Landscape mosaics

Thoughts and proposals
for the implementation
of the Council of Europe
Landscape Convention

COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

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Preface

The landscape reflects a present which interacts with a mosaic of memory traces which have diverse symbolic values.

Valerio Di Battista

The European Landscape Convention of the Council of Europe (ETS No. 176)[1] aims to promote landscape protection, management and planning and to organise international co-operation. It applies to the entire territory of the parties and covers natural, rural, urban and peri-urban areas. It concerns landscapes that might be considered outstanding, but also everyday or degraded landscapes. The convention represents the first international treaty exclusively devoted to all the dimensions of landscape, considered from a perspective of sustainable development.

The Council of Europe is continuing the work undertaken, since the adoption of the convention in 2000, to examine and illustrate certain approaches to landscape.[2] This book, entitled *Landscape mosaics – Thoughts and proposals for the implementation of the European Landscape Convention of the Council of Europe*, explores certain ways of understanding the landscape and makes proposals for more attention to be paid to it.

It brings together the reports presented by Council of Europe experts on the occasion of the Council of Europe conferences on the European Landscape Convention, organised at the Palais de l'Europe in Strasbourg, on 23-24 March 2017, 6-7 May 2019 and 26-27 May 2021. Representatives of governments and international organisations, both governmental and non-governmental, who took part in these meetings were able to discuss the subjects dealt with and make progress in the implementation of the convention.[3]

The experts who contributed to the production of this book are warmly thanked for the quality of their reflections and their proposals:

- Valerio Di Battista – Towards a grammar of European landscapes;
- Régis Ambroise – Designing agricultural landscapes for sustainable development;
- Patrice Collignon – The rural landscape in transition: energy, agriculture and demography;
- Mauro Agnoletti – Experience of Tuscany, Italy;
- Carmine Nardone – The Manifesto for the beauty of rural landscapes in Campania, Italy;
- Jean Noël Consalès – Urbanisation, town planning and landscape;
- Felix Kienast, with F. Wartmann, A. Zaugg and M. Hunziker – A review of integrated approaches to landscape monitoring;
- Barry Hynes, Valentin Riehm, Maguelonne Déjeant-Pons, with the contribution of Enrico Buergi – Experiences with public funds and the landscape;
- Yves Luginbühl – Landscape and responsibility;
- Michael Oldham – Professional recognition of landscape architects;
- Claire Cornu – Dry stone walls in the landscape, inheritance and innovation for rural sustainability;
- Gerhard Ermischer – Walking the landscape;

1. Adopted by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe in Strasbourg on 19 July 2000, the European Landscape Convention (https://www.coe.int/en/web/conventions/full-list/-/conventions/treaty/176 ETS No. 176) – now entitled "Council of Europe Landscape Convention" – was opened for signature by European states in Florence on 20 October 2000. A protocol amending the convention (https://www.coe.int/en/web/conventions/full-list?module=treaty-detail&treatynum=219 CETS No. 219), which entered into force on 1 July 2021, aims to promote European co-operation with non-European states wishing to implement the provisions of the Convention, by opening it to their accession.
2. *Landscape and sustainable development – Challenges of the European Landscape Convention*, Council of Europe Publishing, 2006; *Landscape facets – Reflections and proposals for the implementation of the European Landscape Convention*, Council of Europe Publishing, 2012; *Landscape dimensions – Reflections and proposals for the implementation of the European Landscape Convention*, 2017. www.coe.int/en/web/landscape/publications.
3. Conference reports: Documents CEP-CDPATEP (2017) 19; CEP-CDPATEP (2019) 20; CEP-CDPATEP (2021) 16. www.coe.int/en/web/landscape/conferences.

- Klaus Fürst-Elmecker: Traditional forms of thought and spirituality;
- Michael Oldham, with the contributions from Ana Luengo, Niek Hazendonk, Leor Lovinger, Indra Purs: Urban landscapes and climate change: the contribution of landscape architects to improving the quality of life;
- Régis Ambroise: Landscape and the responsibility of stakeholders for sustainable and harmonious development.

