



PRESPA IN SEPTEMBER

In September I was invited to speak at a meeting at the Prespa Lakes, in Greece, looking out over the lakes also bounded by Albania and Macedonia (FYROM). The meeting was on the Cultural Values of Wetlands and was organised by Thymio Papayannis under the auspices of three organisations: Med-INA (Mediterranean Institute for Nature and Anthropos www.med-ina.org ; MedWet, the Mediterranean Wetlands Initiative (www.medwet.org) and the Society for the Preservation



of Prespa. As this is one of the great birding sites of Europe, I accepted immediately, and was rewarded by sightings of both species of pelican and marsh harrier. The most common bird (!) there is the Pygmy Cormorant which is one of the most endangered species in Europe. It is odd that every time one looked out of the window, there were several very rare birds.



The purpose of the meeting was to enable those organisations responsible for the wetlands of the Mediterranean, which is dominated by those needing to conserve the natural heritage of wetlands (under the Ramsar Convention) to reach beyond those needs and also embrace cultural values. This in an attempt to provide an integrated management future. That said, I fear I was the token culture vulture. Crossing disciplines — an admirable aim, although we were not all convinced that Ministries of Culture will immediately welcome approaches from Ministries of Environment.

The meeting also set me thinking: how do dismal swamps become precious wetlands? and about the meanings attached to swamps and bogs and their inhabitants? The English Fens and the Levels, like the Grimpen Mire, held some strange secrets, and inaccessibility was a critical element. So opening the wetlands for all to visit and enjoy in safety raises a few issues of authenticity, whatever that may be.

One presenter was Julian Hoffman, writer of landscape fiction and non-fiction, who lives in Prespa. Excellent — see his work on Pelicans at www.terrain.org

Peter Howard
Bournemouth University

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For disclaimer and addresses for editorial enquiries and administrative correspondence see the box on page 11.

www.landscape-research.org



Landscape
Research
Extra 52

November
2009

Copy deadline for LRE 53
January 21st 2010



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The fast disappearing maritime landscapes of the Pacific region

Talk to indigenous south sea islanders about 'the landscape' or 'the seascape' and most will look at you askance. For Pacific islanders the concept of landscape is a more complex, less tangible and more an abstract one than for most Europeans. It has to do with the association people have with their tribal lands more than with just the visual character, landform, or geography of the place itself. In the south Pacific, people and their knowledge, traditions and spirituality are seen



as inseparable from their territorial, freshwater and marine ecosystems: they are not external entities. These concepts are embodied in the Fijian islands in the term 'vanua' for their tribal lands and 'iqoliqoli' their traditional fishing grounds. Similar terms are used elsewhere in the Pacific islands (1). Understanding these concepts is important to all those involved in planning how to protect, conserve and manage these environments sustainably into the future.



The landscapes of Oceania are very varied ranging, from coral atolls such as the Majuro Atoll, in the Marshall Islands barely a few meters above the surrounding ocean to islands like Viti Levu in Fiji, dominated by volcanic peaks and cloud forests. Many of these islands and their near shore marine areas are self contained 'arks', each with their own unique and often very limited assemblage of biodiversity. All are highly sensitive to sea level rise and other environmental changes.

60% of the world's coral reefs are to be found in the Pacific and 20% of its coral reefs have already effectively been destroyed. A further 16% are seriously threatened by increases in sea temperature which cause the coral to 'bleach' and die. With almost a quarter of the barrier reefs



Kiritimati (Christmas Island): a very large atoll about 60km long, remote 6700km from Sydney. Photo credit: Crew of Mission 4, ISS, NASA

skirting the island territories of the Pacific already damaged because of development pressures and a further 26% under long term threat, means that the rapid and unprecedented deterioration of coral reefs and loss of marine biodiversity in this region constitutes one of the most serious biodiversity problems globally. The loss of the biodiversity in turn threatens the future viability of local communities reliant on marine resources to sustain their traditional way of life.

Global warming and other environmental changes are also resulting in the rapid decline of mangrove forests in the Pacific region. Mangroves are trees that have adapted to live in saline conditions in tropical and sub-tropical regions. Mangroves are commonly found in sheltered areas such as lagoons creeks and estuaries. The species vary, some growing to 40 ft tall some much lower and all serve as important protectors of the coast particularly in storm surges. Their stilt like



aerial root systems help trap nutrients and provide refuge for young fish and crustaceans but pollution, and changing environmental conditions have resulted in widespread damage to these important habitats and loss of one of the most characteristic landscapes of the

Pacific region.

