Greenscape as Screenscape: The Cinematic Urban Garden¹

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Abstract: The relationship between city and garden appears in many feature films in order to visualize narrative dualisms. In particular, the character of the boundary - as a fundamental medial characteristic of gardens - determines the meaning of the represented space. According to the Western representation of ideal places and the historically-developed antagonism of city and garden, the boundary defines the latter as the diametrically opposed utopian antithesis to urban life. This antagonism is used, for example, in *The Garden of the Finzi-Continis* (1970) in the political context of World War II, or as in *Being There* (1979), embedded in a philosophical discourse centered on Voltaire and Sartre.

The dystopian city of Los Angeles in Ridley Scott's *Blade Runner* (1982) lacks space not only for gardens, but for any natural environment in general. The only garden that remains, exists as a kind of *Paradise Lost*, a placeless *topos* with a unicorn, banished into and limited by the world of imagination of the protagonist. As this example indicates, the cinematic garden and particularly the more specialized topic of the relationship between the garden and the city within cinema is still an under-examined realm of the research of garden history.²

In cinematic genres where the city is usually presented as the essential character -- such as in Neorealism, Film Noir, and dystopian science fiction -- garden space is hardly discovered.³ These types of films frequently transport an extremely negative connotation of the city. Indeed, they could be considered as the epitome of culturally defined opposition of the peaceful and quiet garden and the wicked and noisy city, where in order to show the extremes of the one side, the other one is completely erased. In particular, the American crime thrillers of the 1940s, such as John Huston's *Maltese Falcon* (1941), present a city that is the low-key lightened backdrop for human failure.

The genre-oriented classical Hollywood cinema, such as the western or the thriller, sets up the drama upon the fight between good and evil.⁴ While doing so, the use of different sets can be an important indicator for the characterization of the protagonists as hero or the wicked competitor; more generally expressed, the inherent, historically redefined antagonism of city and garden gives the feature film the opportunity to visualize narrative dualisms.

Historically gardens have been conceived of as "retreats" from the city, or as "attacks" on urban life.⁵ Nowhere is the dichotomy more obviously expressed as in the antagonism of city and country life in the ancient villa treatise of Pliny the Younger or in the Italian villa books of the sixteenth century.⁶ The faraway often-garden-surrounded villa was the epitome of withdrawal:

In the villa, I say, one tastes infinite pleasures in accord with the variety of the seasons that are offered to us one after the other. Here you arrive at faithful Spring, ambassadress of Summer; all the trees, as if in competition

one with another, alter gain their bark and dress again in greenest boughs: adorning themselves with such a beauty and variety of flowers that beside the sweetest odors emitted by everything around, afford incredible joy and delight to whomever observes them. As birds sing their loves with sweet and dainty accents our ears are filled with lovely melody ...⁷

This description of the garden stands in marked contrast to descriptions of the city. For instance, in 1566 Falcone described the city in *Le Ville del Doni* as "...nothing other than a patent theatre of misery and filled with every infelicity ..."⁸

In the 18th century Pope continues Petracca's ideal of the villa in his retirement-model, when he antithesizes city and country in the polarity of "vice" and "virtue."⁹ Compared with this, the garden city movement of the late 19th and the early 20th century tried to combine what was once separated. Ebenezer Howard and other representatives of this movement attempted to counter the effects of industrialization by including greenery into their vision of "urban utopia."¹⁰ The union of garden and city, therefore, came to be seen as a form of attack on an outdated, urban way of life.

Although this paper will give examples of gardens and parks from completely different historical periods and styles, my main focus is not to present a unified typology of cinematic gardens. This analysis will instead examine to what extent the boundary of each garden is relevant for the iconography of each cinematic garden. Through the creation of an outside and an inside world, the boundary as a media related constitution of the garden itself is, as we will see, fundamental for the use and the meaning of a cinematic urban garden.

Historically the positive iconography of gardens depends on their clearly defined boundaries; the ancient *topos* of the *Golden Age*, and the Christian idea of paradise or the *hortus conclusus*, for instance, are very often founded on schemes of an enclosed space. *The Golden Age* (1530) painted by Lucas Cranach the Elder, mainly described as the utopian original state of mankind in Greek mythology, shows a massive wall that separates the inside world of peace and harmony from a hardly recognizable outside surrounding. Almost exactly in the same way, the Master of the *Garden of Paradise* (Fig. 1) presents the *hortus conclusus* as an enclosed, peaceful microcosm representing the virginity of Mary. In images such as this, peace, happiness and virginity depend on clearly defined garden boundary.

