Landscape And Archaeology. Representing History For Places
Federico Nurra

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Common Goods from a Landscape Perspective

Coordinators and Guest Editors:
Saša Dobričić (University of Nova Gorica)
Carlo Magnani (University I.U.A.V. of Venice)
Bas Pedroli (University of Wageningen)
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F. Cimmino, *Bright Life in the Alley Tight*, Fourth Edition Peoples Landscapes
These proceedings of the 6th UNISCAPE Careggi Seminar on Common Goods from a Landscape Perspective are an interesting and inspiring collection of papers, presented and discussed in Florence, 16-17 January 2014.

Landscape and common goods each boast a substantial amount of literature in their own right. However, the aim of this seminar was to explore the nexus between these two concepts through the lens of epistemology, land-use, property rights, collective decision-making, governance of resources and non-institutionalized practices.

The overall objective was to build on the intellectual discourse initiated by the European Landscape Convention by further developing a framework for the protection, management and planning of landscape based on a social order not governed solely by economic and property considerations, but one which includes the ‘common’ shared aspects of the Earth’s resources from an ethical and social perspective.

This seminar was open to practitioners, experts, professors and young researchers alike and was visited by about 100 participants from many countries.

It is interesting to note that in the early etymology of ‘property’, land had significance greater than the sum of its economic production value and was also an important component of identity. Indeed, the early notion of property entailed the mutual identification of the owner and the owned; whereas the modern meaning of the word divorces property from identity and refers to inalienability rather than mutual identification.

The legal discourse of property rights has come to dominate the cultural discourse of property more generally.

However, given the existence of goods that are neither fully public nor entirely private, such as shared resources and common goods, property alone is no longer relevant for many governance strategies.

Of course, ownership and control of resources comes in shades and degrees and while a piece of land might be privately owned in title, in practice its landscape is often the subject of collective use and management.

Interpreting landscape as a common good entails a belonging articulated in users’ rights (including participation and access) – without appropriation – as opposed to owners’ rights.

This extends the notion of property beyond something external to the individual, whether private or public, and recovers the element of common identity.

We wish the reader the same pleasure as we have experienced in discussing the contributions that here follow.

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Abstract: The aim of this paper is to present the objectives and preliminary results of a research project, currently ongoing, framed within the ‘ancient topography’, but looking to the latest practices of spatial planning focused on the environment. Today, as the principle of individual profit and income is prevailing the concept of publica utilitas, it seems crucial to identify the archaeological public heritage, throughout the territory, not merely as economic and monetary source, but as a cultural and social resource, too often ignored.

A reflection is proposed, in order to prevent the impoverishment of cultural sense of territory and urbs. An upstream deep reconsideration of some positions (usual in the praxis of predominantly object-oriented conservation) will be needed, orienting the study towards a new reading and interpretation of historical evidences (both visible, such as ruins, an agrarian structure or a road network, or invisible, such as toponymic fossils, oral traditions or suggestions) contributing to the modification of the landscape, up to the present perceived ‘shape’.

Expected result will be a new model of representation of perceived variations of the character of historicity of the Landscape, not as census, cadastre or simple result of the territorial invariants, but as an instrument of help, support and direction to every study plan.

Keywords:
Ancient Topography, Archaeology, Landscape, History, Places.

Premise

The study and analysis of landscape took, in the last twenty years, an ever increasing role in different fields of knowledge, from landscape ecology (Farina 2001) to geography (Guerrandi, Tonet 2008; Farinelli 2003), territorial planning (Castelnovi 1998; Raffestin 2005; Turri 2002), history (Guzzo 2002; Settis 2010; Azzena 2011a; Turri 2006) and legislative field (Carpani 2005; Carpentieri 2004).

The topic includes in itself different strictly interrelated features; the result of a sectoral hyper-specialisation (Morin 2000) in the approach to the study of landscape, led to its factorisation in parts too rich in adjectives (Caravaggi 2002: 12), too often disconnected.