The cultural and natural diversity of the Pacific region has combined to produce a wonderful array of landscapes on islands where more than 2000 different languages are spoken. The region reflects ethno-biodiversity par excellence, a symbiotic relationship between man and environment as these isolated peoples had to become self sufficient and live in truly sustainable ways.

Pacific islands and their near shore marine areas are among the Earth's notable biodiversity "hot spots". Easter Island for example has been severely exploited and is among the Earth's least bio-diverse parts of the world because the mismanagement of natural resources in this case the sheep farming and the cutting down of tropical forests. This destroyed the natural environment and led to its near abandonment. Diamond in 2005, in his account *Collapse. How Societies Choose to Fail or Succeed* writes "The overall picture for Easter is the most extreme example of forest destruction in the Pacific, and among the most extreme in the world: the whole forest gone, and all of its tree species extinct." The ethno-biodiversity of much of the Pacific is under threat from outside pressures, the loss of oral traditions, the decline of subsistence economies, increasing reliance on imports, tourism development and unsustainable exploitation of natural resources.

A recent study identifying problems of the Region concluded that overall it was 'a lack of sufficiently trained people in national governments who understand the policy and the science of environmental issues both at the national and international levels' that posed the greatest challenge to tackling this environmental crisis.

The UK Government through its Darwin Programme has supported the work of the International Centre for Protected Landscapes (ICPL) www.protected-landscapes.org to help develop the capacity of people in the small island states of the Pacific to conserve their biodiversity and to plan and manage the changes that are taking place to landscapes and seascapes. Based in Suva, Fiji, the University of the South Pacific in partnership with the South Pacific Regional Environmental Programme has worked with ICPL to establish distance learning undergraduate and post-graduate programmes to train people to deliver this work. Distance learning offers great opportunities for people to learn new skills in environmental management that might otherwise be prohibitively expensive. The aim is to encourage sustainable development through education that promotes the goals of the Convention on Biodiversity, conservation, sustainable use and equitable sharing of the natural resources of these

islands. The evidence from the last decade and the achievements of students that have followed these courses is that the investment has been very worth while.

Notes

Similar terms apply in other islands - fonua, fanua, fenua, whenua, henua, 'enua, in Polynesia, te aba and bwirej in Kiribati and the Marshall Islands in Micronesia and kastom or ples in Melanesia.

Gareth Roberts

MONSTER FIELD

by Philip Pacey

Next to the church of Dore Abbey, at Abbeydore in Herefordshire, is a working farm. Immediately behind the church, among the ruins of the monastic buildings, stands a neglected orchard and an immense sweet chestnut tree. Beyond that lies a field, dotted with clumps of thistles and nettles, which is the last resting place for various pieces of obsolete farm machinery. To some eyes this might appear a 'blot on the landscape'. However, in the course of a number of visits I've found myself feeling increasingly drawn to it, perhaps not least – but certainly not only – because I can come here to relieve myself in breaks between rehearsals in the church – nobody follows me; few of the abbey's visitors find their way around to the back of the church, and, thanks in part to the broken down machines, there is plenty of concealment. The 'Portaloo' next to the lych gate leading into the farmyard is an eyesore, hence – other considerations aside – my reluctance to use it.

Of course, as a (paying) guest of the farmer and his wife it wouldn't do for me to criticise his practice of dumping machines where he does. I guess the disposal of redundant machinery is a problem for all farmers, for which there may not be a ready solution. In fact, for some of the same reasons that this place offers me concealment, it is notable just how inconspicuous it is. It cannot be seen from the lane because the church stands in the way. It is hidden from the farmhouse by an assortment of barns and farm buildings. On the north and east it is not fenced off from the vast Glebe Meadow, beyond which runs the stream, but from the point of view of anyone taking the footpath across the Meadow it is partially enclosed and camouflaged by a broken hedgerow which in fact marks the course of the former 'Golden Valley' railway.

It helps that the rusting contraptions are not piled on top of each other; rather, they are scattered randomly, like grazing animals. There are often cows and there is sometimes a bull in the Glebe Meadow. On my last visit horses were browsing here – one came across

and nuzzled me to see if I had brought anything good to eat, then, giving me up as a bad job, went to investigate one of the old apple trees, heavy with fruit. The once bright Dinky Toy colours of the old machines are rusting and fading. Like much of the abbey except for the portion of the church which survives, they are ruins which have something of the 'picturesque' about them. They remind me of Paul Nash's 'Monster Field', where the monster was a huge uprooted tree waving its roots in the air, like a prehistoric beast, and also but less so of Nash's paintings of crashed German aeroplanes lying splintered in the English landscape, once hostile, now for ever harmless. They may not be pretty now, but Nature already dominates and will outlast them. Nothing of them will survive to be unearthed like dinosaur skeletons.

