INTRODUCTION
Identity, Place, Landscape and Heritage

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‘Landscape’ is . . . ‘the world out there’ as understood, experienced, and engaged with through human consciousness and active involvement. Thus it is a subjective notion, and being subjective and open to many understandings it is volatile. The same place at the same moment will be experienced differently by different people; the same place, at different moments, will be experienced differently by the same person; the same person may even, at a given moment, hold conflicting feelings about a place. When, in addition, one considers the variable effects of historical and cultural particularity, the permutations on how people interact with place and landscape are almost unending, and the possibilities for disagreement about, and contest over, landscape are equally so. (Bender, 2006: 303)

Over the last 20 years Barbara Bender’s research has been about landscape, place, heritage and identity – the theme of this special double issue of the Journal of Material Culture. She has opened up this field of study in many different directions. Very much in the spirit of this journal she has stressed the need for interdisciplinary research and breaking out of the academic ghetto. Indeed her take on landscape starts off from the work of novelists and poets rather than academics of any sort (Bender, 2006) and has widely appealed to archaeologists, anthropologists and human geographers, all of whom contribute to this collection of articles.

Undoubtedly, and as acknowledged in all the articles published here, the leitmotif underlying all Barbara’s research, as reflected in this introduction’s opening quotation, is that landscapes are contested, worked and re-worked by people according to particular individual, social and political circumstances. As such they are always in process, rather than static, being and becoming. Landscapes are on the move peopled by diasporas, migrants of identity, people making homes in new places, landscapes are structures of feeling, palimpsests of past and present,
outcomes of social practice, products of colonial and post-colonial identities and the western gaze, they are places of terror, exile, slavery and of the contemplative sublime. They get actively re-worked, interpreted and understood in relation to differing social and political agendas, forms of social memory, and biographically become sensuously embodied in a multitude of ways (Bender, 1993, 1998, 1999, 2001, 2002, 2006; Bender and Winer, 2001; Bender et al., 2006).

Rather than attempting to define landscape and pin it down and definitionally control it, for Barbara the concept was more a medium for the analysis of social identities, and as wide as the social and political perspectives of those who use and embrace it. It is very much in this spirit that these articles are collected and presented here.

SOCIAL IDENTITIES, MODERNITY AND TRADITION

Who are we? What binds us together and what makes us different from others? What is our past and where is our future? How do we make a place for ourselves in the world? What are our traditions and how do we react to the new? How do we represent ourselves and what is important to us? These are all classic questions of social identity. Such issues have come to the fore in social theory during the past two decades in discussions of landscape, place and heritage. Globalization, the rapid development of multicultural urban societies, the increasing influence of multinational corporations and the growth of ‘flexibility’, and concomitantly insecurity, in the labour market, diasporas and large-scale movements and displacements of peoples, tourism and travel, the Internet and a collapsing sense of space and time, all these and many other factors lead people to ask identity questions. Part of this is a desire to find oneself and a place for the self in a world in which culture has increasingly taken on ‘hybrid’ or ‘creolized’ forms (Hannerz, 1992). Thus questions of social identity and personal identity are inextricably bound. Both become imperatives when they can no longer be assumed and are perceived to be under threat. Identities are only ‘safe’ and unproblematic when we do not begin to question them. Once we begin to ask who we are, and to whom we belong, we inevitably problematize that which was given and that which went unquestioned.

The advent of a post-structuralist approach (for want of a better term) in social theory has manifested itself in a non-essentialist approach to questions of identity. The aim has been to reveal the mutability and fluidity of any notion of the concept. Identity becomes something spoken about in the plural, not one but many, something always changing in space-time. Identities are always responding to change, mobile rather than fixed and static, constantly open to formulation and reformulation. From such a perspective notions of identity as being forever grounded,
stable and immutable can only have a mythic status. This is the way that many might like the world to be but it inverts, rather than reflects, the realities of the way that world actually is.

Some influential views: the nation is an 'imagined community' [Anderson, 1983], traditions are 'invented' [Hobsbawm and Ranger, 1983], modernity is a scene where people become 'migrants of identity' in which home becomes movement [Rapport and Dawson, 1998]. The routes, rather than the roots, of identity become a key framework for analysis [Clifford, 1997]. Through systemic global processes [Friedman, 1994], diasporas and migrations of people, the world is increasingly 'deteriorialized' [Bauman, 1992; Appadurai, 1995] and consequently the significance of space and place has been transformed. Ultimately, perhaps, identity is only an 'unfinished game . . . moved into the future through a symbolic detour through the past' [Hall, 1999: 43]. Talking about identity becomes increasingly problematic in tandem with the polysemic nature of the usage of the concept. This is so because identity questions refract both notions of similarities and differences, ruptures and continuities with others, movement and stasis, reconstructed pasts and imagined futures [Hall, 1997; Woodward, 1997]. Identity becomes something whose contradictory worth and value requires constant reaffirmation and reiteration less ultimately it be put at risk. That persons and groups ultimately have no stable identity is a logical outcome of a non-essentialist position. Identity is transient, a reflection on where you are now, a fleeting moment in a biography of the self or the group, only partially connected to where you might have come from, and where you might be going.

This non-essentialist notion of what identity is, something mutable, invented and inventive, elusive, constantly subject to change, producing new subjects out of old discourses, contrasts markedly with the older literature on the subject which is almost a mirror image. Here there is a notion of social identity as relatively fixed in space–time, stable and immutable, a precipitate of the past experiences and expressions of previous generations, picked up in childhood. Traditions carry these experiences into the present, the past governs the present rather than the present governing the past. Such a view postulates an unchanging essence to social identity beneath its different forms. Both societies and persons may change according to the historical and social circumstances in which they find themselves but they are still the same society and the same person with a core of enduring key traits which is the business of the analyst to try and trace. Such a view in anthropology resulted in the endless production of ethnographies of particular ethnic groups emphasizing their unique shared cultural attributes. These local groups, it was assumed, were not only relatively isolated from the rest of the world, but had an embedded and coherent identity, something primordial and
given, as opposed to the disembeddedness and fragmentation of identities characteristic of modern industrial urban societies. An essentialist view of society and culture stressed invariance within cultures and strong boundaries in relation to others. The breakdown of such a view and its replacement by perspectives stressing the constructed nature of identity, its inventiveness, and theoretical positions stressing agency, practice and process was, in retrospect, an almost inevitable consequence of systemic global processes despatializing or deterritorializing social identities more or less in tandem with decolonization. This view of the fragmented and unstable nature of identity construction provides a background to the various studies presented here.

