Green Spaces’ Period Of Evolution In The Municipality Of Sousse

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Abstract

Sousse is a city in the region of the Tunisian sahel and chief town of Gouvernorat. The study of the temporal evolution of its green policy makes it possible to identify the actions that led to its spatial dynamics, to be at the heart of society and to understand the cultural and symbolic values that contribute to the establishment of links and the emergence of a sense of belonging to particular areas of its territory.

Based on the study of written and iconographic documents. We find four periods of vegetation in the town of Sousse. First the pre-colonial period, then the colonial period, the period of the nineties (after the Rio 1992 summit) and finally the post-revolution period.

Keywords: urban landscape, urban planning, quality of life, sustainable development, governance, the municipality of Sousse.

1. Introduction

The green space provides several functions for the municipality of Sousse. It qualifies the urban space, increasing its economic and ecological value. In addition, they contribute to the establishment of social bonds and the emergence of a sense of belonging to particular areas of the territory. We adopt a multidisciplinary approach to position the reflection on the study of the temporal evolution of the green policy of the municipality of Sousse.

2. Methodology framework

In this research study, we mainly relied on reading all kinds of documents available, on observation and interpretation of the field. However, we can find traces of some iconographic sources for the city of Sousse through old postcards and views of the city.

3. Result and Discussion

3.1. Site Presentation

The town of Sousse, port city, enjoys a strategic position on the Mediterranean coast, halfway between the first two major cities of the country: Tunis and Sfax. (Figure N° 1: the geographical location of the municipality of Sousse).

Figure 1. The geographical location of the municipality of Sousse
3.1.1. The pre-colonial period (before 1882)

During this period, the Medina is essentially mineral (figure N° 2 and figure N° 3), the vegetation, when it exists, because of its intimacy and its small dimensions could not exceed the private function (Loukil, 2013).

Figure N° 2: La Medina est essentiellement minérale

Figure N° 3: Paysage agraire au alentour du Médina

Source (Ferdinand. Lop. 1921.P31)

The observation and analysis of the current Medina can trace questions to the past. Its alleys, with a fuzzy alignment, which maintains the element of mystery, the eye is attracted to a vanishing point and there are always a number of unexpected loopholes. In this environment, which is mainly mineral, vegetation is reduced to a few isolated species of palm, bitter orange, Bougainvillea glabra and Hedera helix (Figure 5, Figure N° 4 and Figure N° 6).

Figure N° 4, Figure N° 5 and Figure N° 6: la végétation dans la Médina est réduite à quelques points isolés
3.1.2. The colonial period

France colonized Tunisia in 1881. Gaston Loth 1906 described the embellishments of European Sousse "Outside the walls, along the sea, Europeans have built a city that is developing rapidly. Broad avenues, some walks planted with trees, a square where military music is heard, give this part of Sousse the appearance of a pretty French city "(Gaston Loth 1906. p222-223.

![Figure N°7:Embellishment of the city by the palm trees harbor area at the beginning of 20th century](Louis Olivier, 1895. Tunisia, p177)

"The arrival of the French in Tunis and their settlement in this city made it undergo a wonderful transformation: restoration of magnificent avenues, beautiful squares and walks soon showed what could be achieved in the country using new plants, appropriately chosen and cultivated "(Louis Olivier, 1895, 177).

Louis Olivier (1895, p.182) reported that the French colonizer practiced acclimatization of plants in Tunisia. Thus constitute, the Test Garden to provide ornamental trees necessary for the beautification of boulevards and avenues. Thus, a large variety of plants is introduced in Tunisia, these are mainly:

- The shade trees proper: Ficus Macrophylla, Ficus Nitida, false pepper (Schinus molle), Schinus terebinthifolius, Phytolaccodoioica, Indian lilac (Melia Azedarach), Grevillea robusta from Australia, Pavia Califormica.

- Palm trees, Pritchardia filifera and robust Cocos de Bonnet, C. feathery, C. Dal.

In addition, two institutions were created, one for agronomic training (E.C.A.T) and the other for the development of new plant species (Tunisian Agricultural and Botanical Service). These two institutions have, since independence, changed their name to INAT and INRAT.

In sum, during the French protectorate a functional landscape planning led to the creation of attractive green infrastructures (Donadieu and Rejeb, 2009).

In another vein, Leïla Ammar (2016), emphasizes that the local population has adapted with difficulty to this new way of life and the idea of the Europeans of a new city built and inhabited according to the canons of civilization modern. "... We are posing on the Place de la Marine at this time new benches. The model that was chosen is very solid and very practical. But the Arabs have not waited until the seals were finished, to lie on these benches as we usually see them. Could not we take a decree, as we did in Tunis last year, to prevent the transformation of these benches into real dormitories, to the detriment of tired walkers?"

With time and following this landscape policy developed on the model of the cities of the metropolis. The use of parks and public gardens in Tunisian cities has become a usual social practice. (Bouroui, M. 2000. Quoted by loukil, 2013).