Fig. 1: Master of the Frankfurt Paradiesgärtlein: Garden of Paradise, 26.1 x 33.3 cm, oak, circa 1415, Städel Museum Frankfurt a.M., on loan from Historisches Museums Frankfurt.
(Courtesy of Städel Museum Frankfurt A.M., ARTHOTEK)

The central thesis of this paper expands upon this form of Western representation of ideal places and explores how devices such as hedges, fences or ditches help to define the garden as the utopian antithesis to urban life. As these boundaries become increasingly fractured, one can expect the garden to be an integrated part of the cinematic city. In doing so, the garden becomes less of a *topos* and increasingly becomes a definable *local* space where external factors are permitted to break through.¹¹ In the following discussion I explore this notion by focusing on a number of different films, including Vittorio De Sica's *The Garden of the Finzi-Continis* (1970), Hal Ashby's *Being There* (1979) and Jacques Tati's *Mon Oncle* (1958). These movies set garden space in highly varied narrative contexts. In *Mon Oncle*, the garden is part of social criticism, while in Vittorio de Sica's *The Garden of the Finzi-Continis*, the garden is embedded in the political context of World War II. Moreover, Hal Ashby's *Being There* connects the garden to a philosophical discourse centered on Voltaire's rationalism and Sartre's nihilism.

Symbol of Inner Emigration

Vittorio De Sica's *The Garden of the Finzi-Continis* (1970) tells the story of an Italian Jewish aristocratic family driven into poverty by the political reality of the Fascist period (1938 to 1943). Given the external socio-political factors at play, this family was forced to live their lives within the walls of their property. From the outset of the film, the demarcation of the estate from the outside city of Ferrara is ostentatiously established by the composition of the image, the dialogue, the music, and the action itself.¹²

In the first scene of the film we see a group of mostly Jewish teenagers cycling along the seemingly endless garden wall. The entire opening scene serves as a characterization of this place as an enclosed garden. From the first step into the garden, De Sica never offers - not even in high angle shots - a view of the outside architecture of the city. And Malnate, one of the main characters in the film, lets us know that he is not able to see the interior architecture of this place by stating that, "The house must be a long way from the gate." This negation of architecture and such human references of culture provoke a certain feeling of timelessness and placelessness, which usually goes along with the *topos* of paradise.¹³ One of the young girls further confirms that this place has an uncoupled character from the human being when she asks without getting an answer, "Is anyone there?"¹⁴ This effect of temporal and spatial uncertainty is reinforced by the use of a soft focus, a restless camera, and many close ups that reduce the field of vision. The long travelling shot of the group of young cyclists into the garden provokes spatial disorientation. As in a maze, the horizontal view leads only into the greenery while the vertical view into the blue sky.¹⁵ This scene is supported by the sentimental music of Bill Conti and Manuel De Sica, which starts just at the moment when the group begins to ride their bikes.

The conversion of this place reaches its peak when Micol lets us know that the name of the enclosure of this garden is "Mura degli Angeli"¹⁶, Angelwalls. This clear reference to the New Jerusalem viewed by Judaism as the Garden of Eden is supported by the color of innocence that is worn by the protagonists. The positive connotation of the garden transmitted as *topos* can be found in the statement of a young girl who just entered the garden and says: "It's lovely."¹⁷ The second part shows in the tradition of an ancient villa treatise once again how detached this place is from the city: "Like the country!"¹⁸

In contrast to the garden, presented as a modern *hortus ludi*¹⁹ where young people are playing tennis, De Sica presents a second landscape, Ferrara. In this film Ferrara is a space in which everyone wears dark colours, where the air-raid warning breaks the silence, and where the straight streets are occupied by a noisy crowd carrying Fascist or National Socialist symbols.²⁰ Therefore, De Sica

constrains the entirety of real political situation to the city space. Nevertheless, the seemingly apolitical private space of the garden where Arians, Communists, and Jews spend their time together is derived from highly political origins. In the words of Armin Nassehi, “Privacy is only the other side of the political coin. Since the apolitical is only understandable by the political.”²¹

The negation by the Finzi Continis of these outside political events is reflected in the staging of the garden as a *topos* and not as a real *local*. This is underscored by a scene in which, despite the political situation taking place outside the garden walls, Mr. Finzi-Contini, one of the central characters of the film, renovates the tennis court. Thus, the garden becomes the epitome of the leitmotif described by Adriano Bon as “desiderio d’immunità,” the longing for stability.²² Moreover, this space gives expression to what Herta Hammerbacher, one of the most influential German garden architects of the 20th century, once called the “inner emigration” – a term she used to describe the practice of garden architecture in times of National Socialism.²³