A global proliferation of identities, as opposed to homogenization, has become central to accounts of modern identities in a globalized world. A number of authors have stressed that what is central to contemporary modernity (post-modernity for some) is the emergence of a new type of reflexivity. For Berman all that was once solid and established melts into air. Our current social condition is one in which all the old certainties of class, of culture, of a stable identity, of belonging to a community, of a sense of one’s life being rooted and grounded in the past have long since vanished. Instead we are faced with constant change and uncertainty. We are forced to attempt to find our identity in the maelstrom of the permanent revolution of modern life (Berman, 1982). In these circumstances personal and social identity become much more a matter of self-conscious reflection than formerly. Identity becomes, in part, something that may be chosen, constructed and manipulated. Reflections on identity thus carry within themselves a sense of possibility, of being different and making a difference, a potentiality for changing the self and changing society. Gone are the old certainties of knowing and accepting one’s place. In modernity identities are no longer ascribed but are instead achieved. Questions of identity become then, questions about states of mind and bodily enactment in the world.

Bauman (1996) draws a distinction between ‘modernist’ and ‘post-modernist’ strategies for identity construction. The former tries to fix and ground identities in the past (e.g. forms of nation-state building). The latter attempt to resist all fixation, remain open, and embrace perpetual change. Both strategies coexist side by side in the modern world and the latter ethos is most prevalent amongst contemporary academic and cultural elites, precisely, it might be argued, amongst those who are most mobile and in a permanent state of homelessness. Bauman goes on to argue that identity questions are quintessentially products of modernity. To ask who you are and to which group you belong is a contemporary problem. Identity becomes a task and the solution to this problem is to try and do something about it. One thinks about identity whenever and wherever one is not sure where one belongs and where one is going.
Identity questions are born out of uncertainty (Bauman, 1996: 19). Identity, therefore, is only non-problematic, a state of being and becoming, when it is not the subject of critical reflection, when it is lived and practised, rather than something consciously reflected upon. The identity crises of contemporary modernity result from the insecurities which arise from introspection.

For Giddens (1991, 1994) reflexivity is also the key to understanding the contemporary world (for him ‘high modernity’ as opposed to ‘post modernity’). The self becomes a project constantly being remade and his argument is that self-identity is a distinctively modern project in which individuals construct or organize self-narratives in an attempt to establish and control their pasts and secure their futures. New mechanisms of self-identity are both shaped by, and shape, the institutions of modernity and individual reflexivity finds its counterpart in institutional reflexivity. One of the most distinctive features of modernity is the manner in which there is an increasing interlinkage between globalizing influences and personal dispositions, the two extreme poles of ‘extensionality’ and ‘intentionality’. Doubt is a pervasive feature of modern reason permeating both individual lives and institutions and the concept of risk becomes fundamental: ‘reflexively organized life-planning, which normally presumes consideration of risks as filtered through contact with expert knowledge, becomes a central feature of the structuring of self-identity’ (Giddens, 1991: 5). Reflexivity involves a chronic revision of all social activities in terms of new information or knowledge which itself may be risky or uncertain in the context of the mediated knowledges produced by expert systems increasingly contested and lacking an aura of authority which they once possessed. Such reflexivity is now global in scope in which people become impelled to take an active stance to the conditions of their own existence, people who in the ‘third’ and ‘fourth’ worlds are often more than familiar with anthropological ideas and texts using them to find themselves and their desired pasts. Another key feature of high modernity, for Giddens, is what he refers to as the ‘evacuation of tradition’. Traditions become not a way of life, an imperative for identity, but part and parcel of life-style choices. They enter into dialogue with other traditions and alternative ways of doing things (Giddens, 1994: 105). They become disembedded from social life and like everything else are called upon to explain and justify themselves: what is the relevance of this to me or us? High modernity is supposedly the first ‘post-traditional’ society.

In the face of the flux of contemporary modernity, and in tandem with the waning significance of the nation state, it is to other forms of collective identity, such as shared historical traditions linked with ethnic identities, or religious identities, that people may increasingly turn in order to provide ontological moorings and such identities have to be
conceived of as fixed, solid, and beyond question in order to perform this sociopsychological work. Collective identities are always bound up with notions of collective traditions and shared material forms. That is they are imagined in a historically and materially specific way. But that which they imagine, or present to consciousness is not always the same. For example the meaning of being a Muslim or a Hindu, or being Cornish or Breton may change fundamentally through time although use of the same term produces a semblance of continuity.

Ethnic groups are intermediate between local kin groups and the nation. Effectively they represent a hybrid form of identity, neither local nor disembodied and abstract (Tambiah, 1993: 441). This ambiguity of their situatedness gives them a peculiar power in which they can simultaneously evoke concrete reference points and therefore seem grounded, but nevertheless remain abstractly constituted. Under colonialism ethnicity was picked upon as a primordial form of identity by colonial administrators. Ethnic boundaries which had once been fuzzy and mutable became rigid and bounded. The colonial state was based on the fiction that everyone only had one identity (Anderson, 1983; Hobsbawm and Ranger, 1983) which became solidified and objectified through the mechanisms of colonial administration.

