

landscape research extra 75

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Breakfast on the 83rd floor.

Not the alluring mist of a September morning but the haze of a Chinese city (Shanghai) at sunrise. I might wish to impress you by claiming that the two images and the close access to this very modern landscape, were mine — experienced by me, photographed by me — but I cannot.

As places they appall me, while as landscapes, even citiscapes in the true sense of the word, they leave me floundering. How to describe such a place? Does one have to fall back on the Manhattan Mapping idea (Becky Cooper *Mapping Manhattan*: — discussed in Prof Goodey's review see notes below) where remembered places and emotional experiences substitute for geographic realism. Alternatively that



frequently referenced street- by- street mapping by Charles Booth 1889 of wealth, poverty and destitution?

I think what appals me is that these images (of Chinese high rise cities) portray a structure of immense wealth — intricate, anonymous and more or less untraceable — while in there and amongst the powerful structures is a micro-organismal world of poverty allied with ambition, a measure of criminality, some success and a lot of despair.

It may be, of course it is, that I have only three words of Chinese, a thin wallet, and am unable to direct a taxi or read a street name. I recognise too that I am claustrophobic even at an English railway station.

I have spent a week or two in Beijing but there I had a guide who had lived there three years - my garage friends in village England call him Sun Yung Won and he knew what he was doing. I hated but felt reassured by the fact that there were three internal ring roads; I revelled in the single storey housing which at that date was being progressively eliminated but represented village life and understandable places, little clearings in woodlands of medium high rise. Hong Kong, I feel might offer some understandable edges: the sea, the mountains perhaps a notable green-space. But the Shanghai of this picture frightens me. Its layout is terribly intricate at ground level. It is dark in its own shadows. Above ground it sprouts — another further world of intricacy - like seedlings competing for sunlight. A landscape to coordinate in three dimensions, or layers of landscape that one will never know how to interpret. Perhaps Becky Cooper's *Manhattan* idea is the way to (mentally) map landscapes when line work, boundaries and multi layered hierarchical descriptors fail.

For fifty plus years I have grappled with London and in the last 10 with Boston and they say of London that it is a city of villages. I 'speak London' and can hear London spoken. I know how to think about villages and to navigate them. I can interpret London's built forms. I am even getting the hang of Boston, principally by using the 74/75 bus out of Belmont, and the T and by connecting Boston Downtown - not too large - with MIT and Harvard Square with bits of suburbs mechanically announced at each bus stop. I have not had to comprehend very much of the

third dimension - the vertical sprouting of real estate onto immensely valuable city lots. But that does not worry me there: Shanghai from the 83rd floor is different.

I am a country boy who finds cities fascinating. Clearly I find it difficult to deal with the vertical complexity of high rise cities. So let me tell you about my latest daring exploits into three small towns in Eastern England - places I understand.

Notes

Becky Cooper *Mapping Manhattan: A Love (and Sometimes Hate) Story in Maps by 75 New Yorkers*, New York: Abrams Image, 2013.

From Goodey about the above: '*At its most frightening, 'place-making', which is a strong current theme in official British urban design practice, consists of superficially understanding the essence of a place, mapping development with this superficiality to the fore, and marketing a new development with stylistic tags that suggest rootedness. What Cooper's revelation tells us that it is the myriad of human experiences, seldom built-form-related, that make those places which we share in conversation (and on these maps) with others. It is these rather than the clean-limbed images of a new morphology.*'

TOWNSCAPES IN THE EASTERN SHIRE COUNTIES.

At a late stage in my career I decide to visit a company with whom I do some business. There is a cluster of such companies in the Leicester area. This

one (Bluesky) produces the kind of plane based aerial imagery used in Google Maps where it is called 'Satellite'. A truly satellite based company (Airbus Defence and Space) has its HQ close by.

My meeting is in **Coalville** but seems an unpromising place to spend the night so we book into **Warwick** and this is the first of a series of smaller towns that we investigate on a circuit that takes in **Market Harborough** (Leics), **St Ives** (Huntingdon) and **Saffron Walden** (Essex).

We are looking for those special qualities that endear us to small towns. They should have complexity yet be readable, they should be intricate in detail, they should offer surprises, whether of shops discovered or open spaces suddenly come upon. They should offer the fourth dimension of history, the history of stability and change: the many different epochs of building style, the infills and changed uses, the scale changes, the sudden breaks. This then is what makes small towns so satisfying and it is in part a detective game appealing to the mind, in part a set of changing moods each part promotes. As an illustration look at the following.

