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Review of the book
by Allan T. Shulman
and Randolph C.
Henning

Review of the book by Allan T. Shulman and Randolph C. Henning „The Discipline of Nature: Alfred Browning Parker Architect In Florida“

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The book “The Discipline of Nature: Alfred Browning Parker Architect in Florida” presents works and life of a prominent American architect Alfred Browning Parker on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of his birth. It consists of the detailed description of the different periods of the architect’s professional life; the memories of Randolph C. Henning, the author of the monograph about the works of Alfred Browning Parker; excerpt from Alfred Browning Parker office profile; and numerous sketches and photos of the projects.

The philosophy and specificity of Alfred Browning Parker works is very clearly described by Allan T. Shulman. Part I explains how Parker came to a paradigm for an architectural discipline derived from nature and it also presents five main principles of his work. Part II describes Parker’s early career which had an important influence on the development of the suburban residential houses and public buildings (schools). Part III elucidates the development of Parker’s philosophy – an organic approach that involves testing the boundaries between the modern and regional design and proposing various types of houses. Part IV presents the application of Parker’s organic principles on commercial and civic objects and at the scale of urban spaces. Part V describes Parker’s final insights and achievements of his activity seeking harmonious relationship between the human creation and the environment. The text is illustrated by numerous pictures of the Parker’s projects. The book captures attention and is well structured, circumstantially and consistently telling the story of the architect’s life. It also presents philosophical and ideological statements of sustainable development in the architectural design and urban planning both from historical (Vitruvius, The Ten Books on Architecture) and today’s relevance point of view, such as: “build strongly; build as directly as possible with no complications; use the materials at hand and keep these as few as you can; let your building love its site and glorify its climate; design for use – make it beautiful.”, “(...) man must constantly seek to live harmoniously in his environment. He must be a conservationist of both human and material resources.”, “(...) we need much less of “look at me” construction.”, etc.



In conclusion, it is certainly a valuable and interesting book not only as the book presenting the biography of the famous architect but also as the book presenting the main principles of sustainable and “good” architecture. It can even be considered as an ethical and professional guide both for the students of architecture and practicing architects.

Allan T. Shulman and Randolph C. Henning „*The discipline of nature: Alfred Browning Parker architect in Florida*” HistoryMiami Museum, 2016, ISBN 978-0-9896815-9-9, p. 105.

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Main research area

Landscape visual quality analysis, evaluation and regulation, methods of planned activity or object visual impact assessment, analysis of social preferences evaluating landscape visual quality and use of the analysis results in territory planning, evaluation of the potential of urban structures, research of cityscape identity, expression of sustainable development conception in architecture, landscape architecture, town and territory planning.

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