The word indicating landscape in romance languages (paesaggio, paysage, paisaje, paisagem, peisaj), includes in itself, etymologically, the signs of history and of human action (Scazzosi 1999 e Scazzosi 2002 as in Azzena 2011a: 203); the signs of pagus, village, first and fundamental work of transformation of territory in an anthropic sense (Raffestin 2005; Guzzo 2002). The same definition of “Historic Landscape” that often characterised the attempts to read, interpret and rebuild ancient territorial structures (Azzena 2011a: 203), is therefore redundant.

Main aim of the present research is therefore to reach a reading of the characters of historicity inherent landscape, in order to conceive forms of representation allowing a diverse audience to “read” the traces of history (fragments or ruins of now disappeared territorial structures) on territory, attributing to the significant its meaning in time and space.

As Andreina Ricci observes: « nevertheless there is, amongst many, a problem that is usually neglected: the “meaning” that those pre-existing elements have today for citizens and their communities in order to elaborate collective identities increasingly “multiple” and “differentiated”» (Ricci 2006: 9).

Precisely and duly knowing the positioning and real meaning of the past ruins remaining on the territory is fundamental to reach this aim, i.e. having an ‘Archaeological Map’ (Castagnoli 1993: 5-81; Azzena 2001: 149-152). The territorial survey of the present research is therefore based on the method of ancient topography (Castagnoli 1993; Dall’Aglio 2000), looking to the most recent practices of environmental-oriented territorial planning (Maciocco, Serreli, Sanna 2011).
Objectives

Conceiving new forms of representation of «history for places» (Azzena 2011a: 201) is fundamental in order to support the dialogue between specialists traditionally investigating aspects of territorial archaeology, e.g. ancient topography and landscape archaeology (Cambi 2012), and those studying territorial, urban and landscape planning (Fazio 2005).

The present work, aiming to an organic development of territory, tries to mend the existing gap between a preeminently conservative approach and a diametrically opposite approach, aimed to the transformation (Fazio 2005: 26-28; Azzena 2004: 185-187; Ricci 2006: 41-16 e 58-68; Turri 2006: 21-25).

Implicit objective is to return to populations the meaning of traces of history present on territories, as perceived by insiders and outsiders (Cosgrove 1990: 246-247), in order to build some tools of knowledge and sharing aimed to allow the widest possible audience to know and interpret the history of their own places, and for their own places (Azzena et Alii 2011: 201-209). The attempt is to avoid a drift tending to territorial homologation and to the debasement and the loss of places’ identity (Azzena et Alii 2012: 96-98).

This goal will be pursued with the support of a solid regulatory apparatus, to a Regional (Zoppi 2004 e Guermandi, Cicala 2005), National (D.Lgs. 22 gennaio 2004 e ss.mm. Cammelli 2004) and European extent (Ulisse 2009; European Landscape Convention, Firenze, 20th October 2000, Art. 6 «to assess the landscapes thus identified, taking into account the particular values assigned to them by the interested parties and the population concerned.»); an apparatus that, thanks to the ‘ethic’ inspiration (Venturi Ferriolo 2002) of the European Landscape Convention (Carpani 2005 e Carpentieri 2004), faced the topic with an innovative, but still perfectible (above all in terms of protection), approach.

The ‘object-oriented’ approach to the protection of historical-archaeological heritage (Choay 1995: 136-160; Ricci 2006: 94-99) will be, thus, put into question, trying new forms of reading and interpreting the processes which have allowed traces of history (both visible, as a ruin, an agrarian structure or a road network, and invisible, as toponymic fossils, oral tradition or suggestions) to remain on the present landscape.

A theoretical and practical contribution to the planning and realization of an innovative system of representation (Nurra 2011: 39-41) able to return the perceived variations of historicity of the places (considered inherent and ubiquitous in all landscape, and not only where it’s perceptually relevant) will be proposed.