Warwick, wonderful castle but access denied by vulgarly styled retail approach combined with high *Thuya* tree screens. Best seen from below in Mill Street. Not a bad high street - space and mood - separated into two parts by the East Gate: one part small shop retail, the second part more restrained more elegant and less interesting. This second terminates in the Leicester Hospital a timber framed cluster of buildings adjoining the West Gate. Just off this is the Market area (Place?



Square?) which is a huge disappointment: an example of what can be done by poor planning and worse architecture to eviscerate what may have been a run down but interesting place. The County Offices and library is a notably awful 1960s block (more precisely 1958 and 1966) which my mind's eye sees blasted into small fragment in a controlled explosion. It was from those offices that I received my University grant in 1958. We walked into the town centre from the Victorian villa zone before the railway line and a spacious park (St Nicolas). Too much space too few trees.

And then there was **Coalville** within the abandoned Leicestershire coalfield I would draw a rather glum description of this town inasmuch as it is not Market Harborough which is the next place visited.

The centre of **Market Harborough** is a delight. We stopped to buy food. We sat and ate purchased goodies on a bench overlooking the River Welland — a mere trickle of a river but treated with great attention to its bankside vegetation. Top marks! We were in a little park alongside the river and school children on holiday came past in groups. Dogs on leads investigated our food wrappers. The centre of town is 100 yards from a cluster of large food stores and their parking which you might think would ruin it. But no. The shops are only a short step from the Market Square, past an ancient Yew Tree (of the kind I often call venerable). An immediate feeling of good history, good space, few intrusive elements. A huge but attractive Victorian building behind the impressive church of St Dionysius. A dear little stilted wool market. Up the broad street to the north west a variety of houses and shops in red brick or stucco that makes this writer's heart sing. And at the end



of this street before the urban break — for there was an illusion of countryside beyond — a Georgian red brick house closing off the street space - unconsciously good design. Market Harborough has a history of weaving of wool and silk, 'of tammy and shalloon' and of the other rural industries like brewing. A town centre based on rural wealth. A place to admire.

We went on to **St Ives**, stayed at the 18th century Golden Lion in the Market Street/Sheep Street, crossed the ancient bridge (1442) over the Great Ouse at sundown — it is very wide here, water levels controlled — admired the wonderful frontages in this old part of town, but to the south side of Bridge Street were astonished at the spawn-spread of hairdressers, nail bars, sun tanning, and depilatory shops along this street; these interspersed with all manner of narrow frontaged global takeaways. Not a normal shop among all these. What does this say of a population which incidentally spreads out over several square miles of suburban development? Very 21st century so seek historic reassurance in the dark tree-gloomed churchyard of All Saints which closes this street off.

Saffron Walden another time but here regale yourself with one building top right — seriously chocolate box!

Now consider my response to Shanghai or Hong Kong: photos of those cities by William Young.

Notes

My 'wool market' in Market Harborough turns out to be early grammar school.

The huge Victorian Building was built to accommodate factory production of Symington's soups based on pea flour. It is now refurbished as council offices.

And top right, a first class chocolate box image of a one time industrial building in Saffron Walden. Timber framed highly imageable but only a part of a complex small town.



IN MEMORY OF GARY FRY

This note came to me from Wenche Dramstad via Maggie Roe who also sent me a photograph taken by Richard Hobbs.

"It is with great sadness I have to tell you that Gary Fry has passed away, after a long illness, at the age of 68. Gary was for many of us a very good tutor and an excellent researcher in the landscape area, especially focusing on multifunctional landscapes and inter-



and transdisciplinary research. He suffered from a severe form of Alzheimer's disease that forced him into a premature retirement. I'm sure we are many who will remember Gary for his enthusiasm, his funny stories and his fun-loving attitude to life".

The views and opinions in this publication are those of the contributing authors and the senior editor individually and do not necessarily agree with those of the Group.

This particularly applies to land ownership and geo-political opinion

It is prepared by Bud and Rosemary Young for the Landscape Research Group and distributed four times a year to members worldwide. It is also to be found on the Group's Website

www.landscaperesearch.org

under 'publications'.

It forms a companion to LRG's refereed journal, Landscape Research. Editorial enquiries for LRExtra contact young@airphotointerpretation.com For the refereed journal Landscape Research contact Editor Dr Anna Jorgensen a.jorgensen@sheffield.ac.uk

THE SOUTH WEST COAST PATH THROUGH THE EYES OF A PRINT MAKER



I am a landscape artist and for me place is paramount. Understanding the anatomy of a landscape by spending large amounts of time in it is the foundation on which I build my bodies of work. In 2012 I embarked on a three year project to walk the South West Coast Path that runs from Minehead in Somerset, through Devon and Cornwall, to Poole in Dorset. Covering a distance of six hundred and thirty miles, it is the longest National Trail in the country. With one hundred and fifteen thousand feet of ascent and descent it is also a very challenging walk. The physical demands were something that I looked forward to, having an excuse to walk even more than usual, and call it 'work'.