During the French protectorate, through many postcards and views of the city of Sousse, we can report the presence of a typology of varied green space, we find:

- autonomous and collective landscaped areas: urban parks, gardens and neighborhood squares.
- Landscaping areas linked to equipment: school equipment, for example.
- Landscape spaces linked to infrastructure: road networks, railways, market places, streets, etc.
- Landscaped areas in residential area
- The municipal nursery of Sousse is created in 1940 on an area of 7000 m² (it is still functional).
- private gardens, municipal kindergarten;

Figure 8: Alignment trees in Jules Ferry Street, Circa 1900, Source : www.tunisie-cpa-1900.net

Figure N° 9: A functional landscape planning led to the creation of an attractive green infrastructure

Figure N° 10: Panorama near the Grand Hotel Figure N° 11: Alignment trees
Figure N° 12 Square Pichon 1910 was built between 1892 and 1898 (Ghanouchi, 2011)

Figure N°13 Public Garden and The Military Circle and the Street of Customs, offer a public space to city dwellers
With the advent of independence in 1956, the public authorities deliberately turned to a very urgent policy of reforestation, protection of areas threatened by erosion and the development of agricultural land. We are witnessing a slowdown in urban greening explained by economic priority at that time.

3.2. After the Rio Summit (1992)

After the Rio summit, the concept of green space is associated with the sustainable city and thus constitutes a key element to ensure the improvement of the urban living environment. Thus, the municipality of Sousse has benefited from several beautification projects.
3.2.1. The National Program for Monitoring Reforestation and Creating Green Spaces in Urban Areas

Table N° 1 illustrates the evolution of green space per capita rates in the commune of Sousse between 2005 and 2010. This evolution is slow given the importance of the actual population.

![Evolution of green space rates in the municipality of Sousse (m2 / inhabitant)](image)

**Figure N° 16 Evolution of the green area offered per inhabitant 2005-2010**

3.2.2. Promoting urban aesthetics

Efforts are being made to carry out several projects in the field of urban aesthetics, through the creation of several green spaces. Among which we can mention: The Sidi Edhaher green space, in 1996, on an area of 5000 m² (Figure N° 17) and the green space Khezema East in 1997 on an area of 13000 m² (Figure N° 18).

![Sidi Edhaher green area](image)

**Figure N° 17: Sidi Edhaher green area**
3.2.3. The National Program of the Boulevards of the Earth

This program consists of the development of the boulevards of the land in the communes and the chief towns of the governorates, Figure No. 19 represents the Boulevards of the Land of the municipality of Sousse.

Figure N° 19: Boulevards of the Earth of the municipality of Sousse

3.2.4. The National Program of the Boulevards of the Environment

Figure N° 20 represents the Boulevards of the environment of the municipality of Sousse.

Figure N° 20: Boulevard of the environment of the municipality of Sousse
3.2.5. The garden parks "Ibn El Jazzar".

The garden parks "Ibn El Jazzar" was created in 1993, on an area of 15000 m², in front of the hospital Farhat Hached, on the border between Jawhra Sousse and Sousse Medina. It has a strategic location, in the middle of the city. It contains a playground for children. Indeed, it has reputation as a merry-go-round and not a green space.

![Figure N°21.The gardenparcks « Ibn El Jazzar »](image)

3.2.6. HmadetEdouik Urban Park

The urban park HmadetEdouik, located in CitéSahloul, covers an area of 10.5 ha its development is completed in 2009.

![Figure N°23 : The UrbnParckHmadetEdouikin 2009](image)

3.3. After the revolution

After the revolution, the town of Sousse has redeveloped green spaces around the ramparts, as part of the beautification program of the city in 2016 (Figure n° 10: Green spaces around the ramparts). Also, it has done the development and planting of 3 ha in CitéErriadh V and a green area in CitéSahloulé with an area of about 4000 m², in collaboration with the works management (more than 1000 ornamental trees and 3000l² of grass) (Figure n° 12: A green zone with Sahloul city). During this period we are witnessing a new generation of green spaces that look like open gardens, these spaces profoundly change the image of the city.
Figure 24. Open green spaces around the ramparts

Figure N° 25. Green spaces in CitéErriadh

Figure 26. A green area in Sahloul city
Among the projects realized after the revolution is the project of creating green zones in tourist cities.

Figure N° 27. A green area in Sahloul city

Acknowledgements

"The tree seems to be this essential element to our comfort that brings something to the city, like a caress, a kindly thoughtfulness, in the midst of our authoritarian work" (Le Corbusier, 1925).

During the pre-colonial period (before 1982), the Medina of Sousse is essentially mineral, vegetation, is small in size could not exceed the private function. The French intervention in the city in 1895 is translated by embellishments of the European city with broad avenues, walks planted with trees, avenues, squares). In short, during the French protectorate a functional landscape planning led to the creation of attractive green infrastructures. Since the nineties, there has been a growing awareness of the need to consider the value of green space in improving living conditions in the municipality of Sousse. After the revolution, the town of Sousse redeveloped green spaces around the ramparts, Sahloul city and Erriadh city. During this period we are witnessing a new generation of green spaces that look like open gardens, which have profoundly changed the image of the city.

The public actions in urban greening in the town of Sousse is first of all the tradition of the town in terms of green space (begins in the colonial period) and refers to the concept of urban decor. Despite the initiatives undertaken by the municipality for the maintenance of its green spaces, either by its own means or through the partnership with the private sector. the intermittent maintenance and the non-involvement of the city dweller are the biggest challenges in the management of green spaces in the municipality.

References