Not half a mile away but entirely invisible from Dore Abbey there is – or was – a wreck of another kind. On our very first visit, looking across the valley from Ewyas Harold Common, I was astonished to see carriages of a relatively modern passenger train, clearly visible in a gap in the thick woodland, where I thought I knew there never was and surely could not be a railway. Without a shadow of doubt I was looking at two relatively modern railway carriages; I could not see whether they were standing on railway track. Enquiries yielded the information that they were on land used by the SAS for training; land to which there was of course no public access. I suppose such training has to take place somewhere, and whatever happens here at least takes place under a cloak of foliage. But whereas the farmer's rusting hulks appear benign in their retirement, the railway carriages do not belong but are a sign of a landscape which has been appropriated, a peace which has been disturbed.

PP

MEASURES OF GREENSPACE QUALITY

by Jeff Collison.

There is increasing evidence that taking a walk in the park makes for more than a pleasant interlude. It can improve our physical and psychological well-being. With current concerns about obesity levels and mental health, it's clear why the government has recognised the importance of improving the quality of our parks, or greenspace, which also includes semi-natural green areas.

So what does good quality greenspace look like, and how do we assess the quality of what is there? It's to answer this question that the Scottish Government has required Local Authorities to audit the quality of all

their greenspace, and also ask their citizens what they think good quality looks like. Will these two approaches give the same sort of answers? That's what this project set out to discover.

The town of Bo'ness was chosen as the focus of a comparative study. With a population of approximately 15,000 it is a significant community, but of manageable size. A quality audit of most of the 16 greenspace areas in the town had been recently carried out by a professional consultancy. To obtain the community perspective, this project distributed questionnaires to every twentieth home. The survey asked which greenspaces residents had recently visited, how they rated these areas, and sought out their greenspace improvement priorities. Around 100 people responded, a return rate of over 20%.

The comparative analysis of the results showed that the ordered lists of "good to poor" greenspace obtained from the professional audit and the community survey were a close match. Analysis of visit behaviour from the community response confirmed that the better the quality the greenspace, the more people will visit it. There was a linear relationship between perceived quality and distance travelled to access greenspace. These results were all confirmed as statistically significant.

However, there were some significant differences between the outcomes of the professional audit and the community survey, particularly with priority for improvement. Some areas which were graded low in the professional audit, were more visited, further travelled to and rated higher by the community. An example was an area of shoreline now adjacent to a sewage farm and subject to fly-tipping, and not rated for improvement in the audit. Further investigation revealed



that in the past this had been a favourite spot to visit on warm weekends. Despite recent dereliction, it held a cherished place in the community folk memory, as evidenced by persisting visit behaviour and community improvement priority. The professional audit had been quite blind to this.

Greenspaces have different community uses, and this affects improvement aspirations. For example, from the survey results it was possible to identify greenspace that had a strong use as short-cuts. These had high visitor numbers, but figured far down the list of targets for improvement. It was the destination greenspaces that were the improvement priority for the community, not the areas of passage.

Other study results indicated that the socio-economic status of respondents did not significantly alter aspirations for greenspace quality, and that addressing greenspace nuisance factors was key to any improvement strategy.

Overall, the study found that the two approaches of professional audit and community consultation produced broadly similar results, but that understanding the "hidden" ways in which greenspace was used and thought about by the community is really important in identifying improvement priorities that will be locally valued.

This study was carried out as part of an MSc in Environmental Management at the University of Stirling. The support of the University and of Falkirk Council are gratefully acknowledged.

JC

STRATEGIC ECOLOGICAL NETWORKS:

Opportunities for Biodiversity Improvement through Development in the South East Region by Sharon Whiting

I am a planning officer. Studying part time I finished my MSc in Environmental Assessment and Management at Oxford Brookes in September 2008. I have long been interested in the relationship between development and biodiversity, and decided to investigate how development can improve strategic ecological networks and biodiversity.

Nature conservation groups and academics are, more and more, proposing that planners can improve landscapes by the establishment of strategic ecological corridors; this can be achieved through habitat restoration, creation and enhancement. It is widely recognised that not enough is being done.

I used the South East Region as a study area and examined the South East Plan, looking critically at achievements in 'large-scale habitat restoration, enhancement and re-creation' and how planners have identified 'areas of strategic opportunity for biodiversity improvement' -- the latter having been 'sought through development schemes, including developer contributions, where possible, contributing to the establishment of strategic corridors or networks'.

I used questionnaire surveys, I reviewed documents and did case studies to obtain evidence of strategic biodiversity improvement (SBI) being sought and realised through new development. The questionnaire survey received a good response: 64% of District/Unitary authorities and 57% of County Councils replied.