I got myself fit on Dartmoor as I didn't coast path close to home. However, I did find that Dartmoor was remarkably flat compared to the coast. The first week on the path in Somerset and then into North Devon was extremely hard going but, on reflection, the physicality of the terrain definitely affected how I made the sketches and portrayed the landscape. It seems that my connection with landscape is such that the physical manifestation of place is translated into spontaneous and dynamic mark making in my sketches. The experience of this first week confirmed my reason for undertaking the project; to spend prolonged periods of time experiencing the ups and downs, both physically and mentally, of a particular landscape. In my book*, published by Combestone Books in 2015, I wrote:

I found walking through this new landscape very exciting but also a little daunting. Knowing how long it takes to really understand a place made me uncertain that I could represent it just by walking through it. I think you must get different things from first contact compared with the deeper understanding gained after many visits. I find that by re-visiting locations I am able to build up a vocabulary of marks allowing me to create a visual language appropriate and unique to the place. Whereas, during a fleeting visit, the sketches convey a more immediate, fresh and energetic response.'

My aim was to produce an image to represent each day on the path, these artworks would be made using a variety of printmaking methods. Each day I produced a number of sketches and on return to the studio, after each week's walk, I used these to produce printing plates. I also collected a small stone and a word that summed up each day. I put the stones and words into an old typeset drawer with other objects found on the path. This highlighted the diverse range of soil and rock types that we have in the south west and offered me ideas of mineral colours, to help

with selecting my inks, and the textures that I could use when making the printing plates.

When I had settled into a rhythm of walking and drawing, and after the initial excitement of sketching, I increasingly noticed the minutiae of the landscape. Repeating patterns and motifs became evident as did the effect of erosion and weathering, the tide and human impacts on the landscape. The scale of the project was, at times, overwhelming. There could be a lifetime's work in every day, in every mile; selecting the day's sketched image to translate into a print was often difficult.

This project, which I named '**Outline South West**', has reinforced my passion for landscape and made me realise that I thrive on long sustained projects that demand a large amount of focus and effort. I am now preparing to start work on the next project — A Year on Dartmoor.

Anita Reynolds

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Notes

**Outline South West - the South West Coast Path through the Eyes of a Printmaker. Available on line via Anita's website. The two prints here are named: 'Bantham 1' and 'Hell's Mouth'. The photo is the artist sketching at Trevallas*

LANDED - FREEMAN'S WOOD - AN EXPLORATION OF LANDOWNERSHIP THROUGH CONTEMPORARY ART.

Storey G2 is a contemporary art organisation with a long history of exhibitions, which is currently working on projects about landownership and its effects on people's lives. One of the earliest functions of pure landscape paintings seems to have been to provide evidence of ownership, like an entry in a land register. Gainsborough's painting 'Mr&Mrs Andrews' against a background of their owned land is a well known example. More recently, some artists have engaged with political and economic issues about land such as **Amy Balkin's** 'This the Public Domain' project in California; **Maria Eichhorn's** 'Acquisition of a Plot of Land in Munster'; and **Patrick Keiller's** series of films about landscape, place,

politics, and economic history in England.

Freeman's Wood is on the edge of the City of Lancaster in north west England. Local people claim that they have used this site for decades, and they have regarded it as common land, but fencing was installed around it in 2012, resulting in public unrest and reports in the local press. The physical appearance of land in general is obviously greatly affected by its ownership history and the ways in which the owners' use have determined the modifications they have made to it. In this case the allegedly unclaimed land has reverted to attractive mixed age woodland, herbaceous areas and a central area of grassland which has been quite intensively used. In a way this is typical of a common in all but title and the kind of land parcel that figures frequently in Village Green Applications. Freeman's Wood now appears to be owned by a property investment company which is registered in Bermuda. The director of the UK development company which caused it to be fenced in barbed steel fencing suggestive of future industrial use, happens to be socially well connected. These factors may have exacerbated the case and led to the arts project.

Identifying this as a socially significant example, StoreyG2 commissioned three sets of artists to produce artworks to stimulate thought about, and raise awareness of, the issue of landownership. Its Artistic Director wants the project to have potential to reach a



large audience, so he asked the artists to produce artworks in forms suitable for distribution on the internet, rather than objects for display in a gallery. Layla Curtis has produced an iPhone app called TRESPASS, featuring GPS tracked conversations. The user has to consider trespassing to hear all of them. Goldin and Senneby bought a plot of land and produced a script about its history. This script is now the description of the plot in a fake estate agent's sale particulars. Sans Façon created a board game which requires players to role-play the various stakeholders in a plot of land, and negotiate responses to various events.

