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INTRODUCTION

It is claimed that rural America is the ideal image of the America nation. However, the confrontation of America with the city forms another point of reference in considering the ideal of social life. The questions arise: how have Americans reacted to the rapid urbanization of their nation and how have they put their national design into real landscape? The recent growing public interest in the amenity of urban environment presents these questions to us.

Undoubtedly, Cities have a fascination, and at the same time, some unpleasant aspects. This is because the concentration of population and functions, as a symbol of prosperity, invites congestion as well and results in inevitable deterioration of the natural environment. Another
problem inherent to the public life is the growing number of immigrants. Deprived of opportunities for recreation and communication in open space, people are left alone in a flow of crowds. Therefore, the quality of urban life has always been a central question for the great American cities. Facing urbanization, Americans have not left their cities, but have made an effort to reform the conditions of urban areas. For instance, by introducing open space and rural landscape into cityscape, they have attempted to facilitate communication between citizens with different ethnic and cultural backgrounds. The very act of establishing urban parks is one of these countermeasures to revive weary cities. The creation of Central Park in the middle of 19th century was just such an epoch-making event in American history. In this reform, green space for pleasure and recreation was established for the people in New York City, America’s largest metropolis. As the first large park in America, Central Park exerted a great influence on the idea and design of the urban environment.

My main concern in this article is to analyze the foundation of Central Park from the viewpoint of urban reform movement and, above all, as an expression of nationalism in antebellum America. There are two reasons for this choice of viewpoint. First, there are tangible aspects of reform movement, for Central Park was based on a clear idea to improve the quality of urban life in New York. In other words, the elements of reform, such as purpose, process and products, are easily traced in this public project of New York City. Thus, the Central Park movement is influential enough to be examined as a pioneer of American cultural history. Second, it also reflects the social and intellectual environment at that period, in terms of urbanization, growing number of European immigrants, longing or European landscape fashion, the anti-slavery movement, and the social reform movement. Therefore, it is valuable to discuss this subject in this article in order to understand an image of the ideal America. To clarify the point, we can consider the founda-
tion of Central Park as reification of American nationalism. It is nothing but the landscape of the New World as an antithesis of European Societies.

The argument will be developed in three stages. The first chapter will be devoted to clarity how the need to reform the urban environment was recognized among New Yorkers. The second chapter will be on how the process of planning served to make their ideal a reality. In the third chapter, an evaluation of the products of Central Park will be presented. Through these steps, the meaning of Central Park as an urban reform in the search for a national landscape will be clarified. Further, it will make a considerable contribution to comprehend the American quest for Utopia in the urban context.

To anticipate the conclusion first, the making of Central Park is considered to be a dramatic crossing of conflicting ideas for national design: urban vs. pastoral, North vs. South, and America vs Europe. The result has been that always the former of these three pair concepts has been the eventual realization of American nationalism. Namely, this urban park in the American North was an ultimate landscape of nationalism in those days.

I. THE NEED TO REFORM NEW YORK CITY

Every social reform movement begins by asking one simple question: what is wrong with the status quo? The case of the Central Park movement was not an exception. In fact, it started with a discovery of the existing gap between the ideal state and the real condition of New York City. Then, through the activity of publicizing, opinion leaders evoked an awareness among New York citizens which led to a certain consensus to make an urban park. The central theme in this chapter is to trace how the necessity of reform was recognized in New York City.

In the middle of the 19th century, America faced an accelerating urbani-
zation. The trend was most apparent in New York City. Its geographic location along the Atlantic Coast served as a favorable factor for it to become a trading port. Just as with various foreign commodities, a high proportion of European immigrants flowed into the New World’s great commercial center. In 1850, the population of New York was over seven hundred thousand. Surprisingly, it was more than triple of the beginning of the century. By the time of the Civil War about one million people had settled in the city. The resulting congestion was shown, for example, by the density of the seven lower wards of Manhattan. In the period from 1820 to 1850, it increased from 94.5 to 163.5 persons per acre. Moreover, in accordance with the increase of immigrants, the cellar-dwelling population in New York amounted to 29,000.

In proportion to the growing population, the urban environment deteriorated. It was congestion and overcrowdedness which made city life intolerable. The residents in New York city were exhausted in both physical and mental senses. This was, firstly, because of epidemics caused by inadequate sanitation.