Maguelonne Déjeant-Pons

Secretary of the European Landscape Convention, Head of Landscape, Environment and Major Hazards Division, Council of Europe

Sanja Ljeskovic Mitrovic

Deputy Minister of Sustainable Development and Tourism of Montenegro, Chair of the 10th Council of Europe Conference on the European Landscape Convention

Krisztina Kincses

Senior Governmental Councillor, Ministry of Agriculture of Hungary, Chair of the 11th Council of Europe Conference on the European Landscape Convention

Chapter 11

Walking the landscape

Gerhard Ermischer, expert to the Council of Europe

Archaeologist and historian, Austria.

Introduction

Walking is one of the most intensive ways to experience the landscape and it can help form a better understanding of the landscape as such, an awareness of its vulnerability and the great need for its care and good management. Walking is the human way of moving, without machines and engines, at a human pace and speed, and the ideal way to perceive, even "consume", the landscape as something beautiful, natural and also human.

The normal speed of transport has changed dramatically since industrialisation – trains, cars and planes move so much faster than a human being could ever do on their own – that the landscape we travel through becomes just a blur through a window. Both the structure and the speed of our mode of transport now distance us from the surrounding environment. That of course is most true for flying, when we also change our perspective completely, travelling well above the clouds or looking down on the Earth below us from an eagle's perspective – just much higher than any eagle could ever fly, and much faster.

When our travelling gets slowed down, as a result of bad weather conditions, road works or technical problems, and we move at a snail's pace in the traffic jam or wait for our connecting train or flight at a station or airport, we are so caught up with the inconvenience of the delay that we rarely spend a second looking around and trying to experience, even less understand, the visible landscape.

Of course, often very little of that is visible, as we travel with a high-speed train through tunnels and artificial valleys of concrete, blocking the view and, instead, travellers look at their laptops or smartphones or maybe even a monitor showing the landscape as a virtual experience, and where the season to see it in can be chosen, in spring blossom or winter snow.

This massive change of experience over the last 150 years has also changed people's perspective of walking. It is no longer the natural way to move around, as many people use the car even to get a packet of cigarettes or a loaf of bread from the vending machine or the shop around the corner. The real shopping is done in shopping malls outside the cities, perhaps accessed by bus or tram, but typically by private car, while shop owners in the city centres regularly protest against new pedestrian zones because they fear losing business when customers can no longer drive up to their shops and park in front of their doors (notwithstanding the fact that most customers really circle round the shops in their cars for hours to find said parking place). Walking has become a leisure activity, something we do as a pastime, just for fun, for our health – or actually with the goal to experience a landscape that we find worth experiencing. Walking has become something special, something even organised in specific clubs and hiking associations, professionalised through the training of certified walking guides, done with specific equipment, studied scientifically and defined even by industrial norms.

Figure 1. The Holy Family Trip

Walking today is something quite different from what our predecessors did for centuries – nay, for millennia. It is a leisure activity and, in our high-speed, high-tech, highly competitive society, that also means something professionalised, commercialised and trendified. It is considered "retro", going back to our roots and allowing for a more natural experience of our body, soul and environment, and the latter, viewed consciously, becomes – landscape. This form of walking, a conscious way of experiencing the landscape, is therefore something quite new, something which could only develop fully with industrialisation and the new technologies of transport, but there are roots to it going far back in history. It makes sense to look back into history for these roots, before analysing today's trendy hiking movements.

1. A short history of walking

Walking on two feet is one of the distinguishing features of the human being. The process of becoming human is linked to the process of learning to walk upright; in anthropology, the anatomic signs for an upright, walking being are among the most telling proofs for a fullydeveloped human being, in contrast to early human-like forebears, who moved on all fours, or walked in a crouched way, using hands regularly to stabilise the posture. The early humans were hunters and gatherers and therefore lived a nomadic, or at least semi-nomadic, life. Covering great distances was part of their make-up: they did so by walking, maybe walking at quite a quick pace, akin to jogging or the modern variety of hyper-running. They definitely had to understand their environment and move with open eyes, taking in all aspects of the

surrounding land, scanning for dangers as well as sources of nourishment and, of course, for landmarks to find their way. They would necessarily know much more about the nature of the territory they crossed than any modern town dweller on their Sunday walk, even an ardent nature lover, nature protector or the best-trained biologist. That early human would be taking in their environment, interpreting it and memorising it, forming a mental map of sights, smells, sounds and all the other physical aspects of the land they were moving in. They were creating their own landscape as we define it today. Of course, they would not see it as such and therefore it is arguable whether they actually thought about a landscape, but the principle stands sound that human beings explored and interpreted their landscape by walking it, even if the concept of landscape was only created much later in our history.