Written by the Editor on behalf of Artistic Director for Storey G2, John Angus.

Notes

The artworks and full details are available on Storey G2's website <http://www.storeyg2.org.uk>

There is a short introductory video at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yxebw_rC7I8

and several aerial views of the site taken from a drone at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iTloKiK-aTk>

LANDSCAPES OF TRAVEL IN UKRAINE

By Gareth Roberts

I am currently writing up my experience of living without a car in the past 11 months and am taking the opportunity to reflect on landscapes I have experienced from public transport in recent years. The following article reflects on one of those landscapes.

I prepare to set off on what has become a regular journey for me in recent years a 5 hour bus trip from Kyiv to Kremenchuk in south east Ukraine. I used to make this journey by overnight train but these days I opt for the relative luxury of a coach service that offers free coffee and biscuits, reclining seats, air conditioning in the high heat of the summer and comfortably warm in the fierce winters that stop almost everything else in its tracks. In this way I also get a continuous view of the landscape. Although many things have improved in this country since Communist times this remains a sorry State.

One hears that self interested oligarchs still rule the roost here and are proving difficult to oust. The people deserve better and the inadequacies of recent Governments are reflected in the landscape. The roads are as bad as ever. They are now pot-holed to such an extent that journeys now take up to 30 minutes longer than they did before the war with Russian backed rebels in the eastern Oblasts of Donetsk and Luhansk erupted three years ago. The country looks 'down at heel'.

One of the advantages though of long journeys on public transport is that they afford me the opportunity to ponder over the changing character and quality



of landscape. The landscape of central Ukraine is primarily flat and full of arable crops in summer, sunflowers, corn and wheat fields blazing shades of yellow as far as the eye can see. The river Dnieper comes and goes. Often its vastness dominates the views from the road and these are especially spectacular in the winter when the river can be frozen over for many months. Apart from a few solitary fishermen shuffling on the frosty river or crouched over their pick-axed holes — tempting fish suppers to bite — all life seems to stop in this white landscape

There is little by way of any regulatory planned or managed landscape in the vastness of rural Ukraine in part because there is little call or desire for such intervention. This is still a dominantly rural country where traditional ways of farming and building construction have prevailed. Yes there are cities and large ones at that, but they are well separated while the needs of the rural communities are served by small market towns and villages. The intercity buses avoid such villages but views at the outskirts reveal very poor conditions for many. Thatched houses are not uncommon and their surroundings, typically bounded by picket fences suggest that living conditions can be

desperately poor for many.

In countries as corrupt as this one the planning and management of landscapes and its development are never much in evidence. Ukraine is said to be one of the most corrupt countries in Europe. The lack of public investment in infrastructure is most evident in rural areas.

A striking example of the lack of active management of the rural landscape



in Ukraine in recent years had been the proliferation of trees heavily affected by parasitic mistletoe. Tree lined roads that once offered corridors of refuge for wildlife are now being systematically cleared of diseased trees (a desperate measure) and piles of smoking branches at the roadside are common place. Many argue that this should have been better managed from the outset with selective clearing of trees weakened by the mistletoe parasite. This lack of environmental management is reflected elsewhere in signs of social and economic malaise.

Life is hard for the people of Ukraine, and especially so for the elderly rural

folk, many of whom live on very small pensions of less than 1000 UAH a month. The ongoing war in the east of the country following the illegal annexation of Crimea and the insurgence of Russian backed rebels in Donetsk and Lughansk has crippled the opportunity for economic advancement and prejudices inward investment. An estimated one and a half million people have been displaced, many moving to the relative safety of the more western Oblasts.

A couple of men from Donetsk I met earlier this year had pitched makeshift tents of plastic and carpet on the edge of the River Dnieper close to the town of Kremenchug. They survived the winter by fishing and occasional handouts. Their only heating source wood scavenged from the river banks. This fringe landscape is becoming an increasingly common sight along the banks of the Dnieper as the plight of such refugees worsens.



GR

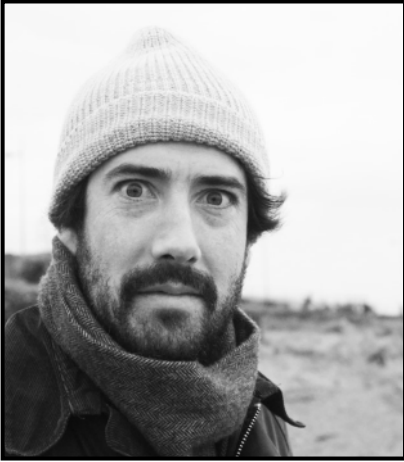


THE GROUP'S PRIZE WINNING DISSERTATIONS

PERCEPTIONS OF
LANDSCAPES IN WICK-
LOW – An Application of
the Cultural Values Model
Brian James Shaw