Hobsbawm and Rangers’ important book (1983) made a strong claim for the ‘invention of tradition’. Many traditions which appear old are quite recent in origin and often invented. The contact thus claimed with the past is essentially spurious. From such a perspective it is therefore implied that in Africa, the Pacific and elsewhere, pre-colonial identities or authentic ‘customs’ simply evolved. Under colonialism, and after, inauthentic ‘traditions’ become invented and still persist. But might not traditions be invented in pre-colonial or pre-modern contexts? All traditions have to start somewhere, and at some time, and therefore may be said to be invented. Therefore notions of degrees of authenticity or inauthenticity remain entirely inappropriate to evaluate them. In oral cultures the ‘real’ past is effectively unknown. In literate cultures the past that is documented in some way inevitably becomes the subject of interpretative debate in which it becomes connected to the concerns of the present in new ways. There is no such thing as a traditional identity, only forms of constructing identities that might be labelled traditional by some according to particular, and ultimately, arbitrary criteria. However, the significance of tradition manifested through material forms and the social practices linked to them is difficult to overemphasize. One of the paradoxes of contemporary modernity is that on the one hand traditional ways of life are perceived to be under threat yet local traditions (culinary, dress, arts and crafts, dance, music and so on) are everywhere being emphasized. Why material traditions remain of such significance to people in thinking through and acting through their identities is one
of the major themes discussed by the contributors to this issue. Old notions of place regarding them as home for settled and distinct communities with coherent sets of social identities linked to the pasts of these places are becoming more and more difficult to sustain in many parts of the world in the face of increasing social mobility and flows of goods, services, ideas and images, which Harvey has referred to as space–time compression (Harvey, 1989). The friction of distance on identity relationships has been significantly eroded and we are in transit for an increasing amount of our time in what Augé has referred to as the self-contained ‘non-places of supermodernity’ such as airports, hotels, supermarkets, motorways (Augé, 1995). But what makes a ‘non-place’? Here we need to investigate the specific articulation and juxtaposition of material forms, something scantily addressed in Augé’s work which makes the book more assertion than a sustained piece of analysis.

We sit in front of TVs and computer screens in which there is a simultaneous logic of excessive information and excessive space in which new forms of solitude and interaction replace face to face personal encounters. These may increasingly foster new virtual shared communities of taste, interest, consumption patterns and notions of shared identities among people who may never meet each other. Identity, when it becomes deterritorialized through migrations and diasporas, almost inevitably becomes located between places rather than bound to particular places or homelands (Bhabha, 1994; Appadurai, 1995). Diasporas and transnational communities retain communals of identity despite displacement through shared memories and representations of lost localities and homeland that may be particularly strong. They may typically care much more about place, about homeland and origin, about who they are, than peoples who are not so displaced. Members of diasporic communities may typically relate strongly to traditional values and homeland when abroad and strongly with where they now reside when and if they return home. But the relations are complex and manifested through material forms in many different ways. The Internet may play an important role in sustaining certain (relatively well-to-do) diasporic communities but cannot provide a substitute for the sense of belonging achieved through actual contact, meeting in a homeland.

PLACE AND LANDSCAPE
In the face of perceived threats to the identity of place and landscape ideas about the uniqueness and singularity of both have become in many cases re-entrenched with people wishing to find a refuge, to defend a notion of a bounded place with which they can identify. This almost inevitably results in nostalgic imaginings of how these landscapes and places should appear and conservation and heritage projects whose overriding...
aims are to preserve such a romanticized identity, a search for the purity of ethnic groups and continuity in the face of change. This is because the affective power of place and locality is so strong whatever the influences of global processes. When we think about social or cultural identity we inevitably tend to place it, put it in a setting, imagine it in a place. Ideas and feelings about identity are located in the specificities of places and landscapes in what they actually look like or perhaps more typically how they ought to appear (representations in guidebooks, postcards, tourist brochures and so on) and how they feel, in the fullness and emotional richness of the synaesthetic relations of these places with our bodies which encounter them (Tilley, 1994, 2004; Lovell, 1998).

Landscape and place are often experienced as a structure of feeling through activities and performances which crystalize and express group identities to the outside world through passing through and identifying with particular places and particular histories. For example, parades and carnivals may choreograph time and space and create a sense of belonging through assuming a particular material form in which inhabitants both present themselves to others and present themselves to themselves. It is through making material reference to the past that identification with place occurs through the medium of ‘traditional’ material culture and representations of life-styles, urban and rural, that no longer exist. Modernity is erased in favour of nostalgic reference to a lost past in an analogous way to the manner in which the official promotion of world heritage sites requires architecturally restoring the past in the present to project possibilities for a desirable future. Identifying with place does not just happen. It requires work, repeated acts which establish relations between peoples and places (Creswell, 2004; Massey, 2005) and significantly expands intersubjective space–time (Munn, 1986) beyond the self.

A symbolic return to the past often acts as a retreat from the uncertainties of the present. The crucial point is that place as a stable, relatively closed or bounded, and secure resource for forging social identity has become more and more problematic in the flux of spatial flows that ‘open out’ places to the world. An increasing introspective reflexiveness in relation to what our identities actually are goes hand in hand with the kind of interventions that no longer allow places to simply be and to become, but requires their careful planning, maintenance, surveillance and reconstruction. It is not surprising that members of local pressure groups (often non-local in origin and who work away from the places in which they reside), tourist boards, planners and developers, political parties and non-governmental organizations attempt to stress the uniqueness or Otherness of place as a unique piece of cultural capital to be maintained and marketed. Fostering a sense of landscape and place requires its deliberated re-presentation. The development of such a sense of place may occur at a range of spatial scales from the village or town
or city, or areas of that city, to regions and nations or even in relation to supranational entities such as Europe. What kinds of landscape and place we produce, and want, are inextricably bound up with the politics of identity, for ideas about both relate to whom we want to live with and whom we want to exclude, who belongs and who does not, to issues of class, ethnicity, gender and sexuality (Olwig and Kastrup, 1997).

THE POLITICS OF IDENTITY

For most people the idea that their biography, identity and culture are constructions is anathema. For is this not to suggest falsity, to strip away the very basis by which their lives can be made meaningful or be empowered? It appears that while a non-essentialist position is fine for the anthropologist or sociologist it is difficult to accept by ordinary people. Ask virtually any citizen of France or Spain whether they are French or Spanish, except in certain disputed areas like Brittany and the Basque region, and they will willingly say yes. Probe further into what it means to be French or Spanish and it is only then that a diversity of views begins to undermine any unitary understanding of what being French or Spanish might imply. The categories are fine for everyone so long, of course, as they remain unexplored.

The manner in which identities are produced and sustained needs to be understood within frameworks of power relations, dominance and resistance, and their relation to different kinds of knowledge, ‘western’ and ‘indigenous’. The politics of identity are bound up with contemporary knowledges and, concomitantly, a synchronic rhetoric and a politics of truth which can have no final legitimation, no immovable bedrock on which it can rest. Harrison (1999) has recently argued that perceived cultural similarities, as opposed to differences, may assume an important role in the maintenance or creation of ethnic differences. Relatively powerless actors in one group may attempt to adopt symbols of the powerful in another. Or they may aim to diminish or eliminate differences between themselves and others or create barriers and divisions through appropriating particular material symbols and practices. Identity in such circumstances may be regarded as a scarce resource requiring careful cultivation and manipulation of material symbols to maintain it.