Symbol of an Optimistic Philosophy of Life

A similar dichotomy between an enclosed townhouse garden and the city is established by Hal Ashby in his movie *Being There* (1979). In this film, however, the dualism of these places is the expression of different philosophies of life. The narration of the story, as noted by film scholars Mary Lazar and John Simon, is highly influenced by the existentialistic thoughts of Sartre and Voltaire’s rationalist novel *Candide, ou l’Optimisme* (1759).²⁴ Ashby characterizes his main protagonist, Mr. Chance the gardener, as an embodiment of Sartre’s *Being-in-itself*. As this term refers to the existence of things, this mentally handicapped gardener exists as a non-conscious being, lacking any “...intellectual, emotional or sexual desires.”²⁵ In contrast to the conscious existence of the *Being-for-itself*, this lack of consciousness is described by Sartre as an existence without any relations to reasons.²⁶ Accordingly, since the gardener is not able to make causal connections, he is not adversely affected by the sudden death of his benefactor at the beginning of the film. Moreover, the main character is described by another as: “... an exception. That’s one of the things I admire about you; your admirable balance. You seem to be a truly peaceful man.” This content way of life is once again located in a completely enclosed garden, with walls so high that they offer no possibility of a view to the outside and an ordered structure of raked gravel paths and box trees that reflect the inner balance of the gardener himself. This state of mind is further supported by Mr. Chance’s love of television. The constant repetition of the intact world by commercial programs has been compared by Simon to the philosopher Dr. Pangloss of *Candide*, who teaches the optimistic, Leibnizian formula of the *best of all possible worlds*.²⁷

After the death of his benefactor, Mr. Chance is forced to leave the property for the first time in his life. His entrance into the city is marked by Strauss’ *Also sprach Zarathustra*, a piece of music popularised most famously by Stanley Kubrick’s *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968). When Mr. Chance ventures out of the garden he is stepping into an entirely unknown world. This outside city, Washington D.C., is characterized by poverty, gang wars and filth— all signs of the rupture from the world caused by the conscious existence of the *Being-for-itself*.

After an accident caused by the wife of a wealthy businessman named Mr. Rand, Mr. Chance is invited to their estate in order to recover from his injured leg. Very soon Mr. Chance, who due to a misunderstanding is now called Chancey Gardiner, becomes involved in the problems of each occupant of the mansion. Mr. Rand suffers from an incurable disease, his wife is sexually dissatisfied, and the President, a friend of Mr. Rand, is concerned about social and economic problems of his country. During the scenes that follow, Mr Chance’s undeliberate and simplistic statements, mostly concerning gardening, recall *Candide*’s famous last sentence: “Il faut cultiver nôtre jardin”²⁸. Invited to a talk show he answers a question regarding the country’s problems by saying: “If you give your garden a lot of love, things grow.”²⁹ But contrary to *Candide*, Chance remains completely untouched

by his new surrounding. Rather, his constantly repeated statement of the eternal circulation of nature is read by others as an allegory, producing a purely optimistic confidence in the world:

Mr. Chance: In a garden, growth has its season. First come spring and summer but then we have fall and winter. And then we get spring and summer again.

Mr. President: I must admit, that is one of the most refreshing and optimistic statements I've heard in a very long time.³⁰

Not only does the use of this metaphor in the President's next speech meet with approval, but Mr. Rand also loses his fear of death by the simple presence of the gardener and Mrs. Rand feels freed after masturbating in front of him.

But what separates this philosophy of life further from not only Voltaire's enlightened rationalism but also from Sartre's atheistic existentialism, is the introduction of a certain religious and nationalist moment, which is clearly expressed in the garden of the estate shown at the end of the film. The pyramid-like mausoleum for the corpse of Mr. Rand carries the Eye of Providence, part of the symbolism of the United States since it had been depicted on the reverse side of the Great Seal of the United States in 1782.³¹ Moreover, the location of the movie is not only another clear reference to the North American state, but also to its historical developed image in the American Dream, based on the belief in the content of the term *Rags to Riches*. The Biltmore Estate, designed by Richard Morris Hunt and Frederick Law Olmsted 1888 through 1895, is a national symbol of the economic wealth of the upper class in times of the Gilded Age.³²

In contrast, the religious moment is less clear to define. Certainly the Eye of Providence as the all-seeing eye is clearly part of Christian Iconography, but the dark mark in the lower area of the cinematic version of this symbol could lead to another reference: the Udjat-eye. This Egyptian symbol of healing power can also be connected to the gardener's name because it is the tenth hieroglyph of the so-called Gardiner's Sign List.³³ But the last scene of the movie makes it unambiguously clear that the iconography of the garden is not to find in a higher syncretism than in the Christian monotheism. At the end of the movie, Mr. Chance walks on the water of the lake. The image carries obvious biblical undertones connected to the Jesus Christ, who is also often portrayed as a gardener. This last image of the film coincides with the last sentence of the funeral oration: "Life is a state of mind." Thereby Ashby transfers the rationalist ending of Voltaire's *Candide, ou l'Optimisme* to an optimistic happy ending located in a garden, which serves as a symbol of the Christian United States.

