

Meet the Editors: Journal of European Landscapes Q&A. 28 August 2020. Transcript

Irene: With a very slight delay, hello and welcome to SPUI25 and the Meet the Editors of the *Journal of European Landscapes* session this afternoon. My name is Irene van Rossum, I am commissioning editor at Amsterdam University Press where I manage the journals portfolio. I'm joined here by Linde Egberts and Hans Renes both of VU University in Amsterdam. To start, we made this session coincide with the virtual online meeting of the Association of Critical Heritage Studies, which of course is not in London today due to obvious reasons. But there's no conference without a book fair and AUP is happy to announce that we have a virtual exhibit where we offer 40% discount on relevant titles on heritage and memory studies. We are very grateful for people to have given us questions for the meeting in advance. If there are further questions to be asked, there is a hashtag. It's not on the screen right now but it's #AUPJEL on Twitter and we will be keeping an eye on questions coming in. We're very happy to have this session here. I think that's all that I had to say for me. Hans Renes will start, introducing the journal and himself.

Hans: Thank you Irene. I'm Hans Renes, I'm originally educated as a historical geographer and worked on that for quite a number of decades. I'm also a member of some international organisations, board member even, on the history of landscape in relation to planning and also in relation to heritage. Since ten years I also have a chair in heritage studies, mainly in relation to landscape, at the VU University in Amsterdam. Now, one of our present projects is this beautiful the *Journal of European Landscapes*. I want to say a few things about 'why this journal'. Initially, Amsterdam University Press asked me and a colleague archaeologist, Professor Jan Kolen, who is not here today, to think about a journal. And we have done some research and we thought that there are many journals on landscape, many on the theory of landscape, and even more on local and regional landscapes but what was missing is a really international journal. And one of the reasons to start such a journal is that there are increasing numbers of European wide projects in which landscapes are researched in an international perspective and many of these data are, as we call it, grey; they disappear in the course of time and after a few years the website of the project is lost and no one knows anymore that it's happening and there is such an amount of useful information. And because of this perspective of much information being lost in the course of time we thought it was a good idea to document these international projects and that's why we started a journal with the following types of publications. The first is articles, scientific papers, which will be

and are peer-reviewed, which need to have an international perspective; so, no local, regional case studies but really comparative case studies that have a transnational perspective. The same is true for the other type of publications; one is projects, which will be documentation of the project I just mentioned and that means that we plan to publish and we already published a number of them, short articles on projects, those that are involved and especially also the places where the data can be found and the main results. And then the third type of publications is, of course I would say, book reviews. So that's what we started with and in fact, the first publications have only been put online a few months ago so this is really the first big presentation of this journal and we are glad you're all here and we are very interested in hearing your remarks and your questions. We can offer you possibilities to publish and of course we also need reviewers, reviewers for books, but also reviewers for articles. So that's for the first information. I give the chair to my colleague, Linde.

Linde: Good afternoon or at least afternoon here in Amsterdam. My name is Linde Egberts, I am Assistant Professor in Heritage Studies at the Vrije Universiteit and I'm a colleague of Hans Renes. I joined the team of the *Journal of European Landscapes* as a chief-editor, well, almost 2 years ago, based on my frustrations in my own research as an international scholar or a scholar with international research interests; geographic comparisons between heritage practices and various areas and various landscapes across Europe and not being able to find a proper platform to share my ideas and to share this international comparative or contextualising endeavour with scholars who had the same interests. So coming across the initiative by Hans Renes and several of our colleagues really struck me as something that could help me overcome this frustration of not being able to find the platform that I wanted to publish on. As a chief-editor I will not be publishing that much myself but I am very happy that I'm able to offer other scholars the opportunity to actually have that platform. And not only established scholars but particularly I notice that young scholars in the landscape and heritage studies fields are especially interested in diving into international contextualising studies, more maybe than the established generations. And it's all still explorative in looking for ways to make this useful and meaningful, to look at or trying to understand localities and characteristics of landscapes and one particular place by comparing them or seeing them in the light of what happens in other places in Europe or outside Europe. It really could help us understand better what is unique about places and how do they transform in their own way and also how are they connected to more global processes of change that influence every landscape in the world, not the least by climate change, for example.