When culture, identity and the past become absolutely non-negotiable and beyond question this may lead ultimately to the kind of cultural fundamentalism resulting in the genocide witnessed in Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia in which it becomes impossible for people to coexist. In such circumstances that which Giddens refers to as the ‘evacuation of tradition’ in high or late modernity appears to have its positive benefits. Once the power of tradition has been diminished it can
no longer be the main organizer of experience, a dominant authoritarian force, Marx’s nightmare that weighs down on the brain of the living.

HERITAGE, TOURISM, PLACE, RE-PRESENTATION

One of the key features of contemporary modernity is the disembedding or lifting out of social relations from local contexts of action and in an age of travel and tourism the effects of global processes on the character of localities are no more evident. MacCanell (1976, 1992) has argued that at the heart of tourism is a process in which local culture and identities become consumed by outsiders, cultures and identities which lack authenticity because of the displacement and movement of peoples. Tourism is a process resulting in the subordination of locals dependent on the mythical reconstitution of traditions uprooted by globalization. The tourist goes on holiday to seek solace, to find sources of cultural heritage and identity that modernity has destroyed, another world. So tourist ‘perceptions, motivations and understandings about destinations are shaped by a preoccupation with harmonious social relations, ideas about community, notions of the whole’ (Selwyn, 1996: 3). Tourism becomes a kind of pilgrimage (Graburn, 1977) or rite of passage in which the old self is lost to find the new and the tourist is a semiotician of difference attempting to decode and read the signs of Otherness. As Selwyn points out such a perspective tends to put all tourists and tourist destinations into the same unitary category while considerable diversity exists with some authors developing various typologies of tourists and modes of tourist experiences [Smith, 1977; Crick, 1985; Urry, 1990, 1994].

It is clear that tourism both creates Augé’s homogenous ‘non-places’ and is also entirely dependent on the maintenance of the idea of distinctiveness, of a worldwide diversity of ‘heritage’: places, peoples, artefacts and customs which may be experienced. Recent work has suggested that relations between tourists and ‘locals’ is far from simple. Through the course of time locals may become tourists and tourists locals and the identities produced are complex. The articulation of local notions of identity are as often as not played out and through relations between local ‘hosts’ and tourist ‘guests’ in which locals increasingly want to control the way in which both they and their locality are being represented since this has a direct effect on their lives. Tourism involves the continual definition and redefinition of identities between insiders and outsiders which become, through the course of time, mutually implicated involving marking differences, strategies and performances of inclusion and exclusion, public and private, ‘front’ and ‘back’ spaces for interaction [Boissevain, 1996; Selwyn, 1996; Abram et al., 1997; Rojek and Urry, 1997]. Increasingly, through tourism, various forms of conscious productions of local distinctiveness are taking place through interactions...
with outsiders, a display of culture being creatively made in the process of interaction as much as found and given in the past (Tilley, 1999: Chapter 7).

Tourism is fundamentally dependent on the production and reproduction of difference, new things to discover and experience, and the exoticism of experiencing other supposedly more authentic and less corrupted cultures lies at the heart of much ethnic tourism. Museum exhibitions, heritage centres and heritage sites are major sites of tourist experiences and consumption (MacDonald and Fyfe, 1996; Clifford, 1997). They manifest a desire to order, collect and classify a realm of material things in a highly specific manner (Baudrillard, 1994). Precisely because they objectify and solidify culture museums and monuments have always been part of the process of nation state building and the establishment of national museums has played an important role in developing a sense of unity in newly emergent nation states following decolonization throughout the world (e.g. Vale, 1992; Kaplan, 1994; Otto and Thomas, 1997).

Critical responses to the proliferation of museums and heritage sites have uncovered the contested terrain of the exhibition, the decisions and prejudices that govern the representation of culture, questioned the process of displaying culture through objects and the types of social relationships that are engendered by the museum as an exhibition space and public institution (e.g. Vergo, 1989; Karp and Lavine, 1991). The museum and the heritage site itself are artefacts, or pieces of modern material culture, and require analysing as such.

Senses of self identity and social identity are bound up with the contingencies and uncertainties of the present, ways in which to relate to an idealized past and an imagined future. Identities must of necessity be improvised and changing, rather than fixed and rule-bound, intimately related to experience and context. They are both in the mind and of the world, embodied and objectified through action and material practice. Theoretical models of either discrete bounded cultures or of individuals as unique repositories of emotion and awareness seem strangely inappropriate in the flux and flow of a globalized world and may only have some archaeological relevance today.

An essential part of the process of making self and social identity is non-verbal: making, using, exchanging and consuming things that always assume a specific form whether this be in the guise of a portable artefact, a monument, an advertisement, clothing, food, museum display or postcard. These material discourses of identity may reflect, invert, mediate, or serve to create their own performative contexts for experience and understanding in which people reveal themselves to themselves and are frequently surprised at the result. Things and places are active agents of identity rather than pale reflections of pre-existing ideas.
and sociopolitical relations. Having real material and ideological effects on persons and social relations, things and places can then be regarded as much subjects as objects of identity. It is through a detailed examination of the effects that landscapes and places have on the way we think and the way we act that we may come to better reflect on how we understand ourselves and how we relate to others. It is to a further explication of these complex material relationships that the contributions to this issue of the *Journal of Material Culture* are directed.

**THE LOCAL AND THE GLOBAL**

The local and the global represent two poles in relation to identity construction. Local constructions of identity are anchored in specific places and relationships, whereas global identity construction is abstracted, mediated, generalized and involves multiple points or reference subsuming the specific and the unique. Disembedded global processes are typically appropriated and transformed locally so that localities become reconfigured from outside themselves. Ethnic and cultural fragmentation and homogenization are thus not two opposing descriptions of the contemporary world but two constitutive trends within it. Globalization has undoubtedly led to a restructuring of the notion of place, previous notions of distinctiveness are being transformed through connections to the world beyond through labour migrations and diasporas, the internationalization of economic structures and consumer products, tourism and communication networks, flexibility and mobility in the labour market. New claims pertaining to the unique character of place are being made such that they have become effectively ‘borderlands’, betwixt and between sameness and uniqueness. In the process the particular identities of places have become contested, their meaning varying for different social groups and the manner in which they wish to project their identities in relation to projected futures.