Landscapes are complex, spatially arranged socio-ecological systems, consisting of material and immaterial realms. The material landscape is that

which is physical, tangible, and empirically measurable, while the immaterial, perceptual dimension is that of intersubjective meaning and symbolism, which is socially constructed, culturally experienced and communicated, and value-driven. Landscapes are the soup in which all life is lived; their structures, functioning and dynamics play a crucial role in



human wellbeing. Due to, amongst other things, processes of agricultural intensification, urbanisation, and globalisation, social structures and landscapes alike are experiencing accelerated and increasingly unpredictable change.

To contribute to the understanding of this change, scientific knowledge of the perceptual, immaterial dimension of landscapes is crucial; that is, to determine how the landscape is perceived and valued, and to establish what linkages exist between the material and immaterial realms of the landscape. To this end, this thesis investigates cultural values held by people in the landscape, the elements of the material landscape that they relate to, and the human practices through which they are expressed, experienced and reinforced. It looks at the landscape as a cultural repository, and at differences in value sets between demographic groups sharing the landscape.

This is achieved using a mixed-methods approach in a case-study in County Wicklow, Ireland, which has a mosaic of land-uses and structures including urban areas, coastal lowlands, natural and plantation forests, and upland heaths. Data was collected through 81 semi-structured freelist interviews in eight locations. The data was analysed using Cultural Domain Analysis, an ethnographic approach tool that ranks items mentioned by two or more participants by their salience to the group. Data was then categorised according to the Cultural Values Model following Stephenson, which conceptualises landscape values as being forms, relationships, or human practices

and natural processes. This methodology collects, ranks, and contextualises landscape values so as to determine their relative importance to the participant group, and with the Cultural Values Model, reveals more specifically which features and social practices of landscapes are important to people.

The main findings of this study show that there are myriad ways in which people value the landscape. There is a clear clustering of 28 basic cultural values that are the most salient to participants, followed by a further 190 values with decreasing salience. Values relating to forms in the landscape were 44% of the total, relationships 38%, and processes and practices 18%.

The most noticeable characteristics of these basic values are that there is a very strong appreciation amongst participants for natural forms such as mountains and forests, that aesthetic values are prominent, and that they see an intrinsic worth in a landscape perceived as natural and wild, as being unaffected by people. Also prominent is how participants valued the landscape as a place of escape. Through being in the landscape they perceive as being natural and wild, they experience relief from their everyday lives; they were afforded a sense of pleasure and well-being. For many, the landscape is physically, mentally, and spiritually, a healthy place to be.

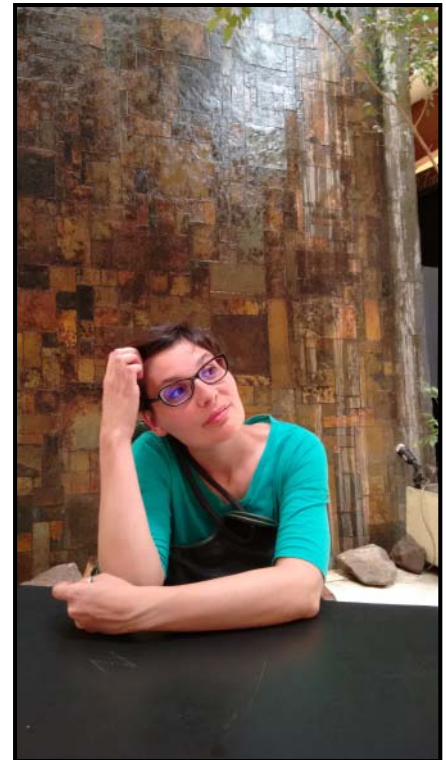
To frame the results with the Images of Nature concept, this study found that Wilderness landscapes are far more salient to the participants than those Arcadian. That is, landscapes without perceived human intervention, such as wild uplands, ranked significantly higher than those that represented a coexistence relationship between people and nature such as in a farming landscape.

While this is at odds with studies of landscape preferences conducted in Ireland, which showed that images of traditional farming landscapes were preferred to those depicting wilderness, studies in the Netherlands and France have shown an emerging preference for the wilderness image over the Arcadian, especially among young people. These studies attribute their findings to the same processes of urbanisation and globalisation that are key driving forces of landscape and social change: as societies become more culturally urbanised, and food production more standardised and globalised, people no longer value landscapes for the food and sustenance that they might provide, but rather increasingly as a human-less nature-pure antithesis to modern life.

A NEW GEOPHILOSOPHY. THE ANALYSIS OF THE CONCEPTS OF SPACE AND PLACE IN A GLOBAL WORLD.