So my fascination in my own research on the cultural heritage practices in landscape transformations really connects very closely to my desire to create a platform for this kind of international research, so that's the reason why I am making time to do this and trying to put my energy into getting this journal running and making it sustainable for the future. Hans already said a lot about what the journal as a platform could offer in terms of what sort of contributions it welcomes, and I can maybe not repeat it enough, but having a contextualising interest in one locality and trying to understand that in a broader international or transnational context is really key to the criteria of what sort of publications would be feasible for being part of the journal, being placed in the journal. This counts for research articles, this counts for documentation of international projects, it counts also for book reviews; if you want to review a book or have your own book reviewed there must be some sort of international contextualising aspect to that book. And it also counts for interviews and it's a category that Hans did not mention yet but we actually started our journal with one of the first articles which is an interview with Kenneth Olwig, so we would also be interested in reflecting on this international comparative perspective on landscapes and heritage practices with people in the field - authorities, maybe later in their career, but also younger ones. So if you have good ideas about interviewing exciting people with new perspectives on this topic then contact us to see if we can highlight this perspective by making an interview together with this specific person.

I think that's more than enough about me but maybe we can move onto answering some of the questions. I think 'why a *Journal of European Landscapes*' has been answered pretty extensively by Hans already... another question 'would the journal be willing to place a review of my book?' Well maybe, if there is international, comparative, contextualising component, transnational component to it and a landscape or heritage component, spatial component, it might be possible that we would like to place a review. But please get in contact with us through our email address and we will get back to you very quickly and say if we are interested and maybe also have some suggestions for reviewers who could be able to take that on. And then the last question that is on my list that we've sort of pre-designed for this Q&A is 'is the journal open for proposals for special issues?' And I would say, yes very much so. It would be very interesting to have a set of articles on a specific topic within the European landscape topic that we want to address or related to societal urgencies that are on-going or to specific subfields within this broader field of research. And maybe it's good to also stress that this journal will not have a printed version, it will not have a special issue, literal issue as in a printed thing with five articles on a similar topic, but it will be a cluster of articles that are published in a few months times, online. This will be an online journal, Open

Access, at least for the first few years which means you will not have a printed issue as such but we will have a set of articles that will be visible as a cluster of topics on the website of the journal for a longer period of time. I will give the word back to Hans Renes to answer some other questions that have come in.

Hans: Yes and one of the questions was ‘what does the journal offer to authors?’ Well what we do offer is publication possibility and even when you take into account that we didn’t have a lot of publicity because of these difficult Corona times, I was surprised by the number of hits and downloads that the journal has attracted already. So we can offer authors a publication possibility and, at the moment, we have money for one or two years to offer Gold Open Access so there are no costs involved - although we would like to have some extra money when projects lead to special issues, for example, but we can talk about that later. And then ‘would the journal be willing to publish a discussion of my project?’ Well, when the project fits into our scope the answer is definitely yes. I did say a lot already about the scope and the aims of the journal but it’s also written down in the editorial and you can find that on the website of the journal, which is journalofeuropeanlandscapes.eu, there you will find all the publications including the project description that was published this week, altogether, and you can have an overview and you can also push a button so you can be informed about future publications. So the answer is yes.

Linde: Now we imagined that future authors might be curious to know what they can expect from the submission, peer review, and editorial process when writing for the journal and I think it’s important to make a distinction between the different kinds of articles that we would publish. For research papers we have a peer review process in place in which, after submission of an article, the article is first assessed by the editors to see if it fits the scope of the journal. And if it’s interesting, to send it off to the peer reviewers and then we will select two peer reviewers from our international network to have a look at the paper and to provide feedback and to also decide whether it’s acceptable; whether it needs major or minor revisions or whether it can be published as it is. And after that we will go into the process of proof reading and copyediting etc. For all the papers and other contributions there is most often contact between the editorial board and authors. That also counts for interviews, it counts for book reviews, it counts for project descriptions. The other three categories of publications will not go through peer-review but will be reviewed by the editors only. So if you contact us directly on our email address we can easily communicate about what the next steps would be and after our initial contact it is possible to use the submissions system that we

have in place for submitting your contribution to the journal and then it will go into the official reviewing process. I think there are a few questions for Irene as well... So Irene will answer a few questions more about the ways to publish and then we will come back to some more questions from the floor, "the floor".