The interpretation of the past meanings of place and most crucially rival claims about whose ends these different meanings serve become crucial concerns in a globalized world. People in places and moving within and between these places constitute landscapes, which are therefore spaces of personal and social identity. Doreen Massey, in her contribution, stresses the notion of place as ‘meeting place’, as open rather than being discrete, bounded and closed and as something always in a process of being and becoming, temporally extending itself both into the past and the future. Such a conceptualization clearly sits uneasily with more usual notions of place as fixed, grounded, stable, providing a solid grounding for identity formation and reproduction. Even 500 million-year-old rocks providing the ultimate in a solid grounding for an experience of place turn out to be ‘immigrants’ which have moved from
elsewhere. The modern geological knowledge that even the rocks we encounter have moved can provide strong ideological arguments with relation to issues such as immigration that are all ultimately to do with grounding ‘culture’ in ‘nature’ and naturalizing the former – it’s always been this way.

The relationship between ‘nature’ and the ‘natural’ and ‘culture’ and the ‘cultural’ remains at the heart of studies of place and landscape even if we appreciate that the distinction is arbitrary and acknowledge that all groups make their own conceptualizations of culture out of their own conceptualizations of nature or, in other words relations between the human and non-human worlds. Landscapes and places pose particular problems in this respect since both are ‘quasi artefacts’, part nature, part culture. Both are culturally fashioned creations – artefacts – yet much is also non-human, non-fashioned, and, like the weather, beyond control. Nature is always a political issue because it involves acts of self-definition in relation to an entity perceived as being outside and beyond our individual or collective experiences of landscape and place. Our ability to ground ourselves and feel at home, or otherwise. As Massey indicates nature as solid and unchanging may ground a sense of national identity or romantic notions of a true human identity or originary human identity in relation to fixed stable places: various escapes from the flux of modernity or notions of harmony and balance can be undermined and nature becomes flux, the world as endlessly changing. The concept becomes part of a ‘politics of truth’ in our own culture rather than something that might provide an ontological grounding for what that truth might be distanciated from our own social and political needs and desires that always require negotiation.

Denis Cosgrove refers to the idea of landscape as a characteristically modern way of encountering and representing the human social and moral experience of the world linking topographies, events and lives, the local and the global, individuals and communities, the poetics and politics of mapping, writing, photographing and painting, politics and power, histories of domination and resistance: in short a bundling of physical attributes and social relations, a spatio-temporal ‘frame’ for action and thought. This idea has changed historically from landscape as territory, to landscape as scenery in the tradition of landscape painting, to landscape and its manipulation as sources for imagining both the nation and morality, involving deeply conservative notions of the picturesque and an organic and harmonious connection between people and place. ‘Heritage’ landscapes become memorious of a nation’s past and the need to root and maintain that identity in the land as a counterpoint to the flux of modernity, to arrest time and change and provide something traditionally ‘authentic’. What happens to place and landscape as implying a relative degree of fixity and some notion of a discrete
territory or arena for human action, in the context of hypermodernity, is the subject of Cosgrove’s article. This is a discussion of Los Angeles, claimed over and over again in the literature to be the quintessential post-modern city whose essence supposedly resides in its placelessness, transience, reliance on the automobile, lack of coherence or a centre, sheer scale and environmental impact, ethnic and cultural diversity. Ironically, the ex-urban, gated community living by the manicured and carefully constructed and maintained golf course, Cosgrove argues, represents in effect a nostalgic yearning expressed in a particular material objectification, in Los Angeles and elsewhere, for what has been lost: the idea of landscape as the picturesque, landscape as community, landscape as providing a stable sense of home, morality and connecting with a stable and grounded ‘nature’.

Depending on your view, the landscape idea either positively provides an endless field of interpretative possibilities allowing us to integrate diverse phenomena or something hopelessly too ill defined for any satisfactory analysis or discussion: a misconceived analytical frame. From a phenomenological perspective landscape is ‘platial’ rather than ‘spatial’. It is not something defined by space as an abstract container but by the places that constitute it and make it what it is. Landscape thus sits in places, is a reflexive ‘gathering’ and set of relations between those places, background and foreground, figure and frame, here and there, near and far. Landscape is thus always both objective physical place and a subjective cognized image of that place.

IDENTITY IN THE LAND AND IN THE WATERS

The ontological moorings of social and personal identities rest in the minutiae of day-to-day life, the embodied practices, material forms, and routines through which we find and see ourselves in relation to others, places and landscapes. In the classic discussions of the Aboriginal landscapes of Australia the ancestral significance of the land and landforms in relation to a sense of place and social identity have been stressed over and over again, but the significance of water to coastal communities has been neglected. Howard and Frances Morphy demonstrate just how important the qualities of the sea and its ownership are to coastal communities not only in relation to the intricate naming of different areas of the coast but also in relation to different properties and qualities of water itself, its flows and distribution, from fresh waters at river mouths to saltwater tidal flows to deep offshore salt waters, altering themselves according to the seasons of the year and the times of the day. These provide potent metaphors by means of which people come to know themselves and establish their relations with others and the ancestral past. Ecology and mythology are thoroughly intertwined, the former
providing a rich set of possibilities, or affordances, for the latter. The fundamental point here is that such fine-grained distinctions could never arise from the untrammelled workings of the human mind itself. They depend on recognizing, taking up and working on that which is already given in the world. In other words the relationship between myth (where seemingly anything might happen) and the landscape is not arbitrary. It is grounded in a profound sensory awareness and knowledge of the world as it is inhabited. To put it another way, they, and us, are quite incapable of conceptualizing the landscape in any way that we might like.