Walking remained the main mode of transport for all the centuries and millennia of human physical and cultural evolution. In particular, the speed set by walking remained the speed for human transport through all these times, until industrialisation and the invention of the railway. Indeed, there were important revolutions in transport before that: the domestication of the donkey and horse, the breeding of the mule, the invention of wheeled vehicles, of boats and ships to move on water and the construction of roads, from prehistoric dams and wooden tracks to the technologically advanced roads built by the Persian kings, in imperial China or, best known to Europeans, by the Roman Empire. Still the pace was set by walking on foot. Wheeled transport, as well as transport by boat, allowed people to move bulkier, heavier goods in much greater quantities than could be just carried on the back of a human, but it did not really change the speed of transport. The most efficient means of land transport for weight was the ox-cart (in other world regions perhaps the elephant) but that was even slower than an average pedestrian.

Horse carts and carriages might travel a little faster on a good road, but the horses needed many rests. Even riding a horse is faster only for a short distance, as horses tire easily and need to be rested even more when driven hard. One of the best-organised systems of mediaeval long-distance communication was that of the royal messengers in England. They could cover up to 50 kilometres a day, while average travellers would make a maximum of 30 to 35 kilometres: heavy transport was limited to approximately 15 to 20 kilometres per day. The really interesting aspect about the royal messengers is that there were two kinds: messengers on foot and messengers on horses. Both messengers covered the same distance per day, as the riders would start out more quickly, but had to rest their horses more often, while the messengers on foot kept up a steady fast walking pace and so covered the same distance in the same time.

Speed was not the great difference in the various methods of transport available to humans through most of our history. The change of perspective was literally one of physical perspective: sitting on top of a horse and looking down on the pedestrians makes a great difference, as does sitting in a carriage. It was not possible to move faster, not even really in more comfort, given the lack of effective springs (dampers) in an average carriage on roads full of potholes and ruts, but still you were a privileged person sitting in the carriage, looking at your surroundings in a different way from the simple pedestrian. The famous German poet and seasoned traveller, Johann Wolfgang Goethe, wrote that the only way to truly experience a landscape was by walking, in recognition of this fact. One could never fully understand the landscape viewing it through the windows of a carriage, Goethe asserted. This statement from the early 18th century, shortly before the Industrial Revolution, reflects on a change of perspective, a new way of looking at the landscape, of understanding landscape, and also a new way of looking at walking, which no longer is just seen by Goethe as a means of transport, but as a means of experience, a means of understanding and exploring, of seeing one's surroundings with a conscious, open mind and a will to analyse and fully understand it. The general view of travelling and viewing – no, experiencing – the landscape deeply was influenced by the publications of Goethe on his travels to Switzerland (1775 and 1779) and Italy (1786).

Figure 2. Goethe in the Roman countryside, J. H. W. Tischbein

This turning point turned walking into hiking. Walking became a leisure activity, something outside the normal means of transport and the mere need to move from point A to point B. Goethe was not the first to make that transition, but the first who combined a specific, conscious way of experiencing the landscape with the experience of walking,

instead of using any other means of transport. In the history of tourism and hiking, the first European to describe a conscious experience of the landscape and an act of travelling (again actually walking) to a specific place for a special experience was another famous poet, the Italian, Francesco Petrarch. In 1336, he walked up the Mont Ventoux in Provence for the special view it offered and described the experience at length. Therefore, he is viewed as the patron of tourism, hiking and mountaineering.

In Goethe's time it was Alexander von Humboldt who not only travelled around the world to learn about nature, geology, cultures and landscapes but who also described how he explicitly climbed mountains and forded rivers, not only to explore new views and gather knowledge, but also because he wanted to say that he was the first European to do so. There is an aspect of competition and record hunting in his expedition to the Chimborazo, which adds an aspect to hiking we know only too well in our competitive society – an urge to do something special, something challenging and to explore the limits of a human's abilities, to stretch those limits and somehow to go beyond them, to face danger and to live an extreme sensation which normal life cannot offer.

These aspects have become much more important in today's society, which at least gives the illusion of security and allows for a safe and pampered life which was unthinkable by all previous generations, though alas much aspired to – and of course it is also an aspiration for many people living now, but in other less fortunate places.