Irene: Ok, so one of the questions that I was asked to answer has already been answered. It's the can I publish in Open Access? Yes, as Hans said we are very fortunate to have funding for the journal so authors are not required to find their own Article Processing Charges at least for the first few years. Maybe I should mention who the sponsors are? The journal is currently sponsored by VU+ which is an interfaculty research institute for Culture, Cognition, History and Heritage at VU University in Amsterdam, as well as the Centre for Global Heritage and Development, a collaboration of Leiden University, Delft University of Technology, and Erasmus University in Rotterdam. So, that's the good news. Another question is 'what services and added value does the publisher, AUP, offer?' Good question, I would like to say as a publishing partner to a journal, the publisher does everything that the editor should not be doing. Editors should be focusing on selecting and reviewing quality articles for the journal and that's their main focus. The publisher should do basically everything else. I always see ourselves as the spider in the web connecting the dots between readers, authors, editors, libraries. So we do marketing, we make sure that the metadata is in order, we supply the platform, make sure that the typesetting is done, DOIs are registered; that the articles are discoverable online which is very important with Open Access articles, of course. I think that covers mostly what the publishers do. If there are any other questions then again, the hashtag is #AUPJEL.

Linde: One of the things I might have forgotten to mention and maybe I hoped that Irene would cover, is whether the journal could provide any services in correcting English, if you're not a native writer or a native speaker. And the answer is yes; but to small additional charges we have professional language correctors available who could assist you in upgrading your language in such a way that it is up to par with academic standards of writing in English.

Then other questions have come in. The first one I would like to mention is by Theun van den Doel who actually provided two questions but I will summarise them as one. He addresses that the internet is virtual and it's becoming bigger and bigger but the digital domain also inhibits landscapes and shapes landscapes, especially in the early years of the development, but later on it

might be expected that this spatial need for internet facilities will decrease and what will happen to the physical manifestations of the digital? So he suggested maybe Bernd and Hila Becher, two German photographers and phonetics about industrial remnants, it could take on the post-industrial era and what I suppose what he is trying to ask with this question is 'is this kind of topic of interest for the journal, would the journal be willing to publish a paper on this topic?' And you have heard us say quite a bit on this already and the easy answer is yes of course if it has an international, contextualising, and spatial component. Now the spatial is covered in the landscapes of the digital and the internet is in essence a very international thing but also if the paper would somehow address the international connections and the international context of how the digital manifests itself in landscapes then absolutely yes. It's also about spatial inequalities mainly, some places might be much more shaped by the digital than others - could be very interesting to look at those too. If you are interested in publishing with us then give us a shout out through our email address and we'll get back to you if you have an abstract or a proposal ready for us. And then there is a question for Hans I think.

Hans: Here's a question: 'I will soon write a review about hobby-associations and their role in animal welfare advancements in the pet-sector. In this article I will discuss the role of European policy and the effect of stakeholder interactions (discourse) on marginalization in the policy domain. Would this topic be fit for publication in your journal?' Well the focus of the journal is landscape, and animal welfare without connection to landscape issues would be a bit too far from our main focus I would say. But when you have comparable themes with a clear connection to landscape - and there are connections between landscape and animal welfare for example in intensive animal husbandry - then we will look at it with a very positive eye. Those are the questions we have received beforehand, are there any more?

Lucia: So Linde, you spoke about global processes of change and how that can be of interest to the journal. I hate to use the 'C' word, but can you offer any predictions about what the Coronavirus pandemic might do to the field of landscape and heritage studies... if it will do anything, if it will have an effect? Obviously it will have an effect because it's having an effect on everything but specifically within your field can you see anything that might come up?

Linde: Well there is a lot coming up but I think the answer to the question is twofold. There is on the one hand, there is studies as a field of research, as a community of researchers, and there is the ways in which Corona, the behaviours related to Corona restrictions and fear and all the logistics that come with tackling such a crisis, have on the physical landscapes and on the cultural, the way that we experience landscapes. So there's two, there is a research community answer and there is a content answer. When it comes to the research community we already experienced the effects; if not for Corona we would have been in London at the moment and we would have been in a minute having dinner with our critical heritage studies colleagues discussing European landscapes at the table rather than being here in Amsterdam looking into an almost empty room. So that means that interaction and debate about landscapes have received quite a bit of a punch in a negative way. And maybe with offering a platform and offering an interactive platform to researchers to keep on discussing their work outside their own small community within their university, their daily colleagues or their students, might be even more important than before. It's less self-evident that we meet each other physically within the community.