The outcome of this for my study area is that there is a great lack of policies. One might hope that the situation will improve as local planning authorities progress their Local Development Framework but there was evidence that not all authorities are intending to identify areas for biodiversity improvement or intend to include policies on developer contributions to biodiversity. My study shows that few authorities have been successful in securing developer contributions towards SBI.

Authorities identified the following limits to achieving success:

- Lack of in-house ecological expertise (48% of authorities responding)
- Biodiversity is not a priority for the authority (33% of authorities responding)
- Current government guidance demands clear demonstrated linkage between a developer's scheme and any beneficial outcome. (26% of authorities responding)
- Lack of information on areas of opportunity for strategic biodiversity (22% of authorities responding)
- Lack of clarity in government advice on planning and biodiversity (7% of authorities responding)
- Concern that developer contributions to strategic biodiversity improvement may lead to loss of features or inadequate mitigation on-site (4% of authorities responding)

Where authorities succeeded it was because of the commitment and perseverance of local authority officers, the fact of having a strong planning policy framework in place, and the presence of in-house ecological expertise. The need for involvement at an

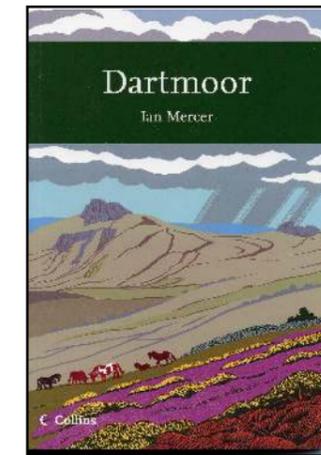
early stage of the development and the co-operation of developers/landowners were also highlighted. I also identified other important factors: the support from nature conservation bodies; the identification of biodiversity projects to which contributions could be made; partnership working and the production of a management plans. [Research undertaken in the summer of 2008]

SW

DARTMOOR A STATEMENT OF ITS TIME

A New Naturalist volume written by Ian Mercer here 'reviewed' JG with the editor.

Dartmoor is one of the evocative place names in the English language. It may resonate with individuals as a prison, a National Park, a setting for Sherlock Holmes and that Hound, a tourist destination, a habitat, a landscape, a place of history, solitude and wildness.



'Dartmoor' is the latest title in the outstanding New Naturalist Library and Professor Ian Mercer has given us a volume to treasure, to read and use. It is written in quality plain English, and is a clear demonstration of how to communicate a very wide range of knowledge, experience and commitment. The volume

bears comparison with NNL 9 'A Country Parish' written by Arnold Whitworth Boyd which is a classic study. Devotees of the NNL Series will be well aware that this 21st century celebration of Dartmoor, succeeds number 27 in the series, Professor L. A. Harvey's and D. St. Ledger-Gordon's Dartmoor. However the latest study goes much further, doing so in particularly lucid way. The strap line to the book's title: 'A Statement of its Time' gives due recognition to the fact that past, present and future are as one.

The Author is proud to be a geographer but he is also a 21st century Gilbert White. Despite working at the highest level of public affairs, Ian Mercer has never lost his love of the sense of place. For him the place is Dartmoor (and South Devon). In Chapter 1 'A Layman's Topography, Brief History and Political Guide' he quotes lines by the Welsh poet R. S. Thomas: "I have looked long on this land, Trying to understand/ My place in it." A great way to look at landscape.

Landscape is a key thread running through every page of the book, there are maps, diagrams and photographs. Of the last there are no less than 270 in 384 pages of text and they appear to be of uniformly high quality.

This is a book about a tract of land -- how it was and is and what it is and what it contains and how it is managed and regarded and used. All these work together to identify a landscape. Can one take away from *landscape* its birds or valley bogs, its weather, its prehistoric reaves or its hill farming methods? Are they not integral? Should we adhere simply to 'landscape is a tract of land and how it is perceived'?

The ten chapters, cover 'The physical anatomy of Dartmoor' 'Dartmoor vegetation in the last millennium; Dartmoor fauna in the twenty first century' 'Weather and living water' 'Working the landscape: Dartmoor men and their masters through historic time' 'Farming Dartmoor and sustaining moorland: the last hundred years' 'The contemporary conservation scene: its history and its future' 'Dartmoor from now on'. One doubts that there could be a more revealing choice of topics.

The author writes with personally acquired knowledge. He deals equally well with the vegetation (60 pages and 46 images) as with 'The contemporary conservation scene' (36 pages and 15 images). Much of what he writes is intriguing and fresh even to the perpetually cynical co-author of this note who has lived 'alongside' Dartmoor for 25 years but has never penetrated its detail. He tells me he wrote it over a period of five years.

