Session title: “ARE WE THERE YET?” ARCHAEOLOGISTS AND THE EUROPEAN LANDSCAPE CONVENTION

Organizers: Marie-Jeanne Ghenne, Région wallonne, Belgium
Graham Fairclough, English Heritage, UK

Time: Friday morning

Room:

Session abstract:

For the past 8 years EAA Annual Meetings have seen discussions about the role of archaeologists in the ELC (Florence, 2000). The importance of this issue for archaeologists continues to grow as the Convention spreads its influence and as its implementation begins in earnest. (It is in force now in 29 countries). There have been two parallel strands at EAA meetings - Round Tables discussing national policy and practice and Sessions explaining methods and results in many countries. There has, however, been a tendency for the range of participants in both sets of meetings to reflect a bias towards the ‘northern’ and Anglophone traditions. In advance of the next Round Table (which we hope to hold at EAA in 2009) and to take advantage of the location of the 2008 Meeting, we therefore offer a session with a different bias

The ELC covers many aspects of landscape policy, and two aspects of the Convention may be particularly relevant to this session: article 6(c) on the need to understand (assess and identify) landscape (because in that area archaeologists have a specific contribution to make in terms of process and human agency through deep time); and article 5 (d) on managing landscape not through narrow sectoral policies (‘heritage’ for example) but through all aspects of land policy. Both raise the question of interdisciplinary work, and all the papers are set within the Convention’s definition of landscape as ‘an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors’.

Paper abstracts:

INTRODUCTION: COMING TO TERMS WITH LANDSCAPE AND PAYSAGE

Marie-Jeanne Ghenne, Région wallonne, Belgium and Graham Fairclough, English Heritage, UK

LANDSCAPE: CAN IT BE USEFUL FOR ARCHAEOLOGY? SOME LEGAL ASPECTS OF THE QUESTION ...

V. Negri, CECOJI/CNRS

A particular concept and definition of landscape emerged in the late 19th century during the development of concern for historic monuments in Europe. In the same way as the concept of historic monument crystallised Heritage’s contribution to the State’s identity, as it sought, after a European conflict, to affirm the eminence of national culture, so ‘landscape’ offered doctrines of heritage conservation and legal arguments to strengthen the sense of belonging to a homeland. During the late 19th and early 20th century heritage debates, landscape was
regarded as “the beloved face of the Fatherland”. Archaeology was also recruited to feed the national sentiment, and so we can witness the only combination in that period of landscape and archaeology.

This notion of landscape developed within a concept of “site” in which aesthetic and picturesque criteria had precedence. Until the Second World War this site-base notion of landscape prevailed in domestic law. The same applied to international laws, such as the London Convention of 1933 or the Inter-American Convention of 1940 on Nature Protection and Wild Life Preservation in the Western Hemisphere which illustrated an orientation towards the picturesque and the aesthetic that summarized the approach to landscape at that time.

From the 1960s and (especially) the 1970s, the notion of landscape was freed from sole emphasis on aesthetic and picturesque characteristics to include other criteria. One influence was the Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention, adopted by the UNESCO in 1972. In 1996, a global strategy was adopted to reinforce the implementation of this Convention in 1996, and concepts of “fossil landscapes”, “relic landscapes”, “living landscapes”, “associate landscapes”, and even “cultural routes” renewed the definition and understanding of landscape. It thus became possible to detach landscape from the concept of site. Most recently, this expansion of the concept of landscape has been confirmed in Europe by the Florence Convention on Landscape, adopted in 2000.

It remains, however, to question the effectiveness of these new standards. The implementation of these new landscape concepts requires the mobilization of the heritage field and its various disciplines that include archaeology, which had only accepted legal definitions of the landscape at its margins.

If, from a conceptual point of view, and in the light of the humanities, the connection between archaeology and the landscape is self-evident, it remains to determine whether, from an operational and legal point of view in the light of the evolution of the legal concept of landscape, archaeology has a find place within ‘landscape’.