Figure 3. Alexander von Humboldt, Friedrich Georg Weitsch

Thus, few people combined travelling and walking with having a perception of landscape. Poets such as Petrarch or Goethe wrote about those experiences, and so did explorers and scientists such as Alexander von Humboldt, speaking about landscape as a teacher and university professor in his famous lectures. Painters such as Pieter Brueghel the Elder, Lucas Cranach the Elder or Albrecht Dürer transformed their experiences into paintings and developed new views of landscape, especially after their travels from the north of Europe to Italy, and influenced by the stunning views they experienced when crossing the Alps. But who else was travelling before modern times, and how would they perceive the landscape?

It is a common belief that few people travelled before modern times. Of course, there was a great proportion of society that would never travel outside the very limited bounds of their immediate homestead. This was true for the many serfs, farmers and farmhands bound to the lord of the land, un-free, not allowed to leave the place where they lived, not free to take employment as they wished. Many of the free farmers would not travel far, just to the next market town, in order to sell their produce and buy necessary supplies. Yet, markets and fairs were regular and fostered the continual travel of people, at least in a local and regional circle. When historians became more interested in the everyday lives of past generations it soon became obvious that there was also a great number of people from all levels of society who would travel periodically over greater distances. This was true for the top layer of society: kings, dukes and great lords of the land travelled continually from residence to residence, because of an existential need: not only to secure their dominance over the territory they ruled by periodic physical presence, but also because no place could sustain the entourage of a great lord for a long period of time. Transport was simply not good enough to bring all the food and other supplies needed by those courts over great distances to one, static court and so travelling from place to place and eating up the supplies at those places (much like a plague of locusts) was the only way of sustaining those parties of noblemen and all the camp followers that were needed to run the great courts.

Figure 4. Carriage of Emperor Joseph II, Reutte, Austria

A few people at the top of society set the pace for most of the travelling before modern times; it was done out of a need, and mostly a really existential need. The merchants and traders also had to travel to buy and sell their goods – and that was as true for the lowliest tinker as for the greatest merchant prince. The truly rich and powerful merchants could stay in their cities while the actual transport of goods was carried out by teamsters. These people were far more than just transporters of goods but more like modern logistic enterprises, dealing with customs and tolls, selling goods on the way and presenting final bills after the journey. Yet even the greatest merchants had to travel, to ensure good deals or to visit the great lords of the country to offer loans and ensure privileges and trade opportunities in return. The mediaeval and post-mediaeval craftsmen learned their profession as apprentices at a fixed place, with a specific master, but once qualified they too might have to travel if they wanted to gather experience; the name journeyman does not come out of the blue, but because they were competent enough to be paid by the day – *journée* – but not more. For many a journeyman, the way to progress was either to become a master (difficult in the mediaeval guild society if you were not the son of a master) or to find some permanent employment at a big workshop.

Travelling was for many people the only way to make their living, because they could not settle down, pay the amount of money necessary to achieve citizenship and open their own shop. At the lower end of society there were also the vagrants, people who made their living as mime artists, jugglers, entertainers, singers, doing small repairs and selling cheap goods or even as beggars, forced to travel from town to city to market town to court, palace or monastery, with no fixed place where they could stay. Cities and towns regulated the influx of these vagrants, and allowed them to stay only for a set period for which they had to obtain special permission. These people were the outcasts of society, who were forced to travel continually from place to place to eke out a meagre income. Economic and social changes could swell their numbers dramatically, as in late mediaeval England when climate change and economic reasons favoured the production of wool by sheep-breeding over the production of crops, and many serfs and tenants were driven from the land they had occupied for generations, to live on the street – as pedlars, beggars or even finally as highwaymen and outlaws.

These unfortunates also swelled the number of soldiers and mercenaries, another group of people who were constantly travelling great distances. There was a group of people from most levels of society who travelled (and mainly walked) the roads of Europe and beyond, as pilgrims. Pilgrimages started in Europe in early mediaeval times, especially to Rome, but later also to the holy places in the Near East: Jerusalem, Bethlehem and the places of the life and sufferings of Christ. Santiago de Compostela became a major goal for pilgrims from all over Europe, the pilgrim route of St James being the first European Cultural Route of the Council of Europe and still one of the most popular routes. More regional and national goals included the shrine of St Thomas à Becket in Canterbury, which was the source for Chaucer's famous *Canterbury Tales*, a mediaeval best-seller depicting a group of pilgrims travelling together to the shrine at Canterbury and telling tales to each other. This book describes the pilgrims, their professions and social background, and their motives for the pilgrimage.

