

# Selected Abstracts and Refereed Papers

Editors:

Maria Ignatieva and Glenn Stewart

## Historical Landscapes in the Modern Era

## Исторические ландшафты и современность

International Conference  
St. Petersburg, Russia: 1-3 June 2009



**St. Petersburg State Forest Technical Academy  
City of St Petersburg  
Lincoln University  
New Zealand Research Centre for Urban Ecology**

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Мария Игнатьева  
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The published proceedings of the conference “Historical Landscapes in the Modern Era” comprises both selected abstracts and refereed papers. The conference was held at the Mikhailovsky Castle, St.Petersburg, Russia, 1-3 June 2009, and was an initiative supported by the city of St.Petersburg Administration, St. Petersburg State Forest Technical Academy, Lincoln University, New Zealand and the International Federation of Landscape Architects. The abstracts were selected by the editorial panel following an international call for papers. Landscape architecture is a very complex profession and includes different research in historical landscapes, restoration and protection of historical landscapes. The refereed papers were double-blind reviewed by international peers, following the invitation to all selected abstract authors for participation in the refereed papers section of the proceedings.

Труды конференции «Исторические ландшафты и современность» содержат тезисы докладов и рецензируемые статьи. Конференция проводилась в Санкт-Петербургской государственной лесотехнической академии с 1 по 3 июня 2009 года. Эта конференция была также изначально задумана и поддержана администрацией города Санкт-Петербурга, Санкт-Петербургской лесотехнической академией, Университетом Линкольна (Новая Зеландия) и Международной Федерацией Ландшафтных Архитекторов. Тезисы были отобраны конференционным комитетом. Все статьи прошли процесс двойного анонимного рецензирования с помощью коллег со всего мира. Авторы статей, успешно прошедшие этот процесс, были приглашены написать работы для части трудов конференции, включающей рецензированные статьи.

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## Introduction and Welcome

Welcome, and Добро Пожаловать! to the conference, *Historical Landscapes in the Modern Era*, held at the State Forest Technical Academy, St Petersburg, Russia, 1-3 June, 2009.

### The Conference

The conference represents a year of planning, and the realisation of an aspiration to make a tangible contribution to the emerging landscape architecture profession in Russia. The idea to host a conference in Russia in 2009 stems from the immense success of the first international conference in 2007 – Globalisation and Landscape Architecture (GaLA): issues for education and practice. This conference was the brainchild of Dr Maria Ignatieva and Dr Irina Melnuchik, both of whom are native Russians, although Dr Ignatieva now lives in New Zealand. The 2008 conference addressed different international aspects of urban design and ecology and was dedicated to the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first Russian landscape architecture programme which was introduced at the St.Petersburg Forest Technical Academy in 1933. The success of the second conference inspired The St. Petersburg State Forest Technical Academy, the Administration of St.Petersburg and Lincoln University in New Zealand, together with the International Federation of Landscape Architects and The New Zealand Research Centre for Urban Ecology to provide support for a third international conference dedicated to the theme of historical landscapes in the modern era.

The conference aims are to share experiences of understanding historical landscapes in modern cities, learning about different techniques of restoration and reconstruction of historical parks, gardens and landscapes and discussions about the place of historical landscapes in the modern era of globalisation, their meaning and importance for identity of cities.

This conference is dedicated to the 110<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Tatyana Dubyago, professor of the Leningrad State Forest Technical Academy and “mother” of the Russian school of historical landscapes and restoration of historical parks and gardens. The conference focus is reinforced by the widely international conference participants, who come from Russia, New Zealand, Canada, USA, Spain, Italy, Brazil, The Netherlands, Turkey, Estonia, Iran, The United Kingdom, Austria, Ukraine, Slovakia and Serbia.