For those who wish to delve beyond the text there is a list of over one hundred references in a select bibliography.

John W. Gittins [with Bud Young]

MITIGATING THE EFFECT OF EXTRACTION DRAINS IN AN IRISH RAISED BOG PREPARED FOR INDUSTRIAL PEAT CUTTING

by Sharon Elizabeth Spratt

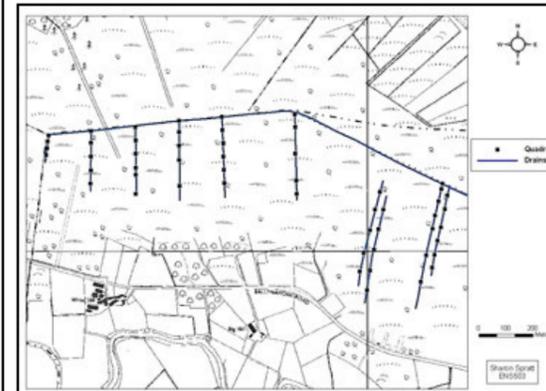
Over large areas of lowland Irish landscapes raised bogs have been damaged by industrial peat extraction. The extraction process is usually preceded by cutting drains into the peat to lower the water table and dry out the surface. They mainly influence the hummock-hollow and pool structure of the bog surface. Raised bog restoration studies have mainly focused on regenerating a functional acrotelm and active *Sphagnum* growth in extensively cutover bogs. My dissertation investigated the effects of



blocking the surface drainage ditches excavated in preparation for industrial peat cutting.

Field work was carried out at Ballynahone Bog near Maghera in Northern Ireland. Apart from small-scale, traditionally hand-cut areas at the bog periphery, it had retained much of its characteristic structure and species composition, prior to planning consent being obtained for commercial peat extraction. Plans, however, were abandoned, following intervention by the local community, but not before a series of fifty two drains had been dug in the intact surface of the peat dome. As a conservation measure, the drains were subsequently blocked, presenting an opportunity to study drain recolonisation. The main aim of my dissertation was to carry out an ecological assessment of the plant communities that had developed in the blocked drains, after a period of about twelve years. My working hypothesis was that species composition would differ spatially depending on location across the bog and that the developing communities would mitigate damage to the hummock-hollow and pool structure.

Environment, spatial location and plant community variables were measured at Ballynahone over the summer of 2007, in a sample of fifty-four quadrats, across ten drains on the intact dome. Within each



quadrat, plant species were assigned a percentage cover value on the DOMIN Scale. The environment variables recorded were drain width and depth, peat resistivity, distance from the top of the drain to the water surface, water pH and distance from the quadrat to the uncut edge of the bog. Statistical analysis was by determining correlation coefficients between environment and biological variables to test if there were significant relationships.

There was a strong significant correlation between species cover, in particular *Sphagnum spp.* and *Calluna vulgaris* and distance from the edge of the bog. A greater distance from the edge of the bog was associated with an increased *Sphagnum spp.* cover and a decreased *Calluna vulgaris* cover. The frequency of emergent aquatic and submerged aquatic communities was positively correlated with increasing distance from the edge of the bog. There was a clear edge effect on the species composition of the drainage ditches. Conditions in the drains nearer the centre of the bog dome were more conducive to bog pool and hollow *Sphagnum* species, whereas drains reaching the bog edges were more conducive to colonisation by *Calluna vulgaris* and other species of better drained conditions.

The findings of my study, show that blocking shallow drains on lowland raised bogs can improve the ecological condition of the bog surface, as measured by vegetation composition and key species and that the effects vary spatially across the bog surface. Blocking drains where this does not interfere with statutory water courses could contribute to restoring bog landscapes damaged by the early stages of preparation for peat extraction.

SEP The Landscape Ecology Research Group, University of Ulster.

THE RAILWAY GARDEN

by Bud Young

Descend the slope from Highbury Fields (a smart part of London N5) and the houses diminish in size and status. Go past a set of matchbox size terraced houses and you arrive at an old wall and in this there is a small green door. This is the door to 'The Olden Garden' and it opens with a Yale key provided to subscribers for a modest fee by the Trust which runs the land.

You are nearly at Drayton Park Station. Three hundred metres to the north is Arsenal's Emirates Stadium but nothing could be more different in scale or intent than this small garden which is being developed for the community. It is separated from the road by the original railway wall in yellow London brick with new expensive copings.

A two and a half year old boy with his dad and grandfather make their way inside and the door closes shut. No one else is there. To one side is an elegant timber common room smelling of cedar. They hesitate to make coffee (though it is nearing 11 o'clock) but look at the notice boards: a committee, volunteers, a plan, a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund. Outside is an



elegant circular pool with lilies floating, water snails scouring algal surfaces and fish languidly swimming:



brick built, raised and very refined. The grandfather sits on a bench and the flowers are lovely. The small

boy examines the fish.