Indispensable starting point will be the traditional ‘Archaeological Map’ (in progress in Italy from 1875 and still unfinished; Mansuelli 1957: 299-301; Castagnoli 1993: 5-81; Azzena 2001: 149-152). This map should be enriched with those material elements that, until the more recent past, interested, designed and transformed the places, trying to overcome the traditional historiographical (Carandini 2008) and legislative (D.Lgs 42/2004 e ss.mm.) criteria, that arbitrarily put absolute chronological caesuras between the end of Ancient Age and the passage to Middle Age and Modern and Contemporary Age (see the principle of ‘equidistance’, in Azzena 2011a: 215-219).

Attention will be paid on individuation and rebuilding of ‘chronosystems’ developed through the centuries, as living bodies on the ground that dying (as defunctionalised) inevitably left their mortal remains, signs of their passage, as memory and track of their existence, often offering cannibalistic nourishing and sustenance to the bodies that took their place and whose succession gives, today, a sense to that diachronic jumble that, filtered through the thick lenses of our look (Farinelli 2003: 66), can be called Landscape (Turri 2006: 15-18; Farinelli 2003: 200-201; Guzzo 2002: 73. Cfr. Cosgrove 1990: 246-247).

Expected result will be a new model of representation of perceived variations of the character of the landscape’s historicity, not as census, cadastral or simple result of the territorial invariants, but
as an instrument of help, support and direction to every study plan (see some explicative cases in Castelnovi 1998; Azzena et Alii 2012).

State of the art

The office for the archaeological map of Italy was established with a Royal Decree in 1889 (Azzena 2001: 15; Azzena 2011b: 30). Safeguarding the archaeological heritage was certainly the driving force of this initiative, in a historical moment when the construction euphoria and a very little forward-looking perspective of progress (in the new capital city, but not only) jeopardised the preservation of the testimonies of the past (Azzena 2011b: 30-31).

Talking about ‘Archaeological Map of Italy’ or about a ‘cadastre’ of archaeological presences today, after one hundred and fifty years (Azzena 2011b: 29), can seem obsolete and out of time; but, as denounced by Antonio Cederna (Guermandi, Cicala 2007: 304), and as remembered by Salvatore Settis, the ‘heritage’ is still undermined by cynicism and indifference (Settis 2010: 282; Antrop 2005: 21-23).

Today, in a moment of economical, social and cultural global crisis, in which the principle of individual profit and income is prevailing the concept of publica utilitas, it seems crucial to identify the archaeological public heritage, throughout the territory, not merely as economic and monetary source, but as a cultural and social resource, too often ignored (deliberately or not).

A reflection is proposed, in order to prevent the impoverishment of the cultural sense of territory and urbs of which future generations inevitably will take charge. The same meaning of cultural ‘good’ or ‘heritage’ (Choay 1994: 83-115), frames an economical-productive oriented approach to the topic of preservation and ‘valorisation’ (another term borrowed from economics), and threatens to undermine a forward-looking planning of territory and of its components. For this reason it seems essential that the archaeological debate would be inserted in the reflection started in the last years in the urban and landscape fields; a reflection that tries to overcome the high boundary walls erected for the defense of disciplinary competences contributing to an organic study of territorial planning (Azzena 2004: 195).

Preliminary results

Reaching a base of historical-territorial knowledge as complete as possible, in order to start to elaborate an innovative methodology for the identification and recognition of the most significant characters highlighting the presence of history in landscape, was the main objective of the first year of research. The collection of as much data as possible about the territory in question, and the analysis of a great number of available historical and geographical data, were an essential part of the work.

