The Creation, Contestation and Transformation of Landscape

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Since its inception as a scientific discipline archaeology has dealt with many challenging theoretical concepts. Among these the idea of landscape have seen significant debate from its earlier conception in processual archaeology. Today the study of landscape is accepted as an interdisciplinary field within archaeological research that brings together concepts and methods from a wide range of other disciplines ranging from geomorphology and ecology to cultural geography, performance theory and the arts.

With this session, we would like to explore from concrete case studies the many possible ways for interpreting and using the landscape concept. We are particularly interested in:

- how landscapes are being transformed through designed creation, powerful appropriation and contestation, such as in early colonial contexts;
- the roles and meanings of boundaries, borders and walls in the regulation of movement and “belonging”
- the conceptualization of landscape (in the minds of people) as “moveable” instead of spatially fixed

We encourage theoretical debates on these issues, but emphasize that presentations preferably include cases studies in which the theories and methods are explicitly articulated.

**Keywords:** Landscape, Creation, Contestation, Transformation, Movement, Borders

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Do Landscapes Move?

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Do landscapes simply trigger or attract migration and “absorb” its effects? Or do landscapes – in one or another- move and “migrate” as well – together and in interaction with people and things? And if so, could the landscape perspective have added value for understanding migration?

This paper deals with these questions, criticizing the common conviction that landscapes are external to people - both physical and in terms of human experience, that landscapes are fixed and therefore provide and environmental and cultural frame of reference for movement, travel and exile, and that landscapes consist first and foremost of solid substance, making them immovable. Instead, starting from the observation that landscapes by definition include people who take landscapes with them in their minds, designs and practices, it is argued that landscapes migrate as well – like people, things and ideas. We furthermore suggest that this also asks for a reconceptualization of the life histories of “biographies” of landscapes. Examples are taken from (pre) historic North-western Europe and from (early) colonial contexts in Asia and the Americas.

**Landscapes of Mobility and Freedom. Marronage and the making of the New World.**
Francisca Angola was born in one of the many Palenques (maroon settlements) of the north coast of Colombia. At the probably age of 70th she and some of her descendants were caught by Spanish soldiers after a military entrance into her Palenque. Taken for a trial, Francisca’s declaration offers a glimpse into the dynamics of mobility, social relations, and daily life of the maroons of the second half of the seventeenth century. Based on colonial written sources, archaeological surveys and spatial analysis, I propose that remembering and belonging could significantly have influenced some of the patterns of mobility of these maroons. Thus, the co-existence of different palenques with a defined military and social structure, as well as their emergence, abandonment and re-emergence in the same areas during this period, characterized the genesis of a particular landscape of marronage during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Changing narratives of power: the impact of designed landscapes in the Late Iron Age and post medieval periods

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This paper explores concepts of ownership and the impact of designed landscapes across time via a case study of Oakwood Park, Sussex, the setting for different narratives of power over the land in very different periods. Three private estates were created here through the process of enclosure in the early 19th century, but earlier signs of control over the land can be found within the former common land. There is a conjunction within Oakwood Park between 19th century garden earthworks and Iron Age linear dykes thought to be associated with an oppidum at Chichester or Selsey. The author’s research draws on detailed analysis of aerial photographs and lidar data, as part of a wider study into the landscape settings of Late Iron Age oppida in southern Britain.

Egyptians, Persians, Greeks, Romans, Arabs: thousands of years of landscape transformation in the Nile Delta

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Egyptians, Persians, Greeks, Romans, or Arabs have transformed the Nile Delta since its creation—approximately 7500 year ago—into a man-altered coastal plain. Different cosmologies, with different—conscious and unconscious—ecologic or economic agendas, have changed a natural landscape from a mythical one, to a very rationalised one. The former had a river, a valley, and a desert playing different and essential roles for humans. The latter, an urban landscape with a fertile hinterland, that became the granary of Rome and a playground to deploy an army and preach the word of God. Could this knowledge improve our understanding of the ancient world, and in particular of the urbanism of the Nile Delta? In this paper, I present a cosmologically oriented Geographic Information System (GIS) where we could integrate all these ecologies, and trace historical changes of settlement patterns to possibly determine urban changes.

Pretoria, ‘Writing Table’ of the Apartheids-Regime: An Urban Terrorscape?
Pretoria, the capital of South-Africa, became in 1948 the seat of a (white) racist regime that introduced the Apartheid (however, elaborating on racism in the colonial era). On a subtle way this regime managed to control the lives of more than eighty percent of the entire population. The non-white population was involuntarily encapsulated in an everything encompassing system that determined where you could live, on what benches you could sit in a parc, with whom you could marry and what type of education you would get. The mechanisms of terror were active on different levels and ranged from sophisticated bureaucracy to brutal forced relocations, imprisonment and torture. The ideological representations of races in public space is equally interesting, just like the creation of nominally independent homelands, an important tool to deprive black South-Africans from their citizenship. The present society is still struggling to deal with this complex and poisenous heritage.

**Designing Space in Place: The Basilica of Sainte-Marie-Madeleine in Vézelay**

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The basilica of Ste-Madeleine in Vézelay is among the outstanding examples of romanesque architecture. Today's nave was erected between 1120 and 1140 and is famous for its sculpture and for the architectural integration of light.

While spiritual interpretations of the church are frequent, its spatial dimension beyond the building itself remains surprisingly ignored – although the church was the starting point of a main route to Santiago de Compostela. I argue that the architecture materialises the legend of Charlemagne discovering the grave of Saint-Jacques, developed simultaneously to the building works, and promotes ideological key concepts of the reconquista.

Sainte-Madeleine in Vézelay encloses and pre-drafts the spatial movement of the pilgrims and encompasses five dimensions of Christian imperialism. Thus, the basilica integrates, evokes and designs an outer space of moveable multi-dimensional borders and imperial claims and practices.

**The Dramatized Landscape: Ritual performances and Topoanalysis of a Minoan peak sanctuary in Crete**

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Contrary to the quantitave approaches on landscape of processual archaeology, which eliminated interaction between the human and his surrounding environment, numerous scholars of performative orientations focus on landscape as a meaningful space experienced through human practices. In this context, the present paper highlights a dramatized aspect of landscape by exploring the pilgrimage and rituals performed on a Minoan peak sanctuary in Crete, situated on the imposing mountain of Juktas and used over a long period of time (2300-1350 BC). It will be shown that the reconstruction of the movements, liminal zones, modes of inclusiveness/exclusiveness leads to a comprehension of the landscape as a dynamic framework, where ordinary social boundaries blur and alternative realities emerge.
Furthermore, the paper moves a step forward by focusing on the Bachelardian concept topoanalysis and by analyzing how a prehistoric community “transformed” a concrete space, as is a mountain, through its participation in deeply emotive performances.

**Indigenous Landscape Transformations on the First Colonized Region in the Caribbean**

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The arrival of Columbus to the Caribbean in 1492 and the subsequent process of colonization represented a transformation of the indigenous worlds at material and cognitive levels. In this paper, I will present an interpretative model of the transformation of the indigenous landscape to the colonial one, through the application of a regional archaeological investigation. The research integrated the concepts of taskscape and contested landscapes within a spatial statistical and GIS-led research to evaluate patterns of material culture distribution and how they can be used to reconstruct past landscapes. From the results it was possible to create models of indigenous tasksapes at different spatial scales, which allowed the delineation of the landscape before the arrival of Columbus. This result was compared with early colonial chronicles and cartography for the northern Caribbean, which allowed the identification of the spatial and material transformation of the indigenous landscape to the colonial.