**CHANGING THE SCALE OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES THROUGH LANDSCAPE STUDIES**

D. Stefan, Vector Studio and M. Dutescu, Digital Domain, Romania

The paper will present the change in archaeological perspective and scale of historical problematic brought by the development of complex landscape analyses in two Iron Age sites located in present day Romania. Traditional research through systematic excavation, even if undertaken for many years, brought plenty information about the chronology and quality of the archaeological material, but failed to integrate the sites in a functional representation. Carolomanesti was traditionally understood as a 7000 sqm plateau interpreted as settlement or even as a cult place, where several large cult buildings and workshops functioned in the late Iron Age. Recent landscape studies showed that this plateau was only the central place of a huge site developed around it, now covered by cyclic flooding of the nearby river. Jijila, an Early Iron Age megalithic fortress, seems nowadays isolated in a remote region. Landscape studies found that this location was in the past, the perfect solution to control the most important road in the region. Thus the landscape studies showed that the research areas should be extended from thousands of square meters to several tens of square kilometres in order to be able to properly interpret the functionality of these sites.
LANDSCAPES HAVE A STORY TOO … ARCHAEOLOGY, GEO-ARCHAEOLOGY AND MULTIDISCIPLINARY APPROACHES TO TERRITORIES

J.-M. Carozza, Université Louis Pasteur à Strasbourg, France
Th. Odiot, Département des Pyrénées-Orientales, France

The relationship between archaeology and spatial planning is often regarded above all as a conflict between actors in two different fields (archaeologists and planners or developers). Furthermore, placing archaeological investigations (“archeologie preventive”) towards the end of the territorial planning process tends to institutionalise an apparent antipathy into the decision-making structure. This perception of conflict is stronger when territorial planning is seen mainly as a process of breaking with previous evolutions, especially when imposed not sought (determinism vs possibilism).

Experiments with multidisciplinary approaches in the South of France show in contrast that a strong complementarity can exist between development and landscape archaeology. This can enable a strong durability in territorial organisation, both in terms of structure (organisation) and as of process (risks). Through examples from work in the South of France, we will show that the achievements of a multidisciplinary approach to territory (i.e. an archaeology of landscape) could be a tool for understanding and management.

In particular, we will use the example of the evolution of the low littoral plains to show the long-term durability of settlement and the evolution of environmental constraints, notably connected with rivers characterised by a strong lateral mobility. Some examples of co-operation with municipal, regional and environmental administrations will be presented.

THE DISCOVERY OF CULTURAL LANDSCAPE IN FRANCE

Ph. Vergain, Ministère de la Culture et de la Communication, France

Starting from the European definition inherited from the Malta Convention, French archaeology since the mid 1990s has come into a mature phase concerning taking archaeological data into account before the launch of major development public works. This fully reconciles the term “preventive archaeology” with the principle of “sauvegarde par l’étude” (“preservation by record”).

One result is that the collection (particularly in the context of preliminary studies and diagnoses) of a wide range of archaeological information notably from sondages, surveys or evaluations, has contributed to the identification of traces of the past including the slightest which is creating, under certain conditions a historicisation of so-called “natural” landscapes. This current development must correspond with a strengthening of the conditions for dialogue between elected officials, economic decision-makers, spatial planners and archaeologists. The latter, in collaboration with social sciences and natural sciences specialists, should bring understanding of the long-term evolution of territories and landscape to the attention of the greatest number and in accessible forms (and easily translatable with assigned values). Such an interdisciplinary work would allow the proposal of convincing reconstructions of cultural landscapes, in order to implement a long-term preservation policy around local projects using all available protection tools.

IMPLEMENTING THE ELC IN HUNGARY
K. Wollák, National Office of Cultural Heritage, Hungary

The European Landscape Convention has been in force in Hungary since 1st February 2008. An action plan is under preparation, which will be supported by an advisory committee consisting of representatives of the relevant ministries and experts, creating opportunities for active cooperation between nature conservation and heritage management. The heritage sector has to be quite innovative during the implementation process. Whilst in the case of the built and archaeological heritage the essential method for protection and preservation is provided through legal tools and by licensing mechanisms, it is evident that the sustainable preservation of the rural and urban landscapes demands different methods such as land management guidelines, advisory assistance and much more intensive collaboration between the different partners.