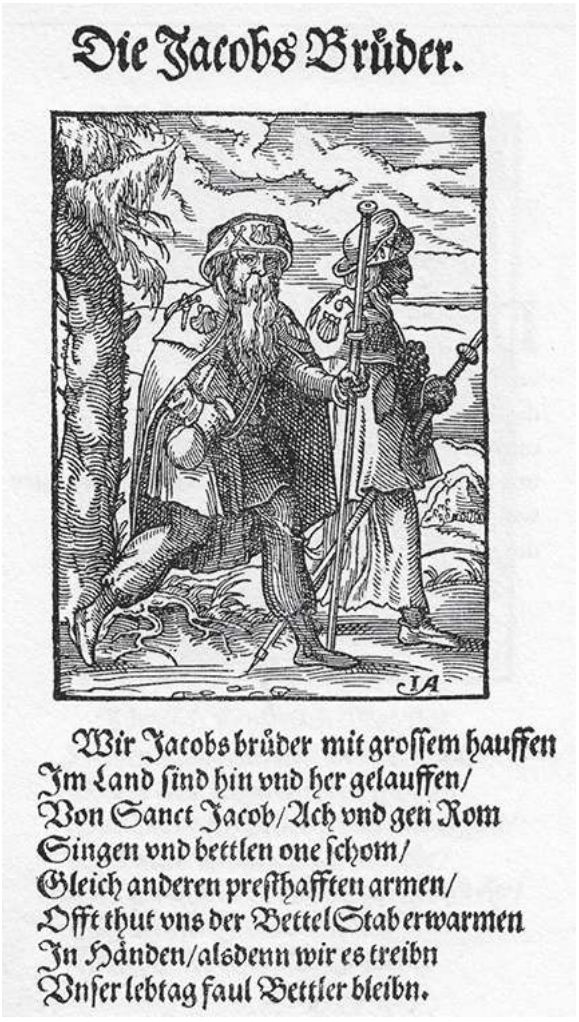

Figure 5. The Brothers Jacob (Die Jacobs Brüder), Jost Amman

Those motives were not all holy. There are mediaeval pamphlets warning about the dangers of pilgrimage, the criminal hosts of dubious hostels, overpriced quarters and trinkets in the pilgrim centres, robbers and highwaymen but also fake pilgrims who preyed on their comrades, stealing from them and even murdering them, tricking them as conmen or leading them astray – to gambling and whoring.

Mediaeval sources speak also of other risks to travellers: becoming unfaithful to the husband or wife left at home, being seduced by whores camouflaged as pilgrims, or sinking into libertinage when far from the rigours of social control at home. Pilgrims were a group of people who not only moved from one place to another as quickly as possible, but also took the time to take in the sights and wonders of the world along the way. So the first guide books in mediaeval Europe were itineraries for pilgrims, describing not only the best routes to Rome or other famous goals, and the hostelries, monasteries and other places of convenience and worship along that way, but also special places to visit and specific features of territories that the pilgrims would have to cross, including the customs and peculiarities of the people that pilgrims would meet.

The social rank of pilgrims was as wide as society at the time, and so was the style in which they travelled. Not unlike modern hikers, who range from nature-seeking trekkers who carry as little as possible with them to those who walk in comfort from four-star hotel to four-star hotel with their luggage transported for them, pilgrims in mediaeval and post-mediaeval times travelled very differently. Of course, little remains from most pilgrimages, except the many pilgrim badges issued at the holy shrines, simple ones cut from bones, cast from lead or expensively carved from ivory and decorated with jewels that show, as today, that the souvenir market catered for all interests and purses. A stunning example of a gentleman pilgrim is Stephan III Praun, from a wealthy family of merchant barons in Nuremberg, who travelled to Santiago de Compostela in 1571 and to Jerusalem in 1585. His pilgrim costume is of the finest materials, tailored for him. His pilgrim staff is inlaid with mother of pearl, his pilgrim hat bedecked not only with shells but miniature pilgrim staffs cut from ivory. He had himself portrayed as a pilgrim in all his glory and his family kept his pilgrim clothes and paraphernalia as a treasure in their own treasury. Today the costume is on display in the German National Museum in Nuremberg. Here, going on a pilgrimage became a means of propaganda to sustain the honour and influence of an ascending patrician family in one of the economic centres of Europe.