This invitation to optimism is anticipated by several scenes of the film, where only the inner point of view changes the impression of the outside reality. Mr. Chance speaks of roses although it is autumn and you cannot see any of them, while in the same way, Mrs. Rand transforms her barren garden by speaking of its beauty when it is in bloom.³⁴

However, it should be mentioned that not only is the cinematic townhouse garden presented as the counterpart of the city, but also the other type of the city-garden, the park, could be staged as an enclosed and thereby pleasant and joyful place. *Mary Poppins* (1964), one of the most famous children's films ever made, clearly defines the place of the narration by the very first picture of the movie. The high-angle shot offers the most popular buildings of London: Houses of Parliament, St Paul's Cathedral, The Tower of London and Tower Bridge, while the remainder is covered by mist. The city is recognizable as Shonfield noticed, because "London is done away with in favour of the same familiar lumps of tourist hardware."³⁵ As in the other films already mentioned, the city is negatively connoted. It is the world of adults where in the same way as in *The Garden of the Finzi-Continis* nearly everyone is wearing dark colours, the children Jane and Michael get lost in the dark

streets, birds go hungry, and rain stops outside games. But the park in this film is not separated from the city by high walls. The park, where the nanny and her friend spend a joyful afternoon, is totally disconnected from the outside by a different use of the medium itself. As they jump in front of the entrance of the supposedly real Hyde-Park into a street painting, the feature film turns into a cartoon. This so-called “Park in the Park” scene presents the greatest possible difference between cinematic city and cinematic city-garden.³⁶ As Bert the chimney sweep lets us know, this is no longer a park but rather a painting in the shape of an English landscape garden. By representing the precursor of its own form, *Mary Poppins* offers a cinematic version of the *picturesque*, where the English landscape garden is shaped as a 17th century Arcadian landscape painting.³⁷ Furthermore, this completely detached city-garden serves again as the outside expression of an inner state of mind. In the following scene, when Mary puts Michael and Jane to bed, she makes the children unsure of the reality of the “pastoral adventure”³⁸.

Jane: Mary Poppins don't you remember? You won the horse race.

Mary: A respectable person like me in a horse race? How dare you suggest such a thing?³⁹

At the end of the film it is obvious that the whole appearance of the world, whether the city or the park, depends only on the way things are viewed. So the city is from the high point of view of a chimney sweep “Quite nice...” as Mary Poppins says.⁴⁰ Urban space can turn in the same way as the supposedly real Hyde Park in the earlier scene, into a colourful and joyful world. It all depends on the attitude to life.

Bleak Prospects: When the Boundary Begins to Disappear

In De Sica's film the garden of the Finzi-Contini finally fails to give shelter in exactly the same way the ghetto-gardens portrayed by Helphand did. At the end of the film, when the aristocratic family is deported, the space of the garden does not differ much from that of the outside city. Everyone is wearing black and the lively green is covered by snow.⁴¹ Even Cardullo describes the “...grainy and intentionally overexposed...” photography as an elegy⁴², expressing the ephemeral character of the given shelter place.⁴³ The colour boundary between the two spaces is given up.

But ephemeral character is revealed much earlier in the movie. Not only does the description of the garden as a ghetto by the father of the main character Giorgio divulge that the Finzi-Continis and their friends are only birds in a gilded cage, but even the scene of the first entrance in the garden refers to this incarceration.⁴⁴ The view of the camera, which leads the eye of the audience from the outside into the interior world of the estate, is obstructed by the vertical lines of tree branches, giving one the impression of looking through bars. Even more significant is the lattice fence of the tennis court provoking the image of a cage. At the very end of the film, this staging of the garden as an imposed prison reaches a tragic climax. De Sica visualizes in several in and out fades the protagonists as victims of the war. They are playing tennis on the tennis court, accompanied by a Hebraic lamentation song about Treblinka and Auschwitz.⁴⁵

In general the increasing fragmentation of the boundary in cinema takes the symbolism of *topos* and thereby the positive connotation from the city-garden. Accordingly, both the townhouse garden and the park become an integrative part of the real local, the city. In the townhouse garden of the Villa Arpel presented in Jacques Tati's *Mon Oncle* (1958), we must consider that the portrayed ambiguity between the inside and the outside reduces the function of the enclosed garden and its

related *topos* to absurdity: Grey walls separate grey walls and grey streets continue behind a grey gate and grey paved paths (Fig. 2).

