

The debate about the continuity and the crisis of Modern Movement, which happened the years after World War II, determined that the architects of the third generation choose ratify the International Style or affirmed the expression of his own individuality accentuated by differences of each country¹. The following of modern functionalism claimed by the Charter of Athens found a clear opposition in the multiple peripheral works coming from different regions, such as Scandinavia, Latin America and North America. They revealed other ways of thinking the modern architecture². Old Europe started to rebuild their cities and boosted the morale of their societies. To reach this the ideas on urbanism were revised and adapted, what sparked theme discussions in the last phase of the CIAM congress with the consequent birth of multiple groups critics with the epoch.³ All this coincided with the emergence of the profession of landscape architect as a result of the historical moment and stakeholder of the hopes for achieving a humanist project for the city and the territory.⁴

In the emergent context of new approaches to the exercise of the discipline, the English Peter Shephard (1913-2002) represents a professional who understood architecture not as a militancy in theoretical battles of the moment, neither as an uncritical entrenchment in the founding principles of Modern Movement (Fig.1). In his writings, Shephard considers himself a functionalist convinced. This is evidenced by his work, which include social housing projects, public schools, urban planning university campus (University of Lancaster), landscape projects such as the Festival of Britain (1951) and the campus of the University of Pennsylvania, several public gardens in London as the outdoor spaces of the zoo or the restoration of some gardens in Bloomsbury, as well as private gardens.⁵ The functionalism Shephard defended was addressed with an open mind to his time. He conceived modern design as the answer to the real needs of the man of his time, from the unification of architecture, urbanism and landscape.

Shephard was an architect, urban planner and landscape architect. He represents the trained architect that becomes in a professional landscaper. This personal journey from architecture to landscape he did it in a time when the new profession was emerging. The metamorphosis Shephard lived was accompanied by the concept of the spaces of in between as the issue the work of the architect who design new landscapes must tackle onwards. This concept not only accompanied him in his professional practice but also in the public realm, education and cultural dissemination he held for more than three decades as president of the Architectural Association (1954-55), president of the Institute of Landscape Architects (1965 -66),

RIBA president (1966-71), professor and dean of the School of Fine Arts at the University of Pennsylvania (1971-1979) and as author of the influential book *Modern Gardens* (1953) and *Gardens* (1969).

Initiation to landscaping

The idea that everything is part of a single continuum in which the architect must move easily between construction, landscaping and urban planning synthesizes Shephard's fundamental thinking.

This view of the three disciplines as one he learned from the urban planner Sir Patrick Abercrombie, who was his teacher at the Liverpool School of Architecture and later boss and mentor in the Greater London Plan. Abercrombie asserted that in urban planning and in the design of public space there was a large common theme that included binding aspects from building, urban design, landscape architecture, social housing, regional planning, conservation and infrastructure.⁶ Beneath the leadership of Abercrombie, Shephard participated in

the design of Ongar (1946), the first prototype of the English New Towns. The project was presented at CIAM 6 in Bridgwater (1947) and the concept of the core of the city as a meeting space and place of amenities was already there, as well as, the theories of landscaping that enact these new towns. The drawings of Ongar, which Shephard authored, showed the strong influence of the functionalism in the architectural design and, for the first time, the planning of public space put together new materials, street furniture and vegetation, responding to the demands of contemporary uses. To a great extent, Ongar was planned following the proposals of the great English landscape tradition but in the small public space modern landscape came into play growing next to the functional buildings of the commercial and leisure area (Fig.2). These ideas Shephard developed again in the first proposal of the New Town of Stevenage (1948) where he was the chief architect.

However is in the Festival of Britain when Shephard, as author of the landscaping of the Southbank area, had the opportunity to intervene in the empty spaces without a defined use neglected between the buildings and pavilions of the exhibition (Fig.3). The planning of these urban landscapes was strongly influenced by the Scandinavian landscape in vogue in those years.

Shephard rushed a kind of new empiricism applied to landscaping based on the copy of the local landscape and the use of native vegetation. In the Moat Garden, the garden of the Lion and the Unicorn pavilion, he performed in the terrace cafe one of his best works recreating a riverbank landscape formed by large stones accompanied with riparian plants dotted with some trees (Fig.4). Some years later, Shephard recognized that the work of the landscape architect provides a proposal and gives a function to the waste land of the urbanism.⁷ At the end of the Festival it was proved that landscape architect plays a vital role in the city because he reveal what could be done in the excluded and abandoned areas by the urbanism when he works in true partnership with the architect and the engineer. The emergence of new landscapes in the city would transform the spaces to offer them to the people as free areas for walking and relaxing.