Mud was common, because the streets were not usually paved, and swallowing in the mud were the herd of wild pigs that ate the garbage of the local citizenry. Without a garbage collection agency, residents would throw their garbage out into the streets and wait for the pigs to eat it. One New York resident commented that after the snowfall the mud, garbage, and manure were joined together in one huge mess, and left for weeks together on the sides of the streets.¹

The absence of sewage facilities, and the careless deposition of fecal materials made New York unhealthy. In short, filth and dreadful urban diseases were the result of congestion. This notion is supported by statistical evidence, demonstrating the physical dangers of urban concentration, which was published by the British government in 1848 in The
Health of Towns Report.

Another problem in New York City was declining public order. Most of the newcomers from Europe had difficulty in finding a job in the New World. Actually, 86 percent of the paupers in New York were those immigrants. The growth of poverty meant an increase in crime. It was in sordid and degrading slums where many of the immigrants stagnated. As a result, such places became notorious districts with gangs, criminals and lawlessness. Further, many immigrants, with their different backgrounds, lacked unity. It was hard for them to have consciousness of themselves as American citizens.

Also, green open space and recreational opportunities decreased in this area. By this time, Manhattan Island had only a few squares for citizens to meet and get together. It was the increasing density and mass in megalopolis which deprived them of natural places for rest and relaxation.

Except for City Hall Square, the Battery (a former military field), and a few squares such as Madison Park, there were no places for outdoor public recreation. Acreage devoted to public open space actually decreased by fifteen per cent between 1800 and 1850, as residential squares were sold by the city or private proprieties for commercial use.²

The lack of public open space was a serious defect in community life, because such open space had a significant role to play in enhancing the city's livability. It was more than just providing natural beauty, or mere leisure, or the means for maintenance of health. It was the life of New York City itself. As August Heckscher argues:

What is expressed in open spaces is the essential quality of urban life—its casualness and variety, its ability to crystallize community feeling. People find in outdoor meeting places the
chance to sense what is going on, to test the mood of the community, to mingle and communicate. Life deprived of these outdoor extensions would lack much of the vitality and savor we associate with city dwelling.\(^3\)

It was evident that the urban environment of New York City was in a serious condition and had bad effects on people's lives. To be more specific, degradation of sanitary conditions, moral order, and natural pleasure grounds were considered as the unfavorable products of congestion. Apparently, the physical and mental health of the public declined. Above all, there were few opportunities to develop community feeling and the increasing numbers of immigrants with different backgrounds felt divided. The situation was far from an ideal of city life. The Central Park movement originated from such a social condition in the middle of the 19th century. In other words, the proposal to make a pleasure ground for the city crowd aimed at reforming the miserable situation in New York City.

This movement in the 1840's and 1850's was well-organized by strong civic leaders, and romantic writers such as Washington Irving. Above all, William Cullen Bryant and Andrew Jackson Downing were those who made the greatest contribution by publicizing this proposal. On July 3, 1844 the campaign began with Bryant, a prominent romantic poet, through his strong editorial voice in *The New York Evening Post*. In his first related editorial, "A New Park", he proposed to acquire park space in New York City. In 1845, this first influential advocate of a large urban park also wrote from England, renewing the proposal:

> The population of your city, increasing with such prodigious rapidity; your sultry summers, and the corrupt atmosphere generated in hot and crowded streets, make it a cause of regret that in laying our New York, no preparation was made, while it was yet practicable, for a range of parks and public gardens. ...
There are yet unoccupied lands on the island which might, I suppose, be procured for the purpose, and which, on account of their rocky and uneven surfaces, might be laid out into surpassingly beautiful pleasure-grounds; but while we are discussing the subject the advancing population of the city in sweeping over them and covering them from our reach.4

The need for a large public park was strongly shown by two visible phenomena. One was the filling of rural cemeteries with New Yorkers, and the other was the very existence of large beautiful parks in European cities.