Fig. 2: Film still from Jacques Tati's *Mon Oncle* (1958)
© Les Films de Mon Oncle (Courtesy of Les Films de Mon Oncle, Paris, www.tativille.com)

The structure of the garden of the villa behind these alleged walls appears as a continuation of French *avant-garde* ideas of the twenties, where plants often no longer exist in a singular perceptible way of being. As in the garden of the villa Noailles (Hyères, France), designed by Gabriel Guévrékian (1928) flowerbeds are reduced to coloured expanses.⁴⁶ What remains in exclusion is only nature itself, appearing in *Mon Oncle* as nothing but treetops behind the building (Fig. 3).

Fig. 3: Film still from Jacques Tati's *Mon Oncle* (1958)
© Les Films de Mon Oncle (Courtesy of Les Films de Mon Oncle, Paris, www.tativille.com)

In addition, according to Nerdingner who identified the villa structure as following Le Corbusier's ideas, the life in this suburban *l'unité d'habitation* is only the repetition of modern city life in miniature.⁴⁷ With that Tati goes against the basic root of villa ideology, the contrast of country and city.⁴⁸ Although Pliny the Younger refers to the fact that in the country there "is no need for a toga", in Tati's film Mr. Arpel turns up in a suit. And while Pliny noticed with satisfaction that "neighbours

do not call and it's always quiet and peaceful", in Tati's film their visit turns into a noisy chaos of a garden party. Furthermore, while Pliny "exercises his mind by study, his body by hunting," in the film Mr. and Mrs. Arpel are watching television on their terrace.⁴⁹ Considering Ackerman's advice that "in reflecting on the ways in which villas respond to the landscape one must remember to look not only at them, but from them," the resistance to the ideal of the villa reaches its peak.⁵⁰ By converting the view from the villa into an examination of the neighbours' garden Tati once again thwarts not only a central motive of the ideal of the villa by limiting the view, but also takes away the central characteristic of the enclosed garden. The space of privacy and individual freedom change under the observation of the "other" into a panopticon, where the ordered structure of the garden becomes the expression of absolute conformism.

This analogy between open garden space and individual repression reappears in an even clearer form in the representation of the cinematic suburbia of Truffaut's "Fahrenheit 451." This film about a dystopian society where no one is allowed to read books, presents the compulsion to homogeneity through the uniformity of front gardens; all united, without any fences.⁵¹ But the destruction of private garden space is not only the cinematic representation of totalitarian systems. As Beuka has so intriguingly shown, the American suburban utopia of the perfect community changes in movies like *Pleasantville* (1998), *The Truman Show* (1998) or even earlier in *Edward Scissorhands* (1990) into a dystopian prison of the single human being where the social shared and formal amalgamates well-kept front garden is the result, and the lawn mower and garden hose are the insignias of adaptation.⁵² Consequently what Aben and De Witt noticed for the inhabitants of the city garden is also a part of the cinematic version of it: "Those who failed to look after their lawns were regarded as selfish and undemocratic."⁵³

In fact, since the early nineteenth century the contrast of city and countryside was strongly attenuated by the democratisation of the ideal of the villa.⁵⁴ Its nearly complete disappearance in the mass produced suburban type at the height of this development serves for Tati as part of his critique on modern urbanisation in general.⁵⁵ Regarding the interpretation of the villa as Le Corbusier's *l'unité d'habitation* not only the form, but the enclosure of Tati's cinematic garden is an absolute historical distortion of his utopian architecture. As Dorothée Imbert has so intriguingly shown, Le Corbusier was the only architect of the French *modernist garden* of the beginning of the 20th century, who connected nature and architecture, not by extending the architectural layout of the house to the garden (as it is shown in Tati's movie), but pulling nature inwards. Certainly in his roof gardens plants were mainly domesticated and confined to small enclosed areas, but this controlled garden quarters stand in sharp contrast to an almost untouched and above all open landscape surrounding. In the *Villa Les Terrasses* (1927), also known as *Villa Stein*, the formal, regular front garden is diametrically opposed to a landscape scheme in the back and just the same the *Villa Savoy* is set in an untouched open surrounding.⁵⁶

The socio-critical impact of Tati's film anticipates the theoretical debate of urban architects and sociologists in the late 1960s and early 1970s, a debate known as the *crisis of the city*.⁵⁷ This debate leads to a completely artificial, formal and enclosed architecture, which appears as the antitheses of nature. In order to criticize the urbanist development since the *Athens Charter* cinematically, the reference of life to nature is as lost in the same way as the clear difference between the city and the country.