**Laura Menatti,
University of the Basque Country,
San Sebastian, Spain**

This philosophical thesis aimed at drawing a comprehensive systemic theory of landscape. The work done at the Department of Philosophy of the University of



the Basque Country (Spain) cannot be considered as a 'cluster analysis' of the theories of landscape but, rather, it is the result of the elaboration of a systemic approach about perception of landscape integrating the cultural, naturalist and ethical dimensions.

There are, in fact, three main levels of research which are intertwined in this essay: the first one consists in the cultural analysis of landscape, place and space by means of philosophy, human geography, and sociology and art theory. This first level considers landscape as a cultural product: it argues that the idea of landscape was born from the Flemish painting of the XV century, and that later was developed into a view and then into a cultural and social product.

The second level constitutes an attempt at naturalizing landscape and landscape theory. It aims at filling the theoretical limits in which cultural theory on landscape is still trapped, and at analyzing

landscape through the glasses of contemporary theories on environment and ecology. This second line of analysis takes inspiration from pioneering works on the connection between aesthetics and ecology, and makes a further step towards the naturalisation of landscape through the concept of affordance and ecological psychology. Specifically, it builds upon Gibson's theory of affordance, considered as the crucial tool and conceptual bridge to explain the complexity of landscape as a mutual relation between the perceiver (his cultural history, his movement and his body) and the ecological perceptual possibilities offered by the place.

Finally, the third level of investigation, not less important, is the ethical analysis of the concept of commons, which has been addressed in relation to that of human right. The resulting approach puts forth the idea that there is a right to landscape and, specifically the right to live in a healthy and culturally-rich landscape. The connection between well-being, health as autonomy and the influence of landscape on our health-system is the natural continuation of this work.

In conclusion, a remark on the title of the thesis, which mentions 'new geophilosophy', but should rather call it 'a philosophy of landscape'. Sometime, in fact, the title of a work is more restrictive than the content it stands for, and this might be the case. Geophilosophy is a core concept in Deleuze's theory, from which this work had started and which has used to develop the concept of rhizome of landscapes. But then in this work geophilosophy became something more: a philosophy of complex and globalized landscape, aimed at overcoming the conservative idea of landscape as view and as related to closed identities. More importantly, this thesis, even though philosophical, had the purpose to overcome the separations between humanities and sciences and, more specifically, to question the opposition in the literature between a cultural and a naturalist idea of landscape.

DEVELOPING THEORY OF PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT IN LANDSCAPE PLANNING: 'DEMOCRATISING LANDSCAPE'

Andrew Butler



It is

generally accepted that public involvement is a positive aspect in landscape planning; allowing individuals to be involved in decision making processes for their everyday landscape helps to develop among other things attachment to place and a sense of involvement in a democratic system. It has increasingly been recognised as a fundamental aspect of landscape planning since the 1970's, after the realisation of the fallibility of experts and increased awareness of the complexity of planning issues. In recent years public involvement has received legitimacy in landscape policy through the European Landscape Convention.

I began my PhD work with the intention to develop an approach for making landscape assessments more receptive for public values. However, as I started to engage with 'good practice' I realise that there was a fundamental problem with how public participation is handled in landscape assessments and consequently landscape planning. This resulted in me drawing into question the practice of public involvement in landscape planning.

The research which my thesis is grounded in examines how public involvement is theorised and practised in landscape planning; representing a theoretical development built on an empirical exploration. The data which my thesis engages with is taken from landscape character assessments from the

UK. The assessments stage represents a key moment in the landscape planning process, the point when the landscape is framed. The purpose of this examination was to understand how practitioners engage with the public and how they handle the multiple and conflicting values attach to the landscape.

Through my research I expose the dynamics between theory and practice within landscape planning and argued that an ambiguity in practice is in part founded on the plurality of understandings of landscape. In particular between two contrasting theorisations which drive a gap between the rhetoric of practice, and its conduct. The first theorisation, expressed in the European Landscape Convention and forming the rhetoric of practice, identifies landscape as a dynamic, holistic entity dependent on perceptions of those who engage with the landscape. The second is operationalised in the conduct of practice, an objective outsiders' view, where landscape is addressed as a physical surface, forwarding a specific aesthetic. Such a view of landscape means that landscape planners lack adequate tools for handling the diverse and dynamic values which are experienced in landscape of their rhetoric, and therefore have no sound basis for dealing with conflicting values.

I further argue that this confusion relates to a weakness of substantive theory in the discipline of landscape planning. Practice builds on procedural theories which have weak substantive grounding, brought about by the discipline being driven and developed by practice, lacking the capacity for critical reflection.