Social identity, myth, memory and meaning have their generative source in the lived experiences and sensory perception of people as they move in and through the water and on the land and observe and make sense of that which is already given. In the case discussed by Howard and Frances Morphy the waters and their qualities both constrain thought and perception (because they could be otherwise) and provide the fountainhead for it. The logic here is analogic or metaphoric establishing linkages between different domains of experience and knowledge and relating them to social boundaries and divisions, amalgamation and differentiation. Water itself – its constantly changing character, its flow and mobility provides a powerful way of conceptualizing flows and movements of people and the relationship between clans, their mixing a metaphor for social reproduction and so on.

Social identity is always experienced and enacted in specific contexts. Having a processual character it always requires specific concrete material points of reference in the form of landscapes, places, artefacts and other persons. It is therefore constituted through various forms of subject to subject and subject to object relations giving it a transactional character. The contexts in which identities are experienced, reproduced or transformed may be conventional and familiar in which persons know how to act and carry on, habitual and routinized, or less familiar requiring a much greater degree of discursive reflection with regard to what having a particular identity might entail.

James Leach emphasizes the manner in which identity is always platial in character. Places are generative of social relations. Power and a sense of community regeneration arise from the place. The particular characteristics of social relations can only be understood in relation to place. In this sense places, like persons, have agency or effects. Moreover places are not just platial in character but are rather bundles of relations; places are in people, and in landforms, and the powers of ancestral spirits. Places are both spatial and temporal. They are intimately connected to history, the past, and hold out the promise of a desired future. As such they are in flux rather than static nodes or points in a landscape, and their qualities and character can only be understood
relationaly, with reference to other places, and on different scales like a series of Chinese boxes.

As Leach demonstrates, to understand the powers of place today one needs to work back and forth between the local and the global. Places thus have their own distinctive and intrinsic qualities, but the 'inside' qualities of place are also constructed, and changed, through processes that are beyond them and quite remote and intangible such as the workings of international money and commodity markets. The particular perceptions people have of themselves are ambiguously foregrounded and Backgrounded from the local to the global in a relation of tension. It is perhaps not, then, so surprising that in this relational nexus place-bound identities become particularly deeply disputed and contested and the powers of place are harnessed in social competition. Leach shows how even a seemingly innocent social event such as a volleyball game supposedly fostering good community spirit can become violent mayhem because in relation to conceptualizations of the generative powers of place there can only be social difference and this should generate winners rather than losers.

**EMBODIMENT, MEMORY**

The concept of embodiment provides a fundamental starting point to discuss, phenomenologically, the constitution of social identities. The most general argument is that the immediacy of our embodied experiences of the world has a profound effect on the way in which we relate to both things and persons. Identities have their basis in the multiple ways in which we perceive and receive the world through all our senses. Embodiment is thus an existential precondition for any sense of identity. Social identity is, in part, the body in the mind. In other words the manner in which identity is thought through relates in a fundamental way to the manner in which agency is experienced through the body at the levels of both individual and social experience, encounters and sensing persons, things and places: carnal, sensual experience. That is: both to sense, and to be sensed, by other persons and things. Only being in place and encountering things and persons in place can create anything other than a vicarious sense of social or individual identity. This is precisely why the disembedding mechanisms of global systems are potentially so threatening to whom we think we are and ultimately fail to provide any liberating alternative. Identities must be felt, they can never be simply imagined. How we relate to others, and the world around us, very much depends on modes of cognition and practical abilities which are embodied. These are acquired through dealing with persons and things and have a profound effect upon our responses to the circumstances in which we find ourselves.
Material forms may act as key metaphors of embodied identities, tools with which to think through and create connections around which people actively create identities. Artefacts permit people to know who they are by virtue of the fact that they assume specific forms or images in the minds of the viewer in a manner not possible to convey in words (Tilley, 1999: 268). Macdonald and Herzfeld in their contributions both show how architectural spaces articulate notions of personal identity with wider social notions of a national character and soul. They aim to fix the individual in a particular desired image through their material mediation, a local site by means of which the modern self becomes defined, tended and cared for in a dangerous flux of external contingencies. Their efficacy as material metaphors is inseparable from bodily, sensory engagement with particular places.

The powers or agency of place and landscape and their contested nature is stressed in Sharon Macdonald’s article on the Nazi landscape of Nuremberg. In many ways this is a fascinating and extreme case since this entire landscape and its various architectural components was deliberately designed to induce specific psychological, political and social effects which are quite obscene today. Many of the now iconic material remains still exist and have become a major Nazi heritage and tourist location in post-war Germany. Macdonald interrogates the very materiality of these stones and the contemporary burden of deciding how to cope with their endurance, and the powers that still reside in them. These ‘words in stone’ were designed to have enduring sensory bodily effects which would become internalized as people moved en-masse through a Nuremberg landscape that itself both drew on and altered the architectural past. As Herzfeld notes in his contribution public monuments almost always have a metonymic relationship to the nation states that they serve to reproduce. In the Nuremberg case individual Nazi bodies were simultaneously subsumed by the mass parades and dwarfed by the sheer scale and other material qualities (e.g. colours, types of stone and their connotative associations) of the buildings to establish ideological adherence and political docility. Supposed de-Nazification in 1945 merely entailed the superficial removal of the obvious symbol of the swastika while leaving the rest of the fabric intact, a failure or refusal to acknowledge the power of the built environment. As Macdonald shows, subsequent changes and alterations to the buildings and parade grounds have only partially erased the past and such ruins may either be considered ‘safe’ in neglect and decay or emotively retain their potential to evoke a past that paradoxically needs to be remembered and preserved, in order to forget and overcome it.

There are two key issues at stake in relation to the Nuremberg case. First, the bodily experiences of memory, the manner in which memories are intrinsic to the body, and the manner in which we remember in, by
and through the body in various ways. The second is the manner that monuments become aids by which the past may be remembered because forgetting that past is conceived of as an inevitable process that takes place on its own accord unless the material traces are preserved. This, as Forty and Küchler (1999) have argued, is a culturally specific understanding of the nature of memory and forgetting. Monuments certainly help to preserve memories of the past but always in a selective manner, simultaneously erasing part of it. The paradox of Nuremberg is that implicitly it seeks both to preserve and obliterate the past in the present thus creating a tension between the two and a fertile ground for contestation, and for addressing the question ‘what is best to be done?’