Conclusions

The cinematic representation of urban gardens reflects the historically-generated antagonism of city and garden. In particular, the character of the boundary -- as a fundamental medial characteristic of gardens -- determines the meaning of the represented space. Thus, the enclosed garden set serves as the cinematic pendant of paradise and the opened garden space promised, at

best, the ardent desire for it. The narrative dualism of the good and the evil represented by the Jewish family of the Finzi-Continis and Italian Fascists, in Vittorio de Sica's *The Garden of the Finzi-Continis* is characterized by their different surroundings. The sunny enclosed garden of the Jewish estate, where people of every shade and colour meet, serves as an apolitical bulwark against the agitation of the urban neighbourhood. Likewise, Hal Ashby's *Being There* changes Voltaire's critique of the Leibnizian optimism into a praise of it. The enclosed garden of the Biltmore estate, its pyramid crowned by the Eye of Providence and the optimistic protagonist, walking like Jesus Christ across the lake becomes a symbol of the realized American dream.

But a diametrically opposed use of city-gardens in film is also possible. By eliminating the gulf between inside and outside space, Tati's formal garden in *Mon Oncle* (1958) becomes part of the whole urban technocracy presented in the rest of the movie. The destruction of the difference between city and country life as the nucleus of the villa ideal is part of a cinematic critique of modern urbanisation. As in the suburban movies of the 1990s, the formerly private garden becomes scrutinized by the eyes of the neighbours, a panopticon in public space.

Cinematic public garden space and individual freedom appear almost always mutually exclusive. Hence, Jane's demand for privacy in the park of Antonioni's famous *Blow up* (1966) is a contradiction in terms, and can only be interpreted as the helpless longing for paradise lost: "This is a public place. Everyone has the right to be left in peace."⁵⁸

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¹ This article is the result of a Summer Readership at Dumbarton Oaks in 2007.

² There are some exceptions, but each one neglects the relationship of city and garden: Nina Gerlach, "Barocke Gartenkunst im Spielfilm," *Die Gartenkunst* 1 (2008): 165-184; Leonie Glabau et al., "Zwischen Realität, Klischee und Tradition. Gärten im Film," *Stadt + Grün* 7 (2007): 42-45; Leonie Glabau et al., "Dekoration, Depp oder Denker? Der Gärtner im Film," *Stadt + Grün* 10 (2006): 57-60; Gianluca Trivero, *La camera verde. Il giardino nell'immaginario cinematografico* (Verona: Ombre corte, 2004); Rupert Doblhammer and Judith Wieser-Huber, "Paradise Lost. Ein kinematographischer Spaziergang durch den Garten," *Die Gartenkunst* 2 (2003): 336-344. Dorothee Wenner, "Die Diva der Landschaften. Der Park als Filmkulisse," *Cinéma* 47 (2002): 9-15; Ute Brönnner and Gert Gröning, ed., *Garten – Film – Landschaft. Komposition im Entwurf – Beziehungen zwischen Freiraumarchitektur und der zeitbasierten Darstellungsform Film. Ein Beitrag zu einer interdisziplinären, experimentellen Entwurfsmethodik in der Freiraumarchitektur. Dokumentation von Ergebnissen und Beiträgen im Rahmen des interdisziplinären Seminars Garten-Film-Landschaft am Studiengang Architektur des HdK Berlin* (Berlin: Institut für Geschichte und Theorie der Gestaltung, Fachgebiet Gartenkultur und Landschaftsentwicklung, 2001); Scott MacDonald, *The Garden in the Machine. A Field Guide to Independent Films about Place* (Berkeley/ Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2001). Even if Giuliana Bruno's extremely well researched work is not relevant for the focus of this article, she mentioned another under-examined realm of the research to cinematic gardens. She draws attention to a formal analogy of gardens and cinema architecture: "The Loew's Paradise, Eberson's masterpiece, was one such urban garden. True to its name, it contained the erotics of garden spectacle in its edenic architectonics. This movie palace was archaeological find, architectural marvel, and landscape garden in one, complete with weather reports. As in an Italian interior garden or a courtyard, in this 4,000 seat theater one could see the sky, framed by the architectural walls.", Giuliana Bruno, *Atlas of Emotion. Journeys in Art, Architecture and Film* (New York: Verso, 2002), 49.

³ There are a few exceptions, where the garden plays at the very least a subordinated role: *The Lady of Shanghai* (1947), *Metropolis* (1927) or *La Dolce Vita* (1960).