Pilgrimage could offer the curious an excuse to travel, and mediaeval sources at least suggest that this was not too uncommon, but for most pilgrims the sights and experiences along the route were only a side effect and the true goal of the pilgrimage was to reach one of the holy places of veneration to obtain absolution and indulgences for their sins, or for real crimes, because perpetrators of serious crimes such as manslaughter could be sentenced to make a pilgrimage to atone for their crime.

In certain periods of our history there were actually people travelling for reasons that we could describe as tourism, with the goal of learning about the world, different cultures and ways of life, but also to develop social networks. This was a phenomenon of the upper class exclusively and reached its zenith in the "Grand Tour" of the 17th and 18th centuries when young men of standing were sent by their families on a long journey through Europe and the Mediterranean, normally with a tutor, to learn and study. Such tours would last for a year or two, were highly expensive, were thought to be highly educative and would prepare the sons of the aristocracy, rich merchants or bankers to run the family business with a broader view of the known world. Interestingly enough, such ventures are also known from Roman Antiquity, with the sons of the senatorial elite and the richest bankers and traders sent on a similar "Grand Tour" around the Roman Empire, preparing them for office in the Roman administration, which might also lead them on long journeys, or to run the family business. A network of family connections, and the Roman system of well-built roads and travel routes, with public mansions and hostels along the way, made such a venture possible. There is something akin to the first tourist guide in Roman Antiquity, with the description of Greece by Pausanias; there are also the first travel novels, produced by authors in the Greek-speaking East of the Roman Empire, mainly in Alexandria, racy novels full of lost heiresses, pirates and miracles, but in many ways quite similar to modern travel novels.

2. From walking to hiking: the effects of industrialisation

Through all these different periods of our history it was only a small group of people who actually thought about landscape as such and who experienced walking the landscape as something special, something to treasure and write about, paint or put into music; they were generally artists, some educated members of the upper class, some philosophers and thinkers, early scientists and explorers. That changed with industrialisation: the whole world changed in a most dramatic way. The most visible and effective change was the change of speed. For all this time, human walking pace dictated the speed of transport, communication and exchange and set the pace of life. That changed completely with the invention of the steam engine and the railway. Even with the very first railways, travelling at something like 30 kilometres per hour, these engines covered the same distance in an hour that a traveller would walk (or ride, or drive in a carriage) in a full day. Pessimists declared that the human body was not built for such incredible speed and people would die when travelling faster than 30 kilometres per hour: but as we know, these

soothsayers were proven wrong and within a few decades the railway network not only spanned all of Europe and America but trains would travel at double and triple that speed.

Figure 6. Berlin-Pottsdam Railway, Menzel

Not only did that change the way of travelling – it changed the perception of time. Before the train came, time at every place was set by the sun, the sun dial defining noon as the middle of the day, 12 o'clock, the standard. All the mechanical clocks – church clocks and any watch carried by an individual – would be set according to the sun. Thus, the time in Munich would be different from Frankfurt, in London different from Exeter, in Paris different from Reims. It was not a problem, nobody would care, would mind or even really know, except navigators travelling the seas. Now, when travelling easily 10 times the distance per day than in the past, the differences became obvious. They were a problem for the railway companies, because trains must run on a schedule, but how could that be calculated and published in a timetable if time is different at every station? In due course, the railway companies invented a standardised time, railway time, which would be the same across a big territory. As a consequence, the time shown by the clock at the station, and the time in the timetable, would be different from the time in the city, town or village and so railway time spread from the station to the city and time became standardised over great areas. Time was no longer following the natural course of the sun, but an artificiallycreated course. This was helped by the demands of the big factories, drawing in labourers from far and wide, who were also working on a schedule with a set start time, breaks and end of work time. Work in offices ran according to the clock and, with the invention of the telegraph and the first real time communication over great distances, standardised time became even more important for the economy and finance, stock markets and traders.