Domestic dwellings are material media through which relations between self and society are both objectified and negotiated. The home is the prime site for expressions of creativity, for appropriating and individualizing an alienable realm of consumer goods. It is also a site in which stocks of ‘cultural capital’ may be accumulated and displayed in relation to others and their social positioning. The home is continually framed as the domestic and personal ‘Other’ to public life. Yet the distinction between public and private, self and society is not so simple as the home, as often as not, also acts so as to mediate the public and private spheres. Official discourses about the good life and the good society enter the domestic sphere and through a dialectic of internalization and externalization become relayed and transformed in relation to the moral values of the self and how one should dwell. Michael Herzfeld discusses these general themes in relation to globalization and the production of a national heritage in urban spaces in Athens, Rome and Bangkok. Here the creation of wide open and imposing urban spaces with grand buildings contrasting with the messiness of winding streets, markets and alleyways forms an essential element in creating a sense of national order, coherence and symbolic purity, spaces for framing myths of national identity. The creation of these monumental spaces has frequently gone hand in hand with the recovery of archaeological structures redolent of a glorious past. While there is an extensive literature on the monumentalization of urban spaces to inculcate civic values and create a sense of collective identity [e.g. Boyer, 1994; Johnson, 2004; Till, 1999] the contemporary social implications involving the removal and displacement of entire urban populations have been comparatively little analysed from an ethnographic perspective.

Herzfeld suggests that such a process, particularly when viewed through the cultural prism of the contemporary Thai example, is intimately bound up with globally dominant images of the ‘West’. It is these, he argues, which have produced a social and cultural ‘Occidentalist’ evacuation of urban space rather than simply considerations of practicality, functional efficiency, sanitation or surveillance, frequently cited
as principal reasons for sweeping away the crowded and chaotic streets equally characterizing European urban spaces before the advent of ‘modernizing’ impulses such as Haussman’s schemes for Paris [Edholm, 1993]. These have resulted in the removal of an urban appearance that Herzfeld terms ‘orientalist’ which in an era of mass tourism now vicariously appeals as a cultural Other in various heritage destinations.

The production of wide open and tightly controlled public spaces has, Herzfeld argues, in countries such as Thailand, been culturally associated with a ‘civilizing’ western impulse in which social ‘chaos’, or intimacy, mess and a lack of the gravitas of an appropriate spatial and architectural order has to be cleansed, swept away and concealed from western eyes. Thailand, like Greece, he suggests, is locked into a quasi-colonial state of nervousness manifested in the creation of a particular and culturally dominant vision of architectural, and concomitantly, social order in which the inhabitants of the city become, effectively, ‘matter out of place’.

**MYTH, TEMPORALITIES AND LANDSCAPE**

Eric Hirsch considers myth in relationship to landscape and time, the manner in which myths assimilate historical events and processes into local understandings of the world, which serve to make that world appear self-evident and obvious. The intimate features of locality are used to re-work understandings of the global, or the world beyond. The ‘inside’ of the myth embedded in the local, in place, incorporates knowledges of the world beyond. Because myths incorporate historical events and make sense of them in terms of local understandings. Hirsch argues, they do not so much ‘obliterate’ time, or make the world atemporal as Lévi-Strauss argues [Lévi-Strauss, 1970], but rather rework time so that past and present exist side by side in relation to a desired future. The time in myth, Hirsch suggests, is an epochal time in which an illusion of simultaneity is produced that subsumes past events in the landscape taking place in a ‘chronometric’ time into the mythic plot itself thus rendering these events non-arbitrary and inevitable. In this sense while for westerners landscapes and events are signs of history, for the Fuyuge of Papua New Guinea they become signs in history which are locally mediated and contextualized. Landscape and place become drawn into a highly selective process of both remembering past events and reordering them, a technology for forgetting. Memory is usually considered to be a matter of the past, a temporal phenomenon but, as Hirsch shows, it clearly involves landscape and place as well which act as grids in relation to which events are ordered: places and landscapes anchor memories because we do not remember in a disembodied placeless manner.
The temporalities of landscape are multiple and scaled. They reside in mountains and hills, rivers and forests, roads and paths, people and activities and events, monuments and memorials, interpretations and reinterpretations. Mark Edmonds addresses these issues in relation to understanding the long-term temporalities in the Lake District, north-west England (an area discussed also by Massey in her contribution). From a broadly phenomenological perspective he discusses the need to consider landscapes as taskscapes, intimately bound up with the lives and values of those who work in and off the land in which identities are constituted through particular forms of activity. Working back and forth between the prehistoric past and the present he shows how a more holistic understanding of the landscape and its significance can be produced than taking slices through time and ignoring that which is on either side of the temporal segment being considered. This is a powerful argument for the need to carry out interdisciplinary research and combine ethnographic and prehistoric studies showing how the past informs the present and vice versa.

A romantic view of the Lake District as part of a national heritage, now a contemporary playground for the tourist gaze, is something of recent date. Privileging vision in relation to the other senses: soundscapes, smellscapes and the tactile involvement of people with the land, such a perspective distorts our understanding of the significance of place and identity, either in the past or the present. Gazing at monuments and hills and attempting to describe these experiences has taken precedence over a consideration of activities shaping and altering the land in various ways. Part of the problem here, of course, is that while the hills and the prehistoric ruins may still be bodily experienced, we can only imagine the various tasks and activities that took place on the basis of the traces left to us. As an aid to this active reimagining of the prehistoric past we can gain insights from contemporary and historical studies, trace through continuities and differences. Yet the thrust of Edmonds' article is not, in a parasitic kind of way, to simply draw insights about the past in relation to the present, but to suggest that all landscape histories need to consider processes and events over the long-term, something stressed in Barbara Bender’s work and, in particular, her consideration of the Stonehenge landscape (Bender, 1998), the need to work between and across the past and the present. For example Neolithic quarrying and 19th-century quarrying were equally, but in very different ways, implicated in tangles of relations, paths of movement and social relationships within the Lake District and beyond providing frameworks for notions of identity and belonging. Landscape histories are entangled, messy, contested and directly implicated in contemporary struggles for access and rights to use and enjoy the land.