⁴ On classical Hollywood Cinema see e.g.: Richard Maltby and Ian Craven, *Hollywood Cinema. An Introduction* (Oxford/ Cambridge: Blackwell, 1995).

⁵ "Certain gardens are described as retreats, when they are really attacks.", Ian Hamilton Finlay quoted after: Adrian von Buttlar, "Retreats or attacks? Der Garten zwischen Arcadia und Utopia," *Die Gartenkunst* 1 (1997): 15.

⁶ James S. Ackerman, *The Villa. Form and Ideology of Country Houses* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1990).

- ⁷ Alberto Lollio, *Lettera ... nella quale ... egli celebra la villa e lauda molto l'agricoltura...* (Venice: 1544), fol. B iii^r, quoted in a translation by: Ackermann 1990, 110.
- ⁸ Giuseppe Falcone, *La nuova, vaga, et dilettevole villa* (Brescia: 1559), Preface, fol. i, quoted in a translation by: Ibid., 113.
- ⁹ Concerning this see: Buttlar 1997, 16-17.
- ¹⁰ Robert Fishman, *Urban Utopias in the Twentieth Century. Ebenezer Howard, Frank Lloyd Wright, and Le Corbusier* (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1977).
- ¹¹ In contrast to the Latin word for place, *locus*, the Greek term *topos* "...referred in particular to a place within the mythological landscape.", Rob Aben and Saskia de Witt, *The Enclosed Garden. History and Development of the Hortus Conclusus and its Reintroduction into the Present-day Urban Landscape* (Rotterdam: 010 Publishers, 1999), 250.
- ¹² The movie was shot on the following locations: Parco di Monza, Monza; Orto botanico and Villa Ada, Rome.
- ¹³ "In the enclosed garden the progress of time is irrelevant. The chronology of past, present and future is extinguished, and eterni and the moment seem to coincide.", Aben and de Witt 1999, 222.
- ¹⁴ Vittorio De Sica, *The Garden of the Finzi-Continis*. 1970.
- ¹⁵ In the same way the presentation of the sky is a typical part for the hortus conclusus: "In the hortus conclusus the containment of the space is stressed by the direct visible presence of the limitless sky. Limited dimensions against endless space, the mass of the walls against the space of the garden, the invisibility of the world outside against the view of the sky.", Ibid., 37.
- ¹⁶ De Sica 1970.
- ¹⁷ Ibid.
- ¹⁸ Ibid.
- ¹⁹ "Hortus ludi: a delectable garden, the garden of delights as a profane reading of paradise. This bounded flowery mead was given over to play (ludus), courtship, rhetoric, philosophy, dance, music, poetry, but also to games such as vaulting, blind man's buff, chess and casting dice.", Ibid., 248.
- ²⁰ The city offers no garden at all, except of the little yard of the house of Giorgio's family.
- ²¹ Armin Nassehi, "'Zutritt verboten!' Über die politische Formierung privater Räume und die Politik des Unpolitischen," in *Privatheit, Garten und politische Kultur. Von kommunikativen Zwischenräumen*, ed. Siegfried Lamnek and Marie-Theres Tinnefeld (Opladen: Leske + Budrich, 2003), 32, translated by the author.
- ²² Adriano Bon, *Come leggere "Il giardino dei Finzi-Contini" di Giorgio Bassani* (Milano: Mursia, 1979), 25.
- ²³ Herta Hammerbacher in a letter (3. January 1980) to Joachim Wolschke, quoted in: Joachim Wolschke-Bulmahn, "Freiheit in Grenzen? Zum Zusammenhang von Gärten, Privatheit und Politik in der Zeit des Nationalsozialismus," in *Privatheit, Garten und politische Kultur. Von kommunikativen Zwischenräumen*, ed. Siegfried Lamnek and Marie-Theres Tinnefeld (Opladen: Leske + Budrich, 2003), 169.
- ²⁴ Mary Lazar, "Jerzy Kosinski's 'Being There', Novel and Film: Changes Not by Chance," *College Literature* 2 (2004): 5; John Simon, "Stodgy Satire, Dodgy Satyr," review of *Being There*, by Hal Ashby, *National Review*, February 22, 1980, 239.
- ²⁵ Lazar 2004, 15.
- ²⁶ Alfred Dandyk, *Unaufrichtigkeit. Die existentielle Psychoanalyse Sartres im Kontext der Philosophiegeschichte* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2002), 61.
- ²⁷ Simon 1980, 239.
- ²⁸ Voltaire. *Candide, ou l'optimisme*. Traduit de l'allemand par M. de Volt***. (Londres: 1759), 163.
- ²⁹ Hal Ashby, *Being There*. 1979.
- ³⁰ Ibid.
- ³¹ U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Public Affairs, *The Great Seal of the United States* (Washington D.C.: U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Public Affairs, 2003), 7.
- ³² Howard E. Covington Jr., *Lady on the Hill. How Biltmore Estate Became an American Icon* (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley, 2006).
- ³³ Alan Gardiner, *Egyptian Grammar. Being an Introduction to the Study of Hieroglyphs* (London: Oxford University Press, 1950), 544.
- ³⁴ Mrs. Rand: "We have 60,000 tulip bulbs up there. It is so glorious when they bloom. Of course, the roses are my favorites, we have 20.000 rose bushes.", Ashby, 1979.
- ³⁵ Katherine Shonfield, *Walls Have Feelings. Architecture, Films and the City* (London: Routledge, 2000), 135.
- ³⁶ Pamelý Lyndon Travers, *Mary Poppins in the Park* (London: P. Davies, 1952).
- ³⁷ John Dixon Hunt, "Ut Pictura Poesis, Ut Pictura Hortus, and the Picturesque," *Word & Image* 1 (1985): 87-107.
- ³⁸ Douglas Brode, *From Walt to Woodstock. How Disney Created the Counterculture* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2004), 93.
- ³⁹ Robert Stevenson, *Mary Poppins*. 1964.
- ⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ In a conversation between Malnate and Alberto the audience gets to know that Alberto considers the city as already dead. Alberto: "Do you like Ferrara?" Malnate: "It's not nearly as dead as you told me it was."