And the other question is will Corona affect cultural landscapes? Yes of course, it already does in many ways. Just to give you a small example, I've been following jokes and comments on Twitter about how people deal with lockdown and it seems that now that we have restrictions on international travel people start looking at their own living environments on a very different scale, of a radius, than before. Homes get redesigned, gardens get completely turned over, people start vegetable gardens where they have never had experience in landscaping or gardening before, they start exploring the hiking trails around their own houses much more intensively than they used to do because they were able to fly to Thailand for vacation. So the appreciation and the knowledge of and the experience of landscapes have become in a sense maybe more localised in a physical way; but of course we have also collectively explored internet and started using internet connections much more for communication. So on the one hand there is more sort of globalisation through these increased Zoom and other meeting connections, and on the other hand, there is also a different exploration of our own living environments on a different radius, for now, during lockdown, and we will see how that will change in the future. But it's interesting to reflect on those and that could actually lead into a very interesting international comparative article on the ways in which people use their local environments during lockdown.

Hans: Yes perhaps one nice example to mention that's some articles in 2001 on the effect of the Foot and Mouth disease on the English uplands and it would be in fact very interesting to look at

what the remaining effects are 20 years after. But there are effects and perhaps that article I just mentioned was written too fast - you need some time for reflection. But it is an interesting international theme.

Lucia: And I suppose it will have a big impact on tourism. Would that be a theme that you say ties into the journal as well? Yep. We have another question and it's a bit different. A lot of artists, filmmakers, and fiction writers or literary writers I would say are currently working also in the field of landscape studies. If you go into the Athenaeum Boekhandel across the road you'll find a huge table full of psychogeography, all of those kinds of explorations of the urban and also the rural environment. In terms of the journal, and you mentioned interviews, would the journal be willing to interview people outside of academia if the subject was right? Because I know there are lot of writers who maybe pursue an academic framework but might not be an academic employed at a university. If that came up would that be something that you would welcome?

Hans: I would personally welcome that very much. We haven't really discussed that but we have in the editorial some remarks on the idea and the history of the idea of landscape and then you come immediately to painters, to poets, so these sources are very important indeed in the existing and the developing of the whole idea of landscape, so yes.

Linde: Another part of answer to that question, Lucia, could also be that an interview could be an interesting form for some, but there may also be people maybe a little bit outside of academia who have an interesting research topic at hand, who have less experience in publishing academically but who have a very interesting story to tell with relevant sources etc. And actually I think we are not too exclusive about who can be writers of peer-reviewed articles; if there are people with an interesting, relevant topic and a good set of ideas then we are very willing to help them to shape their article in such a way that it would be fit for peer-review and up to academic standard. So there is always, it depends on the material, it depends on the person, depends on the sort of cooperation possible but the editors have years of experience in helping people from right outside academia or a bit further away or young publishers without much academic experience to get on that stage and really engage in that platform. So if that would be something that someone was interested in then contact us with your idea and we'll go from there.

Lucia: And I suppose a follow-up question to the previous one. Actually, everybody on the stage including Irene. Do you have any favourite cultural films, or music, or art that ties in with your passions about landscape and heritage studies? That's my question. I thought since this was such a carefully curated Q&A I'd throw in a wild card.

Hans: That took me by surprise. There are certainly, I am in fact collecting material myself on nationalist music from the 19th century which might be something for the future to publish. But I remember some very beautiful movies that focus on landscape and that really opened my eyes for a very different aspect of landscape. I remember in my studies one Italian movie which was called *The Clog Tree*, a beautiful movie about someone who stole wood from the landlord to make clog shoes for his son and they were evicted from the landscape. That was during my studies, that was one of the first moments that I realised that landscape had to do with class and with power relations. So yes, that's an extremely interesting field. I hope that's an answer to your question.

Linde: I think for me it's about food. Being a scholar in European research projects I had the luck to be able to travel a lot and to share experiences with partners who would then invite you locally and would invite you into their eating culture. Regional identities and landscapes are very much tied into culinary traditions and enjoying food from a locality together with the people who are sort of sharing their pride and their hospitality brings up a lot of stories to the table about how these people connect to the landscape that they live in. So eating together with people from other areas is a fantastic way into discussing what is important to them in these landscapes and how does this change in the course of time. Irene doesn't want to answer your question. [Laughter]. Then maybe you can throw in another one, a question? [Hans in background: you may also answer the last question to yourself...inaudible.]