### The Proceedings

This proceedings volume reflects a rigorous process of academic peer review, following the conventions of selection and double-blind refereeing which provide quality assurance in research publication. The call for abstract proposals yielded an excellent response, and the review panel selected c. 40 abstracts. Successful authors were invited to submit full ‘short’ papers (1500 words) for refereeing. The process of double-blind review involved the anonymous papers being sent to international peers for feedback and a recommendation on publication. Anonymous reviewers provided responses which were invaluable in the rigour of this process. The final 19 papers which met the review standards are published in the refereed section of this volume.

preservation of a static picture, but it needs a man to take care of it. Without the will of owners to maintain the vineyards there will be nothing to protect, the historical landscape structure will change and authorities can think about promoting other types of landscape structure in this area. The tools offered by the master plan are not sufficient for achieving the preservation objectives which are set.

### Conclusion

The recommendation for landscape management of local authorities and for municipality is to revalue and reassess the landscape and urban development policies of the vineyard area, with broader discussion about its future, in conjunction with stakeholders and citizens. Further surveys and research, elaboration of different scenarios of development for discussion, achievement of broad acceptance and consensus are needed. To achieve the objective of preservation of vineyards as a public good at least in some areas, suitable not only from ecological and scenic beauty points of view, but also feasible from an ownership point of view, will most probably require deeper involvement of the public sector, intervention of local government, even in the form of land acquisition, or economic incentives to wine producers to continue maintenance of the vineyards. Use of a variety of management techniques seems to be needed for adoption of less romantic, but more realistic approaches towards vineyards and for rethinking the actions and management plans to incorporate the dying relict of the past into the structure of a modern city. Adoption of land use policies, which more reflect the socio-economic factors and wishes of owners can avoid threats and negative implications of the process of black building and wild urbanization of vineyards, and finally can lead to better achievement of preservation objectives of certain commonly accepted values.

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Fig. 1. Vineyard area on the slopes of the hills, Veduta of Bratislava of Hogenberg and Braun.



Fig. 2. Vineyard area in spatial plan of Bratislava.

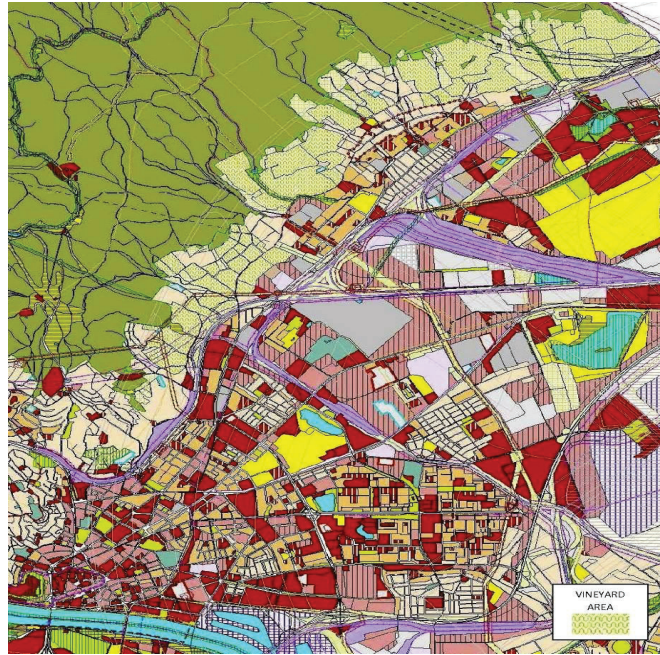


Fig.3. Proceeding urbanisation of vineyard area on the top of the hill, enclosing protected vineyards.