The popularity of urban cemeteries reflected people's longing for green open space in this overcrowded city. Many visitors enjoyed themselves in the rural surroundings of such large cemeteries as Greenwood in Brooklyn, which introduced European landscape design and fashion. Another civic figure, Downing, an editor of The Horticulturist, supported Bryant especially by emphasizing this point. In his opinion, "in the absence of great public gardens"5 the rural cemetery design had succeeded in attracting visitors with its high level of landscape beauty. According to his estimate, those who visited Greenwood Cemetery amounted to 80,000 during 9 months in 1848. From this experience, he offered the idea, "But does not this general interest, manifested in these cemeteries, prove that public gardens, established in a liberal and suitable manner, near our large cities, would be equally successful?"6 His conclusion was to learn from these cemeteries and to establish a regular public park:

Let our people once see for themselves the influence for good which it (a regular park) would effect, and I feel confident that the taste for public pleasure-grounds, in the United States, will spread as rapidly as possible as that for cemeteries has done.......
Also, the parks in Europe were often referred to in discussing the necessity of New York City park. "A Talk About Public Parks and Gardens" in October, 1848 was such an essay in The Horticulturist, in which Downing argued that American cities lacked parks in contrast to London, Paris, Frankfurt and other cities in Europe which were famous with their beautiful parks. Coming away from England, he had a strong conviction that there was an urgent necessity for public open space in his own country. Such a feeling was well depicted in his writing in The Horticulturist in 1850:

I will merely say... that every American who visits London... feels mortified that no city in the United States has a public park — here so justly considered luxury and necessity in a great city. What are called parks in New York, are not even apologies for the things; there are only squares or paddocks.\

The very existence and design of such cemeteries and European Parks exerted a strong influence on people in the movement and, moreover, on their conception of the new ideal park. They held two principles in their vision of the park. The first was a green, rural park as "lungs" or "ventilators" which would absorb and dispell the impurities of the urban environment. They confirmed the role of the park from cemeteries. This was to provide a natural and healthy pleasure-ground for New Yorkers’ longing for peaceful opportunities which was the virtue of rural community life. For that purpose, the park should be large enough. The second principle was a public park based on democratic rule. In the old world, it was often the case that such gardens were owned by the privileged, and designed chiefly for their own pleasure.

In America, however, the new park was to be established for the citizens. It was the common people who should enjoy and manage it. Recognizing these two principles, they proposed to acquire some 500 acres for a large, public park in New York. The publicizers’ campaign
from the 1840's had succeeded in obtaining people's consent on this subject. The result was a loud demand for reform. By the mayoral election of 1851, the proposed park had become a major political issue. With the support of newly elected Mayor A.C. Kingsland, much discussion on the new park took place. Afterwards, on November 17, 1853, the taking of 624 acres (its ultimate size was to be 840 acres) between 59th and 106th Streets was authorized. At the same time, work began on Central Park with the appointment of an independent Park Commission responsible for the project at the expense of citizens' taxes. In 1856, when the Central Park land became available, a consulting board of prominent citizens was also created, with Washington Irving as its first president. This was the moment when a consensus on Centual Park developed among publicizers, citizens, and administrators. In other words, the necessity for urban reform was recognized when city life was declining. Their first step was to make consensus to establish a green, public park in New York City. It was, however, just a beginning. There was a long way to go in order to realize the ideal of Central Park.

II. PLANNING CENTRAL PARK

Planning was the second step in this urban reform. The obscure idea of Central Park was refined into a clear concept in this process. At the same time, the purpose of the movement itself was recognized well through seeking a practical measure to meet the need. This chapter will focus on a couple of planners, Olmsted and Vaux, because their ideas on Central Park were undoubtedly an essential element in this reform.

On September 11, 1857, Frederick Law Olmsted was appointed as superintendent of construction of the New York Park Commission with the endorsement of Washington Irving. Born as the son of a privileged merchant in New England, in 1822, this writer on agriculture was only 34 years old at that time. His strong interest in nature was formed in
his childhood through travelling extensively with his family. This encouraged him to study agricultural science and engineering at Yale University. His weak eyesight, however, made his college education brief. He worked on a farm and a nursery on Staten Island and, after 1848, wrote on farming and horticulture for several magazines. The intellectual atmosphere of utopia socialism in New York influenced his idea of city improvement through public institutions.