North-Western Sardinia was chosen as the field of inquiry, for the preeminent conservative character of this island and for the transformations that took place in the last two centuries in this area (increasing of the mining activity, drainages, towns built in the fascist Age such as Fertilia, agricultural exploitation of the Nurra plain, the industrial hub of Porto Torres, urban explosion and dispersion). For the eminently empiric character of the present research, this method could be applied, in the future, to other territorial contexts. The collection and preventive analysis of historical-archaeological data regarding the examined territory, allowed to highlight relations and interactions contributing to the generation of the historical processes and of the diachronic dynamics (contractive or expansive, depending on the historical moments) of ‘territorialisation’ (Raffestin 1984: 69-82; Magnaghi 2001: 31-33; Poli 2001: 39-41; Raffestin 2005: 36-44) that characterised the same territory.

The collected data have been systematised in a dedicated GIS, thus allowing to deepen the knowledge of territory, defining, to a macroscop-
ic level, some of the relations between natural component (environment) and anthropic component (territory) that led to the current definition, conformation and perception (landscape) of the study area (Guzzo 2002: 33-38).

A widespread and homogeneous knowledge, extended to the whole analysed territory, even if reduced to the basic informative system associated to a precise geographical localisation (the ‘archaeological cadastre’ pursued from 1875), is, in this sense, an undoubtedly solid base, that can be used in different directions and with different functions.

The great number of acquired data was collected and organised according to the specifications dictated by the “Commissione Paritetica MIBAC/MIUR per la realizzazione del Sistema Informativo Territoriale del Patrimonio Archeologico Italiano” (D.M. 22 dicembre 2009. Sassatelli 2011: 99-101), and confirmed by the resolutions of the “Gruppo di lavoro paritetico e permanente per la realizzazione del SIT Archeologico Nazionale per i Beni Archeologici (SITAN)”, established in 2011 and still operating.

To contain and organise the collected data (both present on file system and in network), an express relational GeoDB on a server OS on Open Source platform was arranged, in order to make it possible to access the archived data, through a common GIS client, in every moment through the Internet.

A minimum value of knowledge was attributed to each geographical datum, avoiding redundancies and incongruities. A ‘Greatest Common Divisor’ was used, in order to define to a topographic and chronological level, the archaeological evidences of territory.

**Future actions**

The preliminary results presented are relative only to the first year of research. The work will be completed during the two years lacking to the end of the project of research, and the goals exposed in the present text will be achieved through some concrete actions.

Deepen the knowledge of the representation of archaeological thematism in archaeological cartography (Mansuelli 1957: 299-301; Azzena 2001), was necessary in order to conceive new forms of representation, trying to overcome the current forms of object-oriented representation of the archaeological ‘good’, even when characterised by a measured metric survey (Azzena 2009: 11-16).

The ancient territorial assets of the examined area were defined, not as stratification, but as compenetration, trying to apply the principles of equidistance, scale, reciprocity and sharing in the reading of landscape (for the definition of these four parameters, see Azzena 2011a: 217-223), and trying to represent the produced analysis.

It will be necessary to reach a different reading of the history of the territories, and to propose it as a moment of “auto-determination of populations”. The perceptive characters of the history in the places (Turri 2006: 36-41; Raffestin 2005: 84-88; Augé 2009: 75-102; Guzzo 2002: 33-37) as perceived by users: inhabitants and not, specialized, *flaneur*, insiders and outsiders, will be necessarily analysed (European Landscape Convention, Art. 6). To do this, it will be necessary to try to define new parameters of reading history in the landscape (Nurra 2011: 40-41), highlighting the affective component towards the remains (tangible and not) of History present in places.

Once defined the parameters and supports for the representation (currently in preparation, and not necessarily cartographical), the experimentation in different territorial contexts of the new forms of graphic automated/assisted/analogical representation produced, will be started (a practical example in Azzena et Alii 2012: 96-98).

For the eminently social character of the expected results, it seems undeferrable the successive sharing of the datum to all extents: a ‘democratization of information’ (Azzena 2011b: 34) contributing to create, define and promote that sensibility, indispensable for a ‘shared protection’,
nowadays finally achievable, also thanks to the Web contribution. 
The aim is a shared horizon, an ethic, before than technical, goal, towards a base of knowledge shared, open and really accessible.

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