My thesis explores the implications of theorising landscape as a democratic entity for the discipline of landscape planning. This contributes to an understanding of the dynamics of landscape planning, and begins to develop a theoretical position, with landscape as a democratic entity as the focus for public involvement. Addressing landscape planning and more specifically landscape assessment as a democratic process provides the opportunity for multi-directional, co-creation of knowledge and a realignment between theorisation and practice.

The complete thesis can be accessed on <http://pub.epsilon.slu.se/11251/>

AWARD WINNERS FOR BEST DISSERTATIONS

LRG awards cash prizes to those who

apply to the Group and are considered best in three categories: undergraduate, masters degrees and PhD s. They are valued at £350 and £500 respectively. This year Andrew Butler was awarded £500, Laura Menatti £500 and Brian James Shaw £350. Abstracts of their dissertations are included in this issue.

In the next issue (for want of space here) I include the abstracts for Jacqui Jobbins (£350) and for Martyn Thomas (£350). There were no undergraduate awards this year.

Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor,
I am writing regarding the last (74th) issue of Landscape Research Extra received just recently. I enjoyed it really much, as I did the previous issues, yet there appears to be a serious misinterpretation at the end of the first contribution titled 'Landscape Loss and Landscape Change' which is authored by Gareth Roberts.

The author states that 'the third image shows a collective farm in the foothills of the Krkonoše'. I believe by these words he refers to the coloured image (perhaps a postcard?) on the same page below, which reads *Riesengebirge. Wiesenbaude mit Blick nach der Schneekoppe*, i.e. The Giant Mountains: the Meadow Chalet with a view towards Sněžka. However, this image doesn't show a collective farm. It depicts one of the oldest chalets located on the very edge of the Giant Mountains as it looked during the interwar period (1920s or 1930s perhaps?). It does not show the industrialised landscape of collective farming, which developed in Czechia only since the 1950s. It shows a nice example of 'traditional landscape' connected with extensive farming as it was practiced in the highest parts of the Giant Mountains during the summer (along with the provision of additional tourist services and accommodation) before WW2.

I would be very grateful if you could also forward my comment to Gareth Roberts. Anyway, thank you for a good work with LRE.

With the best regards
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From Gareth Roberts

Dear Bud and Zdenek;
I apologise for my error and thank Zdenek for alerting me to this. I attended a conference at Špindlerův Mlýn in 1991 and bought a number of images of Sněžka acquired, as I recall, in the National Park Museum / Interpretive Centre. During the conference I attended a field excursion where we had a discussion about this landscape. I came away with the impression

(erroneously as it now seems) that the meadow chalet had been requisitioned in pursuit of the CSSRs policy of collectivisation of agricultural production in the post war period.
Best wishes to you both, Gareth

THIS HALF PAGE COMPENSATES FOR TEXT LOST DUE TO MAJOR EDITORIAL REVISION OF UKRAINE ARTICLE



HIGHER REALMS by Owen Manning

"Riding in from the sea, waves of shadow unfolding across the land below.....(they) walk the great blue road that spans the world, in silent caravans." Clouds of course, and I have written before of these breathy outpourings of the vast atmospheric engine above our heads. My aim here is to look more closely at what, apart from inspiring poets (and also raining and keeping everything alive), they actually do for our experience of the landscape below.

For me, a first-ever Mediterranean holiday confirmed something sensed even in childhood: that endless blue skies lacked a vital ingredient, not identified till on my return journey I left a hot crowded train for the Brussels World Fair with its silvery structures glittering and swaying against swiftly moving clouds in a September gale, bringing an excitement never forgotten.

No cloud had broken the Adriatic sky; even thunderstorms grew unseen from days of thickening haze. Years later the eastern United States yielded a similar pattern: a week of blue, a day of deepening grey, a day of rain or snow, a day of lessening grey, a week of blue..... We in north-west Europe's temperate climate are lucky. Relatively free of dangerous extremes, we can freely enjoy the world of clouds above us, alternatively hiding and releasing the sun, taking on all shades and hues – yet even the blackest of them threatening hardly more than the need to bring the washing in NOW. Mounting level upon level to inconceivable heights, they stir our souls by their unreachable strangeness. Those wind-blown galleons in the skies of childrens' books and railway posters, following from the great cloudscapes of Ruisdael, Constable et al: they sail through all landscape art from the eighteenth century on. Photographers love them.

Even so, have these fluffy manifestations really no more than an abstract beauty for us? Can no more useful relations between clouds and us be identified? All our art and science so far deal more with clouds alone than with Clouds and Us. Coffee-table books may thrill, but still they present clouds as things apart from the land they pass over: air-flight also treats us to visions of glory if we bother to glance through the scratched plastic,

but detachment from the land below is absolute. One's own cloud photographs may be tastefully framed by roof-tops, trees, hills, but that is a mere device. If we want more directly to relate clouds to our experience at ground level, then problems arise.

the serious study of them, and also of course for anyone in the fields of design and management. Clouds are not reliable elements of design!