The renewal of the National Spatial Planning Document can be considered as a recent positive element. The original plan was enacted in 2003. Territories with cultural heritage that required high priority management were elaborated, as well as landscapes of national or regional importance which need protection, preservation and management with enhanced care. Relevant areas should be classified into the above mentioned zones, and management guidelines should be developed on the different levels from the master plans of the settlements to a national scale. The preamble of the document identifies cultural heritage as a resource for development.

We also have an effective administrative tool: the so called heritage impact assessment. This is required to be prepared during the renewal of the master plans of the settlements, by exploring and defining the existing and predicted elements of the cultural (= built and archaeological) heritage, and it is also required by certain larger scale developments, in which case a heritage impact assessment is also required to prepare. Some hundred assessments are prepared each year, and therefore this method could help a lot in not only specifying the different elements of the historic environment, but also in developing a more balanced planning policy.

ARCHAEOLOGY AND LANDSCAPE: TWO FACES OF THE SAME COIN

Y. Hollevoet, Department of Town and Country Planning, Housing Policy and Immovable Heritage, Flemish Community, Belgium

Belgium has a long tradition of protecting historical/cultural landscapes. Its first law for the protection of monuments, sites and landscapes dates from 1931. In the past decade, however, it is the Flanders region that has been prominent in the awakening public awareness of landscape. In 1996 a large inventory campaign of the best preserved relics of the traditional landscapes was started. Five years later this resulted in the publication of an inventory of the Flemish landscape: the Landscape Atlas. A holistic approach was taken implying among other things that the landscape was not only determined by landscape elements but also by their mutual historical and spatial relations. Amongst these elements are the archeological sites which form an important part of every landscape. They are the tangible evidence of human action in the past and as such are the historic dimension of a landscape. However most of the time archeological sites left only traces concealed in the earth and largely invisible to a wider audience. And as everybody knows unseen is often also unloved. Additionally, the landscape atlas can only incorporate known archaeological evidence and must bear in mind that this information represents only the tip of the proverbial iceberg.
In 2003 a next step was taken in the protection of valuable landscapes by a new legal instrument: the so-called 'landscapes of inheritance'. These are to be incorporated into the spatial planning process, with specific prescriptions in favour of landscape and its elements. These ‘landscapes of inheritance’ therefore offer a possibility to integrate archaeology in spatial planning.

ARCHAEOLOGISTS AND LANDSCAPE IN WALLONIA WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE EUROPEAN LANDSCAPE CONVENTION

A. Letor, Université libre de Bruxelles, Belgium
M.-J. Ghenne, Ministère de la Région wallonne, Belgium

The European Landscape Convention (Florence 2000) is notable for the emphasis it puts on the entire landscape and on the wider cultural concept, without limiting it to remarkable features too often taken into account, but also insisting on the everyday landscape, on its familiarity and even degraded character. According to the terms of the convention, the present landscape is the result of the action and interaction of human and/or natural factors.

If the reference to archaeology is not clearly stated in the text of the convention, the reference to the human intervention in terms of the landscape’s construction indirectly implies archaeologists as actors for the implementation of the landscape’s identification. The historic landscape is everywhere and is not necessarily made of valuable rural zones but also comprises the urban and periurban zones more obviously altered by human beings. This alteration has taken the form of an uniformisation, following the changes initiated since the middle of the 19th century and exacerbated since the middle of the 20th century by the modification of the planning scale.

Just as some archaeological sites considered as less significant or poorly identified were eroded because of a focus on major sites, we should be alert to the fact that the same mistakes could happen with landscapes.

This is why landscape management can only be thought about after a stage of identification and qualification, the outcome of which will be the management of change understood as a consideration of the historic, cultural, social and economic forces operating outside static and fixed protection. The approach of historic landscape characterisation developed in England does seem to fulfil this requirement in the Walloon Region.