This is the developed part. But there is more. In exploration mode the little family passes below a top retaining wall supported against collapse by a decrepit scaffold framework. They descend through leggy forty year old trees towards the railway line. There, halfway down are enough branches to make a den and they have done this before. It is a skill the child cannot develop in more public parks.

The how and why of this piece of land strikes the older man as they get to the railway line. (1) It is a very shallow cutting, low angle because cut through the London Clay. And yet no trains. It is a near forgotten branchline emerging from a sooty tunnel and entering a mysterious portal just to the south. Maps show that it then passes under Highbury Fields. Towards the sooty tunnel someone in the past has set out orchard trees now untended: father and grandfather



bag up big bramley apples to take home, there are many lying on the ground. Across the line is a patch of classically untidy allotments - a very gently sloping embankment indeed! Passing a little-tended school plot and greenhouse, they climb up to the cedar cabin, out through the precise green door and back into the real world of house prices, parking and space competition.

Notes

(1) The railway line connects with Dockland and has reputedly been used to carry freight to the Olympic Site.



(2) Half way down the slope where the child makes his den they collect three 'flattened cannon balls.' The older man, a geologist, identifies these as fire roasted septarian nodules once prized to make a form of cement - and a natural concretion in the London Clay. More surprising is the clinkery nature of the reddened subsoil (photo below left), which betokens firing of the clay perhaps to make bricks. Or is this the site of a very hot fire, an incendiary bomb perhaps! Who will write the short story?

(3) This small piece of self sown woodland on its railway cutting ranks as the second largest woodland in the London Borough of Islington!

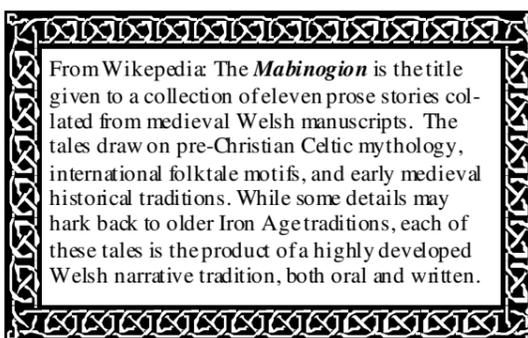
BY

Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor

I really enjoyed your choice of the poem by Jay Appleton (LRE 51). One reason being that I had earlier this morning walked through St. Giles Churchyard in Wrexham and had a similar experience. I will try and obtain a copy of his book.

Regarding Martin Spray's interesting article 'A Tale to Tell: Training the Imagination' I offer the information below. Readers of that great Welsh treasure, 'The Mabinogi' (Mabinogion in English) can still follow some of the action on the ground. A particularly fine book to use in conjunction with a copy of the Mabinogi is by John K. Bollard & Anthony Griffiths entitled 'The Companion Tales to the Mabinogi' published by Gomer Press in 2007*. This book has superb text relating to the Mabinogi, wonderful maps and evoca-



From Wikipedia: The *Mabinogion* is the title given to a collection of eleven prose stories collated from medieval Welsh manuscripts. The tales draw on pre-Christian Celtic mythology, international folktale motifs, and early medieval historical traditions. While some details may hark back to older Iron Age traditions, each of these tales is the product of a highly developed Welsh narrative tradition, both oral and written.

tive photographs of places linked to the stories. Bollard and Griffiths have also produced a very good translation also published by Gomer. Walking the ground, armed with the OS 1:25000 maps, with boots on and a jacket in case of rain, is something else! *ISBN 978 1 84323 825 0.

Best wishes

John (Gittins)

ASK THE RAVENS



Carl Griffin **Protest practice and cultures of conflict: understanding the spaces of 'tree maiming' in eighteenth century and early nineteenth century England.** [A fascinating read]
Trans Inst Brit Geogr NS33/1 pp 91-108.

Joanna C Long **Rooting diaspora, receiving nation: Zionist landscapes of Palestine-Israel.** [A level appraisal which takes into account the Palestinian loss]
Trans Inst Brit Geogr 34/1 2009 pp 61 - 77.

Michael Pacione **The view from the tower: geographies of urban transformation in Glasgow.** [A major exposition from an author who has written a book on the structure of Glasgow]
Scottish Geogr Journal 125/2 2009 pp 127-181.

Brice R Rea and Alastair M D Gemmill **Scottish Landform Example 40: The Buchan Gravels Formation: A remnant deposit of a paleo landscape.**
Scottish Geogr Journal 125/2 pp 182- 194.