Yet their very unpredictability is also a source of delight. Sunlit clouds breez-



One is the uncertainty or absence of any certain parallel with the landforms below. It is true that mountains generate cloud by uplift – but mere *hills* do so only here and there, unpredictably. And major landforms can redirect weather; even Malvern's mini-mountains seem to steer rainstorms around their northern end – but just as often do not (catching out the unwary photographer). And while also true that hot-spots in the landscape generate clouds, through uplift again, this is not predictable. The larger truth is that over most of Britain's breezy gently-modelled land, these great sweeping cloud-systems are independent of what lies directly beneath, as far as we can do anything to predict *what* may happen *where*. It is a frustration for

ing over the land on their unknowable journeys, fleeting shadows hiding fields here, revealing others there, perhaps a church-spire lit against a darkened hill which moments later stands out in its turn – do we care that this kaleidoscope of shifting shapes and colours can never be exactly repeated? And do not unplanned contrasts bring their own reward, as on days when (as now, through my window) the landscape fades wave-like into a misty greyness, its colours muted, yet still able to draw the eye into mysterious distances?





There is something more to say, however. Even admitting their unpredictability, and indifference to anything we can do other than enjoy them, there is a kind of connection between the clouds above and our experience of the land below, and it is crucial. The connection is that clouds help to make sense of the landscape by extending its vertical dimensions: drawing our gaze upwards, and with it the trees, buildings and landforms which give form to the landscape, on into the distance. This may seem paradoxical, for surely the apparent weight of clouds depresses rather than elevates? In the case of a uniform ceiling of dark stratus, yes; or a week of unbroken gloom, obviously; or (more rarely) a storm-cloud of appalling height and mass before which we all cower: definitely! But between these extremes, generally no.



Just as the furniture in a house would appear dwarfed and lost without its enclosing ceiling, so does the outdoor scene need the roof of a sky made visible by distinctly-formed clouds. It is not, in general, clouds which depress but the nothingness of a sky without them. And the reason (I believe) can be found in our perception mechanisms: in that same eye-brain activity which leads artists unconsciously to emphasise the height of things beyond the theoretical truth conveyed by the camera (which is also why most photographs do not record the landscape as we truly experience it). The eye is hungry for heights and depths to enable the brain to identify and make sense of our surroundings. Clouds help it to find them.



There will always be exceptions: times when some special quality of light is sufficient on its own. Yet look at a typical landscape in our islands, as pictured or in reality; follow those trees, those hills, that swelling moorland, upwards to meet the clouds moving through the sky above; imagine the scene in their absence. Even a level landscape needs its elevating, exhilarating ceiling of drifting clouds; can we imagine our Fenlands without them?

‘ Landscapes need clouds! ’

BRICKWORKERS IN THE MADAGASCAR LANDSCAPE

by Roger Dalton



A road journey in Madagascar along the 950 km Route Nationale 7 from the centrally located capital, Antananarivo, to the port of Tulear in the south west reveals a progression of natural landscape types. These grade from humid montane forest through dry forest to thorn scrub. However much of the original cover has been cut over to exploit timber and create farmland. Patches of surviving forest do remain, often as protected national parks, where the lemurs and other elements of the fauna and flora featured in tourist literature occur.



Not deemed to be attractive for tourists are the temporary roadside brick and tile kilns yet these encapsulate key elements of the wider landscape. Firstly there is the raw material for brick making which is dug from the red deep weathered lateritic soils or floodplain sediments derived therefrom. Secondly the fuel used to fire the kilns comprising a mixture of rice husks, zebu cattle dung and charcoal. Rice husks are freely available as rice is the national food staple and rice paddies characterise many valley bottoms. Zebu cattle are used in field work and haulage while in the drier south they are grazed as a source of prestige as well as income. The key fuel is charcoal which is also essential for cooking in urban as well as rural areas. Bagged charcoal is offered for sale at the roadside. The exploitation of the remaining woodland and scrub for

charcoal making is a factor in the continuing denudation of the vegetation cover.

Brick making is low technology. They are shaped in hand moulds and set to dry and then stacked in kilns which are tapered upwards for stability. Flue systems are built into the stacks and after firing for a week or so they are ready for pulling down and distribution to enable improvement of the traditional wooden housing stock. In so doing bricks may be balanced on heads of these girls! Each one is in its way a weighty metaphor for much of the immediate landscape. Good for posture damaging for spine.

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