## Revitalizing Landscapes Through our Senses: A Phenomenological Approach

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### Introduction

Living and understanding the space where we live, is part of a process based on knowledge and experience gained over time. This depends on the way we enter in synchrony with the environment around us and how we perceive and act with the things or even collect and process the information that comes from that environment. The relationships between people and the landscape around them are complex and based in interaction. All the things can hear us and understand us, because all things are *capable of talking*. Even the crack sound made by the ice on



lakes is a new kind of speech of the land. This deference to the natural elements – the clear sense that the ground is not only encouraged to speak but is also listening to us – supports the view of Merleau-Ponty (1999) of perceptual reciprocity: listening to the forest is also primarily to be listened by the forest and as well contemplating the forest is to feel exposed and visible, feeling observed by the forest. This justifies the importance of the study of Phenomenology as a method for exploring and describing the things or experiences, using the perception as an instrumental track. It's the study of the essence of the things; it is the encounter with the world through the body, through the senses. This philosophical method, with origins in Husserl (1958) and reformulated in 1901 by the French philosopher Maurice Merleau-Ponty in the 50's, mainly aims at *"reconciling the objective and subjective components of the form"* (Magalhaes, 2001) through a mental process.

This work aims are to reveal the sensitive reality of the landscape and the inherent sensitivity of Man who moves on it, realizing the inter-relationships that are developed to the point where the subject (Man) is able to form a cognitive representation of the real space, creating a living world full of experiences.

### **Nature complexity of the landscape: feeling the invisible**

For Landscape Architects, landscape is their field of work and intervention. We can say that the landscape is viewed as an ecosystem that surrounds the human race, being formed by a set of elements in a specific time and cultural space (Hardt, 2000). We can affirm also that the landscape is mutable because it depends on man's actions and environment conditions, being the perception of a bilateral process based on each person's perception of reality (Lynch, 2002). Every man is restricted to interactions with other people and objects. It is the establishment of spatial relationships between objects and events that gives man the ability to locate himself as a part of the world and locate places as part of his world. It's the identification of places and what they represent to us that builds a specific character of a certain space. It's also important to maintain historical landscapes as part of our cultural and natural heritage. Our responsibility is to begin to understand these type of landscapes, or more precisely, the *genius loci*, by reinforcing the landscape structure and helping man to set and live, meeting his needs and creating a dialogue between him and the place: *"moving up through spaces, you can often relive the emotions associated with them, obtained in previous meetings or apply models of places previously visited. These emotions are associated with the visitor. However, it is clear that the place has its own way, an emotional state, and independent of the state of mind of the visitor at the meeting. This is called the sense of spirit of the place, genius loci"* (N-Schulz, 1980).

The landscape architect should find a symbolic language which connects man with the spirit of the place, to convey feelings or evocations to enable him to feel good using it. Let's take the example of the second biggest city in Estonia: Tartu. Mainly destroyed during the Second World War most of the historical places were domed to ashes, just the ruins remained. Besides the change in the cultural background, the symbolic meaning of the places were kept and remained alive in the populations mind. Even if we change the land-use, a strong cultural and emotional background pattern is still alive (Fig. 1). The way landscapes are perceived and interpreted by different cultures has structured landscape and land-use patterns (Ashmore & Knapp, 1999). Cultural perception and interpretation of the environment has thus led to spatial patterning of landscapes, and these patterns can be identified and mapped as historical landscapes.

This should be the support philosophy for the study of historical landscapes. Due to their cultural value, these historical landscapes should not be removed from the urban grid, but integrated to revitalize their spirit giving them also a new symbolic language while preserving



their historical content. Because of the value acquired through time, man has related himself to this type of landscape, depositing feeling, interacting with it and integrating its value through mental maps.

Going back to our study case, the main historical places in Tartu located on the central hill, were restored. On one hand the landscape structure was reinforced by keeping the spirit of the place with its' historical value, keeping as well the meaning attached by the people on the natural and man-made landscape features and elements but on the other hand the functional pattern changed. This means that our intervention must strive to create the perfect environment necessary for many functions – *“not only the use but also for protections and raise of emotions”* (Magalhaes, 2001). All this makes the landscape a dynamic structure in itself, a natural process influenced by interactive forces also subject to limitations. We reflect ourselves in the landscape and create in us the phenomena of consciousness that leads to the allocation and extrapolation of feelings; we can also say that we give a personal character transforming this dynamic space in a place.