Moreover, what intensified his concern about social reform was two travel experiences. First, his walking tour through England and Western Europe around 1850 was a kind of turning point of his life. Strongly impressed by the English parks and gardens, he published his *Walks and Talks of an American Farmer in England* in 1852. Particularly, the man-made pastoral landscape in the "People’s park" in Birkenhead remained in his mind and later became a model vision of Central Park. At the same time, he profited from the various foreign reform experiments in England and Western Europe while obtaining an international scope for critical problems such as urbanization, poverty, and crime.

Another influential experience was a series of tours through the South in the rising antislavery campaign in the 1850’s. At the invitation of *The New York Times*, he travelled to present outstanding descriptions on southern life and the effect of slavery there. As a result, he recognized the necessity to enhance the Northern city as the setting of democracy and American civilization in contrast to the slavery of the South.

Through these experiences, he extended his concern from scientific agriculture to other social problems such as urban reform.

Another important person in constructing Central Park was Calvert Vaux. He was a talented English landscape architect and, subsequently, a partner of Olmsted. Born in England in 1824, he was apprenticed George Truefitt, a famous London architect, after his graduation from the Merchant-Tailors School. On his trip to observe masterpieces of architecture in England, he was fascinated by various public recreation
grounds in many cities. They recalled his past enthusiasm about the parks in his home town of London. This experience became a direct motive which sent him to the Continent to study other models of royal gardens. It was Downing, one of the publicizers, who in 1850 found young Vaux in London. As a well-trained architectural assistant, Vaux accompanied him to America and later formed a partnership with him.

In 1858, on the very day of the appointment of Olmsted, the commissioners announced the open competition for the design of the park. At the time, the most likely winning plan was one by Egbert Viele, chief engineer of the commission. He had surveyed the topography of the side, and also prepared a general plan for the development of the park. Carrying on the practice after Downing’s death, Vaux had an intense interest in the progress of the park for which his patron had carried out a passionate campaign. For Vaux, Viele’s plan appeared to be a "manifest defect" and a disgrace to New York City and to Downing’s memory.

When he decided to enter the contest, with a strong sense of purpose, Vaux needed Olmsted’s help. On this occasion, Olmsted was the very person to be his partner. Vaux met him during Downing’s lifetime. It was an undeniable fact that this young superintendent, being on the site everyday, could provide "accurate observation with regard to the actual topography, which was not clearly defined on the survey furnished to competitors by the Board", as Vaux wrote. Olmsted, at first, hesitated to accept his proposal, since Viele, his superior in the Commission, was known to be one of the competitors. Moreover, awaiting him was the task of superintendent as the initial preparation work and the management of organizing the large labor force. Persuaded by Vaux, he eventually joined him to prepare a design for a very real development of Central Park.

Their success was dramatic. In April 1858, their plan under the title of "Greensward" won the contest among 35 drawings submitted to the commissioners. Of course, it meant a rejection of the Viele plan. As
soon as the winning plan was announced on April 28, *The Times* approved "Greensward" by writing such passages as:

There can be little doubt that in its essential features the plan of Messrs. Olmsted and Vaux embraces all the leading requisites of a great Park... adapted not only to the nature of the particular grounds in question, but to the prospective wants of our city also... we fortunately possess in Mr. Olmsted a Superintendent capable of carrying out our wishes, and honest enough to be safely entrusted with our interests.\(^1\)

This design of "Greensward" expressed a direct influence of Downing's ideal vision of a rural, democratic park in the city. It represented Vaux and Olmsted's respect to this pioneer of Central Park movement. In fact, this late patron was always in their mind in preparing their plan "for the site of 770 acres (150 of which were preserved for the Croton reservoirs), about 2-1/2 miles long by 1/2 mile wide."\(^2\) Their ideal landscape of a quiet focal place for people was well depicted in this extract from Downing's essay:

In that area there would be space enough to have broad reaches of park and pleasure grounds, with a real feeling of the breath and beauty of green fields, the perfume and freshness of nature. In its midst would be located the great distributing reservoirs of the Croton aqueduct, formed into lovely lakes of limpid water, covering many acres, and heightening the charm of the sylvan accessories by the finest natural contrast. In such a park the citizens who would take excursions in carriages or on horse back could have the substantial delights of country roads and country scenery and forget for a time the rattle of the pavements and the glare of brick walls. Pedestrians would find
quiet and secluded walks when they wished to be solitary, and
broad alleys filled with thousands of happy faces when they
would be gay. The thoughtful denizen of the town would go
out there in the morning, to hold converse with the whispering
trees, and the weary tradesmen in the evening, to enjoy an
hour of happiness by mingling in the open space with all the
world. (Underlined by the present writer)"