Long-term change is also addressed in the article by Martin Hall on
the development of the urban landscape of Cape Town from 1652. As a colonial outpost of the Dutch East India Company, the layout and naming of the grid of streets of the Dutch colony clearly imposed a particular material objectification of ‘civilization’ which was subsequently modified after the cession of the Cape to the British in 1795, and made more elaborate by the British as an expression of empire. In the late 20th century apartheid city segregation became written over the streets, now subject to contemporary commercialization and development as an entertainment and heritage destination.

Nora argued that history obliterates real memories and the alienated status of memory in modernity becomes objectified in monuments, memorials, museums and performances [Nora, 1989]. We produce cultural heritage because unproblematic memory has already been destroyed. For anything to be required to be preserved suggests that it has been forgotten and requires to be made relevant. The emphasis in Hall’s account is on the manner in which the urban landscape of Cape Town is inseparable from the politics of identity. It developed as an expression of differing forms of power in relation to very different colonial and post-colonial identities and this past is now being actively reworked in various forms of heritage nostalgia. Hall stresses the manner in which the past remains elusive and out of control: the contested nature of the understanding of the built environment as a palimpsest of buildings, street layouts and monumental structures, their relation to dominant interests and ‘countermemories’, relations of resistance to discourses in domination.

THE BODY IN LANDSCAPE IN TIME

Clearly our involvement in the world is always situated as taking place from a point of view. Thus it is impossible to exhaust the description of any place or any object. In this sense experience is always unfinished, inherently incomplete and ambiguous. When we represent a thing in words or images we never represent what is there but always and only an aspect of the thing. Ambiguity is thus an existential ground of what persons and things are. It is not something that should be considered a problem in analysis, something to be afraid of, which we must quickly try to dissolve through the operations of analytical thought.

The body is both interpretational constraint and enabling condition for the construction of meaning. Every perceived object is situated within a spatial horizon or a background from which it is distinguished. Figure can always become ground or vice versa depending on how and what we perceive. But the context of a thing is not simply its spatial background or horizon. It always involves time. The backgrounds of a thing are constituted out of a whole network of past experiences and future
expectations, which are not, in any empirical sense, part of our immediate sensory fields. Thus the invisible aspects of a thing are as essential to its meaning and significance as those that are visible. The diachronic aspect of context constantly affects the way in which we perceive figures and grounds. Thus things have culturally emergent properties. So material forms always have meanings and relationships extending beyond themselves. They are not replete unto themselves. They are always more than themselves: in a process of becoming rather than a static state of being.

Andy Jones, in his contribution, stresses the temporal meanings of landscapes in a study of prehistoric rock art from Scotland. Like Edmonds, he stresses the phenomenological significance of landscape in relation to embodiment and activity, a relational field in which the significance of places is ‘gathered’ together from processes of inhabitation and social interaction becoming a nexus of contested meanings. The inscription of images in the landscape, he argues, is a means of materializing forms of remembrance in which the production of one set of images affects the next. As such these images do not just simply reflect the social but form part and parcel of its constitution. In other words thinking takes part through the material agency of these images (Gell, 1998; Pinney, 2004; Tilley, 2004; Were, 2005). Jones directs our attention not towards what these images might mean, or signify, through their inscription on particular rocks in the landscape, but what they do – the effects that they have and it is this that makes them meaningful irrespective of any attempts to semiotically decode their significance.

Rock art is non-portable imagery, fixed, located in particular places in the landscape and as Jones emphasizes the materiality of the medium – the rock itself – is as important as the images inscribed on it in understanding the effects and significance that it possesses. There is a dialectic at work between ‘natural’ or geological characteristics of the rock – cracks, fissures, runnels, hollows and so on – and the inscribed images. Smooth rocks are avoided while those that have already been ‘pre-engraved’ are chosen for the inscription of imagery. Jones argues that ‘ancestral’ or prior ‘imagery’ is being reworked in relation to the production of the designs creating temporal depth, a reworking of the relationship between past and present in the rock surface itself, and the relationship is mimetic. In viewing these images the relationship between figure and ground is constantly changing and blurring. Repetitive image production simultaneously draws together imagery from different places, both local and non-local and condenses the significance of particular places in the landscape. Rocks and standing stones with imagery represent both an ordering of that landscape, an ordering of the relationship between past and present, and provide powerful nodes for movement through it and the manner in which it is experienced.
One of Barbara’s major recent research projects was on the Stonehenge landscape. Jacquetta Hawkes once cynically remarked that each generation gets the Stonehenge it describes and deserves. We have reasons for remembering, and Barbara meticulously unravelled the changing social and political significances of the monument, its representation and entanglement with social struggles from the prehistoric past to the present (Bender, 1998). It seemed then rather appropriate to include here in this collection of articles a new preliminary interpretative perspective of the prehistoric landscape around Stonehenge, itself influenced by Bender’s consideration of the symbolic significance of the materiality of different media and components of this landscape: stone, wood, earth, air, chalk, fire and water.

Previous attempts to interpret Stonehenge have all tended to focus the attention on the monument itself, and its uniqueness as a major ceremonial centre in the Neolithic and Bronze Age social world. Parker-Pearson et al., by contrast, attempt to understand Stonehenge from a relational perspective, discussing it in relation to Durrington Walls, Woodhenge, the Avon valley and paths of movement through the landscape. This ‘decentering’ of Stonehenge permits a radically different interpretation of the monument and its significance to emerge at varying spatial scales of experience and engagement with it, in relation to (i) the significance of the mid-winter, as opposed to mid-summer, solstice axis of the monument and its association with the dead; (ii) the contrast between an enduring stone monument and wooden circles containing rotting and renewed posts found at Durrington Walls and Woodhenge in relation to the living, the dead, and rites of passage; and (iii) the very different kinds of pottery and animal bones encountered at these monuments and their associations.

This research illustrates beautifully Harrison’s thesis, in which he compares and contrasts the ‘forgetful’ landscapes of the Sepik river of Papua New Guinea in which all traces of human activity in the past are swept away and ‘memorious’ English landscapes that objectify the past in various ways and are made to do so: ‘the English will never know – and they know they will never know – everything that is secreted under their feet. Because their land knows much more than they do, it has an inexhaustible capacity to surprise them pleasurably about their own past, or be made to surprise them by the techniques of archaeology’ (Harrison, 2004: 149).

Whatever we remember, and the manner in which we remember, we get a different past, a different sense of place, and a different landscape every time.
References


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