Landscape functionalism

At the annual conference of the president of the Architectural Association, Shephard addressed to young architecture students with the lecture titled *The importance of being serious* (1954) defending the functionalism. In the meeting he encouraged young people to remain faithful to this thought in order to avoid the theoretical digressions and practices that led to the growing formalism that was invading the discipline of architecture. Shephard argued that the architect is a professional who serves men, that their responsibility is to his client and to the people. From this approach, he was confident that the uncertainty that began to take root in the profession could be overcome if the architect would restore its reputation as a practical man who brings real solutions to contemporary problems.⁸ This thought, of great pragmatic spirit, determined that to find beauty in architecture should be achieved from solving technical problems and not aesthetic problems.

The book *Modern Gardens* was a commission by Architectural Press that pretended to continue the success the book *Modern Houses* by F.R.S. York had obtained. Shephard collected copious pictures of garden designs he judged of particular interest because they represented the best of modern gardens. Consequently, works of Burle Marx, Holger Blom, C. T. Sørensen, Thomas Church, Christopher Tunnard, Brenda Colvin, Geoffrey Jellicoe and many others displayed the different trends in garden design at the beginning of the second half of the twentieth century. This text served to confirm who was anyone of these landscapers and also to support that there was already an international and modern set up approach to garden design.

Peter Shephard:
spaces in between the
architecture and the
landscape
Juan J Tuset

The descriptions of the selected works and the writing of the introduction allowed Shephard to express their ideas about what the modern garden was.

In the first lines of the introduction, Shephard recognizes the difficulty to define what is and what makes a garden modern in a time when modern architecture was discussing its status of modernity. In architecture what can be seen as modern in landscaping seems not to be so simple. Architecture has undergone a great transformation because of the materials it uses. Steel and glass has given a new character to the architecture even if it still continued based on the compositional principles of classical architecture. It was clear that modern techniques had greatly transformed architecture. But examining landscape architecture and garden designs of the twentieth century, the materials they use are the same as other times, vegetation has not changed and, also, its architecture has very simply compositional lines. Because of this condition, Shephard pointed out that one of the basic principles of the modern garden is, and it was clearly visible in many examples that illustrate his book, the permanence of tradition if it want be right, proper and successful. This statement opened a small gap between the architectural job and the work of the landscape architect. Shephard noted that while architects could keep dreaming about building steel and glass skyscrapers inside parks surrounded by nature, as postulated Le Corbusier in the Ville contemporaine, however, landscape architects could not be swayed by vague dreams because the significant work they have to face in the future should remain rooted to the earth.

In *Modern Gardens* is set forth that, in the early 50s, there were several ways to deal with garden design according to the regional and cultural differences of the countries. The book, seen in the context of the international architectural debate, shows no patterns or a common style but rather it advocates for the individual expression of each region and each artist. But Shephard recognizes the important influence that functionalism had had in many architects and landscape architects in the defining modern design. However, garden design, unlike construction, could not get away ornament because the garden is itself ornament. It can be avoided, simplified or restricted but when the raw material of the garden is the lush vegetation, in many cases, it seems difficult for the landscape architect to give this effect up¹⁰. In his writings Shephard often distinguishes the character of the designer from the artist. He understood that the derive experienced by architecture was caused, partly, by the acceptance of the *artistry* of the architect while the landscape architect, considered itself as designer, saw his job as a mean to understand how the world is made, and from this, enhance his change.

Several times Shephard repeated the remarkable disciplinary differences which separated architecture and landscaping pointing out that the landscape architect mainly deals with what already exists, in other words, he has to feel the genius loci.¹¹ For him, the landscape architect is a new professional who needs to understand the character of the place as a fundamental part of the design process. His job must combine the previous knowledge of the place with the raw material that defines it to develop the design from them.