⁴² Bert Cardullo, *Vittorio De Sica: Director, Actor, Screenwriter* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2002), 84.

⁴³ Canby describes the melancholy character of the movie in a completely different way: "Mr. De Sica's way with an end-of-an-era romance is to shoot almost everything in soft focus, as if he didn't trust the validity of the emotions in what seems to be a perfectly decent screenplay. The film's mood of impending doom is not discovered by the viewer, but imposed on him, by a syrupy musical score and by a camera that keeps panning to and from the sky, and shoots the sun, seen through the same sort of treetops that hover over the actors in the world of Newport cigarettes.", Canby Vincent, "Screen: 'Garden of the Finzi-Continis,'" *New York Times*, December 17, 1971, 32.

⁴⁴ Giorgio's father: "...and the garden finally opened to everyone! Converted into a ghetto under their patronage!"

⁴⁵ One statement of De Sica gives evidence of how important this song was for him: "I am against music, except at a moment like the end of *The Garden of the Finzi-Continis* when we hear the Hebrew lament, but the producers always insist on it.", Cardullo 2002, 184.

⁴⁶ Wolske-Bulmahn 2003, 159; For the garden of the Villa Noailles, see: Dorothée Imbert, *The Modernist Garden in France* (New Haven/ London: Yale University Press, 1993), 130-139.

⁴⁷ Winfried Nerdinger, foreword to *Die Stadt des Monsieur Hulot. Jacques Tatis Blick auf die Moderne Architektur*, by ed. Winfried Nerdinger (München: Architekturmuseum, 2004), 5. The villa is a creation of the set Designer Jacques Lagrange and has been constructed at the Victorine studios. Bellos sees in the villa the American "International Style". David Bellos, *Jacques Tati* (London: Harvill Press, 2001), 206-207.

⁴⁸ For the ideology of the villa: Ackerman 1990, especially 10-14.

⁴⁹ Gaius Plinius Caecilius Secundus, *Epistulae*, ed. Selatie Edgar Stout (Bloomington: Indiana University Press 1962), Lib. V. 6. 45., translated by Ackerman 1990, 13.

⁵⁰ Ackerman 1990, 25.

⁵¹ The scene is shot at *Housing for the Elderly*, Alton West Estate, Roehampton (1957-1958). Built by the London County Council's architect's department housing division for the elderly.

⁵² Robert Beuka, *SuburbiaNation. Reading Suburban Landscape in Twentieth-Century American Fiction and Film* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan 2004).

⁵³ Aben and De Witt 1999, 143.

⁵⁴ Ackerman 1990, 17.

⁵⁵ Tati's movie has often been analyzed as a comedy on post-war reconstruction. E.g.: Kirstin Ross, "Starting Afresh: Hygiene and Modernization in Post War France," *October* 67 (1994): 22-57.

⁵⁶ Imbert 1993, 147-183.

⁵⁷ Christian Schmid, *Stadt, Raum und Gesellschaft. Henri Lefebvre und die Theorie der Produktion des Raumes* (München: Franz Steiner, 2005), 31-46.

⁵⁸ Michelangelo Antonioni, *Blow UP*, 1966.

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