What was required of them in the contest was to renew Downing's
beautiful scenery to fit the several conditions posed by the first public
park in New York. Every design had to provide for the following features:
four or more fairly direct crossings from east to west; a parade ground
of 20 up to 40 acres; three playgrounds of 3 up to 10 acres each; sites for
hall for exhibition or concert, for one ornamental fountain, and for one
prospect tower; one site and one design of flower garden of 2 or 3
acres; and a place to be flooded in winter for one skating ground. The
total expenditure allowed for construction was limited to 1-1/2 millions
of dollars.

Their plan was excellent. All these elements were harmoniously laid
out. Their conception of the use of the park land was, first of all, to
"compose a wood-side, screening incongruous objects without the park
as much as possible from the view of observers within it", for the seclu-
sion from urban crowds; secondly, to "compose tranquil, open, pasto-
ral scenes" which provide citizens with all the joys of rural community
life; and thirdly, to form passages of scenery contrasting of obscurity
and picturesque character of detail with the softness and simplicity of
open landscape". It was their creativity which integrated Downing's
idea and the beautiful English park tradition into a new vision. In addition
to their consideration of style, the design also showed an insight on
the future development of the city. As the name "Central Park" implied,
the park would be eventually at the center of a growing population
extended around it.

The reward of this contest was not only the premium of 2,000 dollars. Vaux and Olmsted were appointed to carry out this plan. On May 17, 1858, Olmsted was named architect-in-chief. His responsibility was not limited to that of the designers. All duties to employ and direct labor and to police the park were to fall to him. The position of his former superior Viele was abolished. Instead, Olmsted’s newly created office absorbed when the completion of Central Park on the "Greensward" plan was authorized. The construction then began.

In summary, the motif of a rural, democratic spacious garden in New York City which originated with Downing and other citizens was carefully expanded by two planners, Olmsted and Vaux, who observed the meaning of New York urban reform in relation to Europe and the American South. In other words, the necessity for Central Park was crystallized in the form of the "Greensward" plan. Thus, urban reform in New York City had come to the end of its second stage.

III. PRODUCTS OF CENTRAL PARK

An evaluation of social reform movement will be presented in this chapter which will clarity what has been done and what has been brought about by constructing Central Park. Comparison between the original ideal and the real features of the park, namely the relation between the rural ideal and the urban reality, will be a good measure to judge the real value of this urban reform movement.

What was required of an urban park in New York was not simple. It was to be aesthetic and practical. As it was to be a work of landscape art, charming passages of scenery were to be self-evident. Also, Olmsted believed that active recreational features and sublime air were to be provided to enhance people’s ethics. Utility was another element to be considered. Under the social conditions of growing New York,
the role of the urban park was also to enhance the safety and convenience of city living.

Central Park fully responded to such aesthetic and practical needs, as may be shown by several examples. First of all, by respecting the natural topography of the site, a variation of landscape was available at less cost. The site was divided into two equal portions north and south of the reservoir. The upper or northern portion, between the Croton reservoir and 106th Street (later extended to 110th Street) was "bold and sweeping". Its rugged character was retained to present a striking contrast to the feature of the city. The lower portion, below 86th Street, was much more heterogeneous. The most prominent feature was the long, rocky and wooded hill-side just south of the Reservoir.

The central and western part was an irregular plateau. The eastern part was graceful, undulating land adapted to lawn and gardenesque treatment. The south end had some flat meadow with several rocky cliffs. In accordance with this topography, they constructed Central Park with careful treatment. The importance of preserving these features was well acknowledged by them:

The time will come when New York will be built up, when all the grading and filling will be done, and the picturesquely-varied, rocky formation of the Island will have been converted into formations for rows of monotonous straight streets, and piles of its present varied surface, with the single exception of the few acres contained in the Park. The priceless value of the present picturesque outlines of the ground will be more distinctly perceived, and the adaptability for its purpose more fully recognized. It, therefore, seems desirable to interfere with its easy, undulating outlines and picturesque, rocky scenery as little as possible, and, on the other hand, to endeavor rapidly, and by every legitimate means to increase and judiciously develop
these particularly individual and characteristic sources of landscape effect.\textsuperscript{16}