Steven Boyle **Mapping landscapes of the Improvement Period: surveys of North Lochtayside 1769 and 2000.**
Scottish Geogr Journal 125/1 2009 pp 43-60.

Peter Charles Herring **Framing perceptions of the historic landscape: Historic landscape characterisation (HLC) and Historic landscape Assessment (HLA).** [Written by an LRG Director—important methodology]
Scottish Geogr Journal 125/1 2009 pp 61-77.

Veronica della Dora **Mountains and memory: embodied visions of ancient peaks in the nineteenth century Aegean.**
Trans Inst Brit Geogr 33/2 2008 pp 217 - 232.

Gary Warnaby and Dominic Medway **Bridges, place representation and place creation.** [Nice — remember Bridges of Madison County]
Area 40/4 2008 pp 510 – 519.

Robert A Francis, Simon P G Hoggart, Angela M Gurnell and Chris Coode **Meeting the challenges of urban river habitat restoration: developing a methodology for the River Thames through Central London.**
Area 40/4 2008 pp 435 - 445.

David P Lusch, Kristy E Stanley with nine other contributors **Characterisation and mapping of patterned ground in the Saginaw Lowlands, Michigan: possible evidence for Late Wisconsin permafrost.** [Not everyone's area of work but good detective work with aerial photography and importance to Pleistocene climatic history]
Annals Assoc Am Geographers 99/3 2009 pp 445 – 466.

Daniel Joly, Thierry Brossard with five other contributors. **A qualitative approach to the visual evaluation of landscape.** [Clever if intricate methodology; does it correspond with eyeballing. Technique in search of an application]
Annals of the Assoc Am Geographers 99/2 2009 pp 292 – 308.

Richard A Marston **Land, Life and Environmental Change in Mountains.** [Extraordinary physical landscape events]
Annals Assoc Am Geographers 98/3 2008 pp 507 – 520.

Daniel Muller and Darla K Munroe **Changing rural landscapes in Albania: Cropland abandonment and forest clearing in the post socialist transition.** [Always exciting chronicle of politically induced landscape change]
Annals Assoc Am Geographers 98/4 2008 pp 855-876



ANTHOLOGY

A contrast in styles, meanings and readerships

Landscape is a modality of power in which justice attains different and typically contentious guises. Landscape and justice not only coalesce in presently mediatized struggles such as global environmental degradation, the unequal spatialities of neoliberal violence, or the post-colonial present. They also fuse in the seemingly more pedestrian realities of modern suburbia, dusty historical archives of rural geography, or practical heritage preservation efforts. With its current vigilance to (in)justice, landscape studies hence touch upon profoundly political issues and can deliver important contributions to current debate and struggle within and beyond academia.

*Unattributed announcement for a conference 2009 **

Most now also accept that landscapes, including the most picturesque, are to a large degree within us. They are the construct or product of continuous dialogue between external stimuli - signals, symbols and patterns - and internal readings and interpretations of these by a consciousness informed by a wide range of cultural norms and filtered by personal experience (influenced by a distorting memory), both of which are themselves continually being revised. Therefore, there are as many landscapes as there are consciousnesses and each one is forever shifting, reflecting actual changes, in even the most well protected areas, and the flickering nature of our apprehension of places. *Peter Herring in "Framing Perceptions of the Historic Landscape" (see listings).*

They rowed away down the lake. The dark came fast overhead. Stars shone out. Owls were calling. The edges of the lake disappeared under the hills. They could see the outlines of the hill, great black masses, pressing up into the starry sky. The clouds came up over the stars and they could not even see where the hills ended and the sky began.

Arthur Ransome Swallows and Amazons Publisher Jonathan Cape 1930

*The conference announcement in full can be found at
http://people.su.se/~widgren/Landscape_Justice_first_call.pdf

LISTENING POST — EUROPEAN CULTURAL LANDSCAPES

It started like this:

From Birgitta

*I'm an information officer of the Swedish Research Council Formas (www.formas.se). Formas has recently edited a book by Professor Urban Emanuelsson, **The Rural Landscapes of Europe – How man has shaped European nature**. Information about the book: http://www.formas.se/formas_templates/Page_5476.aspx*

Birgitta did not realise that she had alerted 477 PECSRL members

It then went on:

From Robert C. Zimmermann

Dear fellow members,

This should be a red-letter day in the history of landscape studies: finally, repeat finally, a comprehensive book on Europe's rural (agricultural) landscapes, in my case something I have been proposing, advocating, urging, cajoling, deploring the lack of etc. in print and otherwise since 1981 (and never got around to finishing myself because I have long since run out of money, desire to cross the Atlantic too often, and just plain stamina...).