According to Berque (1998) we should understand the landscape as a stimulus because it is seen by the eye, experienced by a consciousness, valued for its aesthetics and utility, regulated by a policy, and others. This sense of landscape must be seen as a field of visibility and individual meaning – visibility understood as a set of existing natural and cultural forms and associated with a particular area, and individual meaning as a product of our experiences, that shape the components supplied to our perception (apud Lorini and Persson, 2001). One of the examples is the several covering works by Christo and Jeanne-Claude, where they try to point out the physical presence of marks in the landscape, placing them in evidence by their inert character. This means, landscape is interpreted by its evidence and the representations that man makes of it and from it. This is a phenomenological attitude, the understanding of the landscape by experience, placing their essences in existence. Being defined at the visible level, the landscape is a morphological reality of material expression, formed by different components as volumes, objects, colors, cultural objects, of natural and artificial characteristics, making the space created by man over nature.

Therefore, the Landscape only has existence starting from the perception that we have of it; also the man giving the landscape is significance. According to this subjectivity, we can say that the landscape is a mental territory, a development made by mental images, as Lynch (1960) says *“the environmental images are the result of a bilateral process between the observer and environment. This suggests specifications and relationships, and the observer – with great adaptability and in the light of its own objectives – selects, organizes and gives meaning to what he sees”* (Lynch, 2002). Here the landscape is the key to accomplish mental maps, where the different perception susceptibilities induce to different space apprehensions.

The important use of this method in historical landscapes has been connected with research projects exploring the subject boundaries and making links between natural and culture components of landscapes (Skar, 2001). The concept of perceptual units, which are much used in environmental psychology and landscape architecture, are increasingly used in heritage management to define cultural environments (Gansum et al., 1997). Assessment of the historical character of an area can take place at different scales, each of relevance to different planning uses. At the landscape level, assessments focus on the roles of perceptual units and the visual relationships between sites and topographic features within a landscape. The phenomenology of landscapes with the symbolic meaning of places and spaces and relationships between them occur at this level (Llobera, 1996). People have attached meaning to natural or man-made landscape features and elements. Understanding the role of perceptual units assists in interpreting the cultural significance of landscape elements.

## Conclusion

Taking into account the different degrees of complexity in analysis of concepts about landscape, highlighting the difficulty in integrating all the processes and dynamics associated with the landscape project, we say that the landscape is a natural and ecological (climate, soil, water, topography, fauna and flora) and as well as Man's action/intervention product, but also product of both in synchrony, as subject-object. The landscape becomes a personal experience of each individual, based on his own experience, to awaken the perceptive senses for the different realities, and also by the spirit of the place; sending us more than physical characteristics, but also social and economic relations, leading to different levels of complexity.

We can say that the landscape architect expresses certain aspects of the landscape through new codes and symbols, by the invention of an expressive character correlated with the pre-existing content of the real space, or even by other content from the boundaries of the experience of landscapes, expression of his own internal experience in an existential space for all the people.

Transporting this process to the different design stages, we can say, according to a phenomenological basis, that the conceptual approach developed in the early stages of the design must understand the true *genius loci*: the resonance of the body establishing dialogues with the different sensitive forms of the real space, producing phenomena of consciousness (all the meanings they bring to the mind). However, as sentient beings in a world full of phenomena, the design comprehension does not end here. The perception is not a passive act: at all the times our cognitive processes reinvent the world through the integration of new sensory information. The perceptual experience is the key in understanding or quest for knowledge of the world.

Understanding the reality is at the same time being touched by the surroundings and recreating that same world. This way of perceiving and creating from experience should not be understood as a static moment, limited to the comprehension stage of the landscape design, but as a continuum of action that is transversal to all the design stages: perception, conception, formalization and implementation of the final object.

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Fig. 1. Tartu - Toome Hill with the actual University of Tartu Museum of History. This building was originally a 16<sup>th</sup> century monastery that was one of the few places that survived the Second World War.