Landscape architects must understand simple effects to safeguard the idea that the easiest and clearest way to tackle garden design is just establishing a *law of interference with nature*.¹²

In the last years of his life, Shephard said that experience had taught him that understanding the past had helped him to figure out the present. From the past we learn on tradition and see the ways that make possible some works lead to success.¹³ For this reason, in his lectures and lessons he referred to look up and study the classic Italian garden, the Japanese garden or the Muslim garden. This was not for finding the designer's inspiration but, because of his pragmatic and functionalist thinking, to continue the history and the tradition just to know what was right and what did not. He instructed about some direct lessons taken from the past that could be applied in the present.

The design of the spaces in between

The experience Shephard managed in its first urban projects was expanded during the 60s and 70s when he carried out various projects of university campus where he could implement his personal idea of the spaces in between in a specific and concrete way. In the campus of the University of Lancaster (1963-1980), he and his partner Gabriel Epstein, from the office of architecture Shephard, Epstein & Hunter, undertook a multifunctional arrangement of buildings and open spaces. Epstein described it colloquially as a *salad of functions*.¹⁴ The campus design was developed in three different phases in which there were no segregation of buildings. The whole campus was conceived as a continuous construction of buildings, squares and streets that resembled a Mediterranean town with white roofs sited on the small hill of the Bailrigg area (Fig.5). In the core, between the buildings, like a main street, stood up a pedestrian pathway. This artery is the central pedestrian connector of the campus, bridge buildings and link courtyards following the direction of the natural slope. It is like a path that has no stairs but ramps to allow the easy walk to students.

Shephard told that when he first visited the place where the campus should be built he "hear" the advices of the genius of the place. That day was windy and cold, and he perceived he should protect students and, therefore, enclose them in cloisters all interconnected by a path.¹⁵ To Shephard the basic condition of the work of landscape architect is dealing with what already exists. He identifies it with facing the genius loci because understanding the nature of the site is one of the basics of landscape design.

The organizing principle of the campus of the University of Lancaster is simple: blocks reaching the floor and distributed along the path where people walk. This circulation and development axis is only occupied by pedestrians meanwhile motor vehicles are relegated to the margins of the small university citadel (Fig.6). Each patio of the campus, whether it has a square or rectangular shape, has minor differences in its design but all are unified by the same proportions and materials. The idea Shephard pursued was to create urban order where previously there was only the countryside.

In late 70s, Shephard held the position of dean at the University of Pennsylvania and he was commissioned to make the Landscape Development Plan of the campus together with a group of teachers and students. The plan not only aimed to establish the basic concepts and minimum standards of the landscape of the campus but its aspirations for the future. It must be the beginning, a starting process of change of the campus in which the infrastructure and educational buildings ought to be integrated in an single landscape.

The original campus landscape project was a Paul Philippe Cret, Warren Powers and Olmsted brothers work (1913) and it established a set of pleasant greens and forest areas traversed by walks. Over the years, because of building growth and the expansion of

campuses services, the place became a heap of paths and walks full of weeds without their primeval logic, some areas evidenced major flooding problems during the raining seasons becoming real muddy areas or dusty places once they dried out. The plan Shephard devised turned away the street, it closed to it defining an inner space opened exclusively to the pedestrian use, creating a central pedestrian axis where new walks were introduced next to a renewed landscape that respected the qualities of the former (Fig.7). The new pedestrian pathway reorganized the campus services system and reduced vehicle traffic inside, removing it completely at some zones, with the purpose of making this place a more civilized urban campus.

The whole campus had a picturesque landscape style but with the definition of the new pedestrian spine were introduced modern aspects based on a simple system of different contrasts caused by the materials used. In the walks granite curbs delimited the passing areas from vegetation ones and the brick pavement was combined in the central line with stone tiles (Fig.8 and 9). This plain pavement design established a hierarchy in the pedestrian axis determining two clearly defined types of routes: the stone on the fast track and vehicles and the brick in the slow one and services. The adding of mass planting provided volume and perspective backgrounds, although the trees of the campus were treated like a light wooded area. In the building entrances the vegetation was simplified to small masses of shrubs and flower beds which were also supplemented with resting areas to lie on the grass under the continuous tree canopy that surrounded buildings (Fig.10 and 11). The new landscape Shephard proposed largely valued the existing planting and not only looked for solving the needs of the students but it goaled to give a visual unity to the campus.