So what happens? — [*There followed on line a heated semantic debate between PECSRL members on Mankind v Womankind*] — Instead of putting on Mozart's "Exultate, jubilate", we go off on some PC tangent about the title (when we all know what is meant by "man"), and whether chimpanzees, plants, teams of oxen, and erosion etc. created rural/agricultural/cultural landscapes. As far as I know, even the Tuscan "colmate di monte" (a landscape created by controlled erosion and deposition) were ultimately the work of "man". The open woodland of the montado/dehesa may be formed by oaks etc., but who is behind all that? Surely there is no need for more semantic arguments over cultural landscapes.

Why all this nit-picking when we should rejoice at having an overview that might, finally, provide us with an overall framework for analysis, for filling gaps, and for setting priorities? Otherwise we risk drowning in trivia and in ephemera, as is often too painfully evident at PECSRL meetings. And if we don't like what Prof. Emanuelsson is saying, the onus is on us to improve or expand on his work. I heard about the book this very day, but I hope, above all, that it calls attention to conservation priorities. Or at least documentation priorities. We need only remind ourselves that we let the last 3-field landscapes of central Europe (a tremendous piece of cultural heri-

tage for anybody with a sense of history) disappear in the last 60 years without proper and systematic documentation. The same happened with the "alberata padana" of the Po valley, an incredible landscape. And the same is happening with the last remnants of the "coltura promiscua", a landscape with perhaps the richest cultural associations in Europe. As Prof. Emanuelsson says, 'we should also pay more attention to the last "true peasant" landscapes of eastern Europe' — which my draft book deliberately omitted precisely, as Prof. Emanuelsson says, because of linguistic barriers.

There may also still be a need for a coffee-table version of such a book (at subsidized prices) in order to create a constituency (among intelligent tourists et. al.) for landscape conservation. With kind regards from your transatlantic colleague and curmudgeon. R.C. Zimmermann rcz@sympatico.ca

who later added:

.....In my case, I have been guided for years by two French works, R. Lebeau, 1972, *Les grands types de structures agraires dans le monde*, and A. Meynier, 1970, *Les paysages agraires*. In central Europe, there is also H. Kuester's history of the landscape (1995). As you suggest, Emanuelsson being a plant ecologist — incidentally, so am I, and so is Kuester — is probably not as oriented towards human/historical views of landscapes as some of us would wish. It may be that the richly illustrated compendium on the evolution of European rural landscapes, with **all** their cultural associations — historical, agronomic, literary, artistic, linguistic, etc. — ideally, that will guide well-prioritized research and conservation as well as boost intelligent tourism — will always remain a utopia. But we should all keep trying.

Dear Robert (Zimmermann)

And all others on the (PECSRL) list.

This is an opening up of an interesting discussion. I knew that you would be enthusiastic about such a book, and I equally hope you know I do very much respect your knowledge and your enthusiasm about the history of European landscapes.

Of course it is good that we have the book!!! Last spring (2008) a group of historically oriented landscape researchers met here in Stockholm in order to give some input to a process within the European Science Foundation on landscape studies. We agreed that it was important: "To facilitate the creation of new Europe-wide syntheses and narratives of landscape character and change." And this is exactly what Urban Emanuelsson has done -- from his perspective. And the group did not ask for **one** European synthesis, but for the facilitation of syntheses.

Urban — who is a colleague I respect, and we both seem to like to have intellectual arguments ongoing between us — is a plant ecologist who has travelled widely in Europe and seen a lot of different types of grasslands, woodlands and other humanly (!) [womenmade, manmade!!] landscapes and he combines this first hand knowledge with a general understanding and interest in history. But you will not find much on field systems and settlement patterns, nor for example on the East German colonisation, so there is certainly still scope for another synthesis — or many syntheses — focussing on other aspects. The follow-up of books such as CT Smiths chapter on "Agrarian Structures and Field Systems before 1800" (In CT Smith, *An historical geography of...*) is still needed.

Urban Emanuelsson's book is a valuable contribution and I have so far been reading it in the Swedish version. It was the translation of the title that astonished me. Words do have power and from 'man' shaping the landscape it is not far from talking about 'the farmer' who shaped the landscape, and not far from suddenly talking about 'him'. Reflecting on these things and the character of the gendered division of labour behind European landscapes is also an important and interesting part of historical studies of European Landscapes.

best wishes

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The views and opinions in this publication are those of the authors and the senior editor individually and do not necessarily agree with those of the Group. It is prepared by Bud Young for the Landscape Research Group and distributed periodically to members worldwide (and on the Web) as companion to its refereed main journal *Landscape Research*.

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