Another characteristic example was the traffic system in the park. The separation by grades of various forms of circulation and the sunken transverse roads were not only convenient but also gave citizens a taste of seclusion in rural surroundings. Increasing commercial cross-park traffic would become an obstacle in the pastoral scene. Therefore, they provided completely separate systems for carriages, horseman, pedestrians and ordinary street traffic by making carriage drives, bridlepaths (horse-ways), footways and the transverse road. At all intersections, underpasses served for avoiding conflicts. For that purpose, what was created was the sunken roadway which dropped the traffic below eye level to avoid visual intrusion.

"The value of these grade separations", as Olmsted and Vaux wrote, "lies...chiefly in the freedom from distraction and in the greater comfort for people who have come to the park for its enjoyment."\textsuperscript{17} It was because Olmsted believed that "to the visitor, carried by occasional defiles (narrow ways) from one field to another, ...the extent of the park is practically much greater than it would otherwise be."\textsuperscript{18}

In terms of recreation, Central Park was the place which could provide all three kinds of enjoyment. The first one was the aesthetic and mental pleasure given by a variety of beautiful rural scenes. The second one was the physical enjoyment made available by active recreation facilities and sports. The third one was the social enjoyment given by a strong sense of companionship and by the opportunities to strengthen community feeling.

For that purpose, the Park was filled with amusements. A series of open and closed vistas through various topographies, and the sunken transverse road were for the rest and refreshment of visitors' eyes. Specially-created ponds were provided where people could enjoy boating
and swimming. The playgrounds were opened for sportive children. Riders and hikers enjoyed themselves exercising in meandering trails across the park. For more social communication, the park’s mall and fountain were constructed as focal points. Citizens could meet, talk and listen to concerts there. What Olmsted wished was to "provide all the forms of recreation which the community owes to its members." Therefore, he attempted" to segregate these areas and to develop them, each for its own function."

Among the many elaborate details in the park, a total atmosphere of rural environment in the process of construction. In their effort to present a pastoral scene, for example, they minimized artificial buildings in the Mall. This treatment was based on the following idea.

We feel that the interest of the visitor … should concentrate on features of natural, in preference to artificial, beauty. Many elegant buildings may be appropriately erected for desirable purposes in a public park, but we conceive that all such architectural structures should be confessedly subservient to the main idea, and that nothing artificial should be obtruded on the view as an ultimatum interest. The idea of the park itself should always be uppermost in the mind of the beholder."

A strong rural tone in these features did not mean "anti-urban" in Olmsteds’ understanding. In his article in 1870, he supported continuing urbanization since it was closely related to advancing concepts of freedom, culture, and general prosperity. For Olmsted, the city was not only an inevitable thing, but also basically good thing. Especially by preparing "for a continued rising of the townward flood", people could make better cities. Parks were the very means of strengthening community feeling at the center of the city, for they would preserve the physical and social health and would unite citizens through equal opportunities
for recreation. In this way, an ideal democracy, born in rural America, should adapt itself to real city life, which become the typical setting of American civilization. As he wrote in "The Beginning of Central Park":

> Our country has entered upon a stage of progress in which its welfare is to depend on the convenience, safety, order and economy of life in its great cities. It cannot prosper independently of them; cannot gain in virtue, wisdom, comfort, except as they also advance.²⁹

Therefore, unlike transcendentalists, the main concern of Olmsted was a concrete urban reform through the medium of nature. It was to make a rural, democratic park for urban people in New York. His idea was strengthened when he saw fifty thousand people in Central Park at one time. Where else could so many be found together, "With an evident glee in the prospect of coming together, all classes represented ... each individual adding by his mere presence to the pressure of all others ... ?"²⁴, he wrote. In brief, the emphasis on a rural environment in his park derived from its urban utility. According to Lewis Mumford, "he naturalized the city, by making nature urban."²⁵

In spite of engineering problems and political interference, the success of Central Park was evident. In 1862, its first year of operation, it attracted 25,000 visitors a day. Over 4 million visitors in 1863, 7.5 million in 1865, and nearly 11 million in 1871 were recorded. The rich and the poor equally enjoyed the elegant charm in "the first real park in this country", which was "a democratic development of the highest significance."²⁶ Its popular success exerted an immediate influence on the large population of New Yorkers who had never experienced such an opportunity for recreation. Also, the very word "park" appeared in an American encyclopedia for the first time. It was in Olmsted’s article for the 1861 edition of Appleton’s New American Cyclopedia. Central Park was not
only of benefit to New York City. Its aesthetic and functional achievement also become a great model for many urban parks in America.

