilities of direct application of ecology as a science in landscape design. Even though quite a bit has been written on this subject in the past few decades (e.g. Corner, 1997) and many contradictions and shortcomings of applying ecology in landscape design are already known, ecological approach to landscape design is still (even more than before) promoted and advocated as a new (paradigmatic) and better approach to landscape design. In that