Lucia: So this is skipping back a few questions. On the topic before, we were talking a little bit about tourism and how that might be affected by the Coronavirus. Personally, I'm quite interested in the idea of landscaping as a practice and how historically it came to be, especially in England and its class symbols with the elite. A lot of these estates now are lacking in visitors, lots of people not going to them to visit, particularly in the North and Midlands in the UK. My question is: how relevant do you think these places are, actually? I think it maybe ties in a little bit with the heritage of statues and some of the statues that are being pulled down across the world. A lot of these

landscapes were funded by corrupt power means, what's the relevance of these big landscaped estates? What's the relevance?

Linde: That's a big topic you're dipping into. Maybe let's start with an answer and maybe Hans has more up his sleeve too to complement. You're actually addressing several different things; first of all, the problem of these estates to attract enough visitors to upkeep, to provide for the maintenance of these places that were formerly financed through big class differences and exploitation of some people to the benefits of others. And the other question is how do you view these landscapes as contested landscapes, right? Can you only view them as beautiful and romantic and historical and valuable, or do they also have a more contested connotation? I think yes. The UK is a particular area where there has actually been some research done on the contestedness of these landscapes but the problem in most cases, at least in the Netherlands, is that this contestedness is not so visible in the landscapes per se; the wealth was most often generated somewhere else, maybe in colonies where actually the exploitation took place and then it was spent and invested and demonstrated and you know, celebrated in these places that you've just mentioned. So it is not always so easy to really put your finger on, well, 'this is actually what is bad about these places'. It's a very general sense of unease that is growing, maybe.

And then the last question that you could put on top of that is that if the visitor numbers are not great enough to upkeep all these places and we should see them as contested landscapes, should we then not consider a different [inaudible] in heritage strategies. Should we maintain these places at all costs for society? Or should we actually be prepared to experiment with strategies of managed ruination or decay? Is there something to be found in retreating and not wanting to paint the windows every year? What happens to the stories of these places, the physicalities of these places to the relationship of current society with these places if we actually dare to step back a little bit? And I think Great Britain is very much onto heritage maintenance. As are the Dutch, we are not very keen on letting things go, we are managers, right? We want to upkeep everything. So actually experimenting with strategies of stepping back and seeing what happens then, leaving room for other forms of life, other interpretations, for change, might be actually very daring and a very interesting thing to do. And maybe in many ways maybe an also unavoidable thing to do, but let's see if we can make that meaningful, let's see if we can make it deliberate, and critical.

Hans: A few additions. One of the things is of course that we lost our innocence in this whole research of landed estates, but still when you go on an average guided tour in a landed estate you

hear a lot about the owners and very little about the way they, where their wealth came, and about the people they employed, including my family, mainly. But there is something else I would like to say. We had a lot of discussions on the word 'European' in a *Journal of European Landscapes* and we didn't want to go to a 'Journal of World Landscapes' and one of the reasons is that Europe is quite an overseeable but also a very important level platform for landscape studies, particularly because of ever more research in rural landscapes and in planning is guided from Europe, and very little on a world level, still. But then having said that, it was clear from the beginning that these European landscapes were not isolated; they had connections with landscapes elsewhere, because of, well, slave trade is one thing, but also because of other inputs, products, in gardens, the orange trees etc. But also the idea of landscape is exported from Europe to other parts of the world. Not just to the Europeanised parts of the world like United States or Australia, but also other parts of the world where colonials and others have introduced European ideas of landscape and even today, nowadays on a world scale because of the discussions on UNESCO world heritage landscapes in 1992 there is an increasing worldwide discussion on landscapes in which very much of the ideas are still coming from Europe. And it's still a long way to go to come to a worldwide definition of landscape and to include other types of landscape issues.

Irene: Well I guess there were no more questions. I would say thank you very much to Hans and Linde for explaining how the journal came about and what the plans are for the future. I'd also like to thank the people here at SPUI25 for helping us organise the session and to Lucia for organising it for Amsterdam University Press. I will repeat the URL, it is journalofeuropeanlandscapes.eu and I encourage all of you to explore the website. Thank you very much.