In the report of the Plan, Shephard indicates that university life is provided by the campus but admits that much of it happens outside the buildings. The daily passage of people through the new landscape should produce meetings zones or simply places for relaxing retreats (Fig.12 and 13). This would gradually enrich university life at the same time it would give an own identity and image to the institution. When Shephard addressed the design of the university campus always looked towards the historic city in order to highlight that the most admirable aspect is what remains in the memory of people and it is generally "*not the buildings but the space between them*".¹⁶ Putting together the people in the spaces between the campus buildings has also an educational purpose: offering the others the value and pleasures of the daily life that appears just making a good use of the site.

The previous idea reflects one of the major contingencies of the in between concept. It is to drag people to the spaces between buildings so they can stay there and use them. Here the work of the landscape architect is crucial for the design, identification and development of the appropriate conditions for it. Ed Bennis, Shephard's student and collaborator at the University of Pennsylvania, said that his work, especially the gardens, offered six determinant qualities: the relationship of the design with the urban scale; the functionality in its modern conception; the symbolism of the space; the tradition and the permanence carried on for the use of noble and high quality materials; the self-regulation by the use and the dependence on natural resources and, finally, the flexibility to adapt to different periods of time. All of them were the attributes of the spaces in between that Shephard continually referred to his students.¹⁷

The inescapable condition of design

Since late 50s, and especially in the 60s, Shephard occupied the public realm appearing in the mass media, giving interviews and participating in TV shows.

* Photographs are attached in the spanish version

Also writing articles, giving lectures and as active member of several technical committees of experts he advocated the education of the landscape architect.

He pointed out with determination that education was the key and an urgent task. Starting an education system to teach landscape to the architects should foster a new attitude towards the landscape. The training of professionals will create a new environment where men could be civilized and happy.¹⁸

Landscape architect is a designer who trusts his instincts, warned Shepheard.¹⁹ His responsibility is pioneering a right way to change the world and not to try desperately be within. This disruptive stance is conditioned by a job action that, in part, should preserve what exists. To achieve this, he recommended to look closely the raw materials that build the landscape and learn the basic principles of his design.

In his second book Gardens, Shepheard included some ideas and insights he taught at Penn (Fig.14). This little book was a short manual about garden design and construction. In its pages the pedagogical position of Shepheard to landscapers and designers is clearly demonstrated. In the brief introduction he indicates that it is not another book about gardening but a writing that deals with the difficult question of what makes a garden beautiful. Shepheard reviews all the elements that must know the landscape designer: soil, sun, shade, shelter, composition, water, pavement, vegetation, building materials and maintenance. But in the background of his writing lies the attempt to discern where is the beauty of the garden and what techniques affect it. These techniques must be known by the designer and they are not just the specific gardening issues but also architectural ones. Shepheard highlighted that the beauty of the garden depends on, specially, the difficult question of the composition of pavements, walls, fences and the organization of space.²⁰

One of the main functions of gardens is offering people, who no longer live in the countryside but in dense neighborhoods in the modern city, the existence of spaces and areas where they can experience their individuality within the community. Shepheard was convinced that modern garden should be an extension of the house, an outdoor room where the inhabitants could experience their privacy. A new haven of privacy in an age which advanced towards the homogenization of the people behavior. To Shepheard a good garden is made of little things by designers able to perceive them. Such space is born of observation and passion for these delicate stuffs. Gardens could teach the owner's garden to rate aesthetically his property but, even more, it makes understandable to the landscape designer which means to design the in between spaces in the city when they are considered at the same level of garden design. Shepheard considers that the essence of a designed garden is no more than a strong architectural lines covered by vegetation so that the strength of the lines is sweetened and intricate by plants. The linear and geometric rigor of the layout soothes when nature go into action simplifying any geometry and calming all regularity. When landscape architect understands this inevitable condition, his work could go further in the design of the spaces in between.

As a consequence of the specialization labor and knowledge separation, came in first half of the twentieth century, the basic unity between architecture and landscaping wrinkled. To Shepheard, landscaping should be the continuation of architecture by other means. Landscape architect is a professional who promotes a new thinking towards the organization of the landscape, the city and the countryside.²¹ He is an architect who designs landscapes. He is who decides what to do with the vacant land areas forgotten by urbanism. His job finds common places between architecture and landscape with the creation of a new pattern of landscape in the existing landscape. This suggestive affirmation Shepheard pointed out in this

*way: If town landscape is the poetry of odds and ends, then the landscape architect must be its poet.*²²



LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE
FUNCTIONALISM
URBAN DESIGN
GARDEN
NATURE