

E. Mediterranean Landscape Archaeology

E1 Cross-disciplinary and integrative approaches to human-environment interactions in Mediterranean landscape archaeology

TUESDAY 23rd AUGUST 11.10-13.00

VENUE: Hörsal 2

Session organisers: Anton Bonnier, Martin Finné and Erika Weiberg

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Session Abstract

One of the most fundamental developments within Mediterranean landscape archaeology since the mid-20th century has been the increasing application of field survey to Mediterranean (micro-) regions. The attempt to combine data from different regions to produce broader landscape narratives brought scholars together at a workshop in 2002 that resulted in the publication *Side-by-Side Survey: Comparative Regional Surveys in the Mediterranean World* (S.E. Alcock and J.F. Cherry, eds., 2004). These discussions remain deeply embedded within the disciplinary discourse of Mediterranean landscape archaeology. Yet, the idea of broader landscape narratives involves today even wider and more cross-disciplinary datasets, including palaeoclimate and palaeoenvironmental archives. Combining a variety of records we are, more often than not, dealing with regional perspectives that are in fact inter-regional seen from a field archaeological perspective, which in turn places new emphasis on the questions explored in 2002. The session seeks to explore how comparative approaches within Mediterranean landscape archaeology can be applied within modern cross-disciplinary research on human-environment interaction. How do we bridge disciplinary and methodological gaps in order to produce mixed but coherent regional datasets and integrated narratives on human-environment interaction? We invite papers that consider the great variety of complex issues such projects are likely to explore: including the integration of multi-proxy datasets; up-scaling as well as down-scaling of data; visualization of temporal and geographical variation; as well as the application of any results in relation to the wider scholarly debate on societal resilience and sustainability.

Paper Abstracts

The origin and development of a Mediterranean landscape: the integration of field survey techniques with the long-term archaeomorphological analysis of Valencia Mediterranean alluvial plain

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The complex evolution of Valencia's territory has made it one of the most complex historical landscapes in Europe. But this complexity can also be problematic for its study, since the intensive historical occupation and geomorphological dynamics in combination with modern changes have deeply transformed the territory. Therefore, for its meaningful analysis, a multidisciplinary research perspective is needed. The different techniques employed include geomorphology (University of Valencia), multi-proxy palaeoenvironmental analysis (University of Barcelona and GEOLAB-CNRS), remote sensing (University of Cambridge) and archaeomorphology and archaeological survey (Catalan Institute of Classical Archaeology). Archaeological survey and the GIS-based archaeomorphological analysis revealed as particularly useful. Survey has included the revision of the location, chronology and type of several known archaeological sites allowing us to analyse the evolution of settlement patterns from the Iron Age to the Medieval Islamic period. Also, the relation between sites and archaeomorphology has permitted identification of changes in settlement dynamics between the Iron Age, the Roman Republican and the Imperial periods. Archaeomorphological survey has allowed us to review the main features of some structures documented by the GIS-based analysis such as roads or holloways, some of which were identified by the archaeomorphological analysis as part of a Roman centuriation. The integration of these micro-scale studies has helped establish an extra-regional scale comparison, aligning Valencia's historic landscape evolution to that of other well-studied Mediterranean sedimentary plains.

Silent rivers of grass – the detection of ancient drove-roads in southern Italy

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An important interaction between humans and landscape was the practice of transhumance (migrating pastoralism). This economy is historically well attested in the Mediterranean area. Between central and southern Italy the climatic circumstances strongly favoured this kind of economy which, for hundreds of years, shaped the human as well as the natural environment. The existence of the practice of migrating pastoralism is testified already in the times of the Roman Republic. Over following centuries, drove-roads (called calles in Latin, tratturi in Italian) taken by the shepherds and their flocks, although unpaved, became particularly visible in the countryside as well as in urban regions, either as wide, often slightly sunken strips with special vegetation or as the main streets within or along the settlements. The project/paper seeks to explore the possibilities of tracing the course of ancient drove-roads, employing GIS and microbiology.

Contributions and limits of a multiscalar, geomorphological and palynological combined approach to human-environment relationships reconstruction, nearby the multiperiod tell of Dikili Tash (Northern Greece)

Arthur Glais,¹ José-Antonio Lopez-Saez² and Laurent Lespez³