It sum, by constructing Central Park, the ideal of urban reform came true. The achievement was beyond expectation. With its aesthetic value and practical functions, Central Park was recorded as the first reputable urban park in American history.

CONCLUSION

The establishment of Central Park can be evaluated as an early model of urban reform in term of American Nationalism. It is the first substantial reaction of American to the surge of urbanization and to the transformation of their nation in the context of transnational migration. Therefore, this urban reform is more than a historical event, especially for us inquiring about the urban in the age of globalizing tendency of population and communication.

The development of the Central Park movement was bold as well as careful. The purpose of this reform was to enhance urban life and create a national landscape by means of providing a large, green park at the center of New York City. Facing the reality of increasing urbanization in the industrializing of New York, Americans strove to realize their ideal vision of the urban park reflecting their rural dream and pride in democratic America which would differentiate themselves from aristocratic Europe. In the process, first, the necessity of an urban park was recognized. It was Downing, Bryant, and other opinion leaders who made a great contribution to arouse public interest, and to form a consensus for reform. Secondly, the idea was crystallized into "Greensward" plan by Olmsted and Vaux. These two planners created an "American" urban park recognizing the importance of city improvement and the contradictions observed in the American South and Europe. Finally, construction made it Central Park a real symbol of urban America,
for it was open to general public. What Central Park represented was the equal opportunities and the synthesis of the city and the virtue of rural communities.

The product of Central Park was substantial. This first park in America was aesthetic and practical. It served as a provider of mental, physical, and social recreation to New Yorkers. Not only its popularity, but also its influence on other American urban parks should be noted.

However, it is wrong to think of its success as a past event. "After Reform" is also an important element to evaluate a certain kind of reform movement. Central Park is not an exceptional case. As a pioneer, it has been the fate of Central Park to face various problems inherent in urban parks in the first place. For example, administration, preservation, maintenance, and policing of the park system is one of the most controversial points. Time has passed and social conditions and people's ideas have changed since the foundation of Central Park. Increasing demand for more recreational facilities contradicts the original concern to preserve the natural topography. Frequent crimes in the park have become another problem. Therefore, it has now become a mission to fight these challenges of the present urban society.

In spite of all these, Central Park still shines in the history of urban America. Its high ideal and careful practice should be highly evaluated. This urban reform, namely, the establishment of Central Park, is all the more instructive to us in considering how to achieve a better urban life in the present time. Lastly, as urban reform movement in the international context, Central Park forms a critical subject in the American quest for Utopia. In terms of an affirmation of the city as the place of American life, and of the mediation of the rural, democratic ideal with the urban condition, Central Park can be regarded as landscape of American Nationalism in the history of Euro-American relations.
NOTE


5. Ibid., p. 330.

6. Ibid.

7. Ibid.

8. Ibid., p. 331.


11. Ibid., p. 137.


13. Ibid.


17. Olmsted and Vaux's original report, quoted in *Forty Years of Land-

20. Ibid.
25. Ibid.

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Julius Gy Fabos et. al. Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr.: Founder of Landscape Architecture in America (Amherst, Mass.: Univ. of Massachusetts Press, 1908), n. pag.
A Carrier and Ives print of a winter scene in Central Park in 1868. Left: roads across but not giving access to Central Park were articulated by underpasses. This system was for the convenience of users of the park, and it is a sad comment on progress in the hundred years following the adoption of this idea, that even now we are only beginning to see its convenience, its necessity. Below: Central Park Lake: The Prospect Tower and the Ramble in the background of a summer scene.

A winter view of the scene at the foot of the facing page, from a higher viewpoint. Below: Central Park, looking south. The Ramble is in the foreground, the Mall in the centre of the view. The fringes of the park are only partially built on as yet.

Chadwick, op. cit. pp. 200-201.