Figure 7. Great Warehouse, Coalbrookdale, United Kingdom

Today, standardised time has become so natural that we can hardly imagine the revolution that occurred in the 19th century. It changed the attitude of people as much as the big new factories with their machines and revolving drivebands. It also led to a counter-movement of nostalgia for the "good old days". This focused on the massive changes in the landscape – urban as well as rural. Before the Industrial Revolution most people in Europe lived in the countryside. Most towns really were just big villages, and true cities such as London, Paris, Cologne or Nuremberg were rare. Now, suddenly, small towns became mega cities, swelled with the working poor, such as Liverpool or Manchester, and new urban centres arose within a single generation, changing a rural area such as the Ruhr Valley into a hub of industrial activity and a network of cities bigger than most towns in Europe just a few decades earlier. The drift of people from the countryside to the cities, where the majority of Europeans now lived after just two generations, completely turned around the historic settlement pattern, and also created pressure on agriculture, which had to supply more food for more people with a much-reduced labour force. As a result, agriculture was industrialised and mechanised as well, with steam engines working in the fields and barns, fields becoming much larger, hedges and walls disappearing, traditional patterns of crops and woods being replaced by much bigger field systems with single crops, aided by fertiliser imported from overseas.

Figure 8. View of Hinterhaeuser, Adolph Menzel

When one looks at European literature of the era, one can see this change reflected in an elegy of loss, describing a glorified past, living at a much slower pace and now replaced by something inhuman, following the whiplash of the tick-tock of the clock and the demands of machines and engines, instead of humans. This feeling of time becoming the autocratic driver of humankind, and speed as the symbol for the inhuman present, went hand in hand with a discovery of the landscape as a major factor in human well-being. This landscape was also changing dramatically and with great speed, and so the two factors came together in a new pastime: hiking. Caring for the landscape, for the way of living of the people in rural areas, for nature being perceived as natural, became a major focus for people wishing to flee crowded and polluted centres of industry, merchandise and the accelerated urban life. Paradoxically, these people reached the glorified landscape of the rural areas, the upland forests and alpine mountains – by railway, the accelerated transport allowing them to reach their leisure resorts in such a short time that it was possible to hike on a Sunday, having risen early in the city, and to arrive back in the city at night, in time to start a productive working week on Monday morning.

Walking was no longer the means of transport, the way to travel, to go on pilgrimage, to do business and trade, to visit fairs and do all the other productive and target-orientated activities of everyday life. It became hiking, a pastime, a leisure activity, which was celebrated as an alternative model to the harassing production line and industrialised traffic, combined with an experience of nature, landscape and rural life, which had to be protected. At the same time, it was an activity first for people who could afford it, often good citizens and burgers, and later also for persons who were desperately in need of strengthening their health and finding respite from a truly challenging work rhythm. Both however, wealthy burger and poor worker, used the modern trains to reach the areas of recreation, albeit in different classes, from first class in nice Pullman cars to wooden benches in open-roofed carriages.

3. The development of hiking organisations

This trend, moving from the city into the countryside to experience the landscape, also led to the foundation of the first hiking associations in the 1860s and 1870s, especially in Germany and Austria (then including Bohemia, the Czech Republic being even today one of the major centres of hiking and hiking associations), but also in France and Scandinavia. Clubs and associations were founded in great numbers at this time. The first hiking associations were created by well-off citizens living in cities. This was only natural, as the hikers were mainly wealthier citizens, fleeing the smog-infested cities for the nearby countryside, for a healthy respite. As they were also concerned with the landscape, and the many radical changes in their own environment, and were seeking a resort of healthy nature and good traditional culture, they became interested in nature protection, upholding traditional cultures and crafts and keeping agricultural structures intact, which soon also offered possibilities for the locals, thus deterring them from abandoning the countryside and moving to the city themselves. This marks the beginning of the unique combination of interests among hiking associations that has lasted until today, a quite special mixture of nature and environmental protection, culture protection and an interest in traditional skills and folklore, but also in developing tourism – as a source of income for local people as much as a facility for hikers. In order to walk the landscape, people need reliable maps, they like to walk on well-maintained and marked pathways and they might even wish to have a trained – or at least skilled – guide who can lead them through the countryside and back again safely, telling something about the landscape while doing so.

Hiking thus became a leisure activity. As with all modern leisure activities, it needed to be well-planned and with some infrastructure. Although it offered an escape route from everyday stress, it was still done by the clock – because people had to be back in time at the station to take the train home, to be ready for the weekday occupation. The founders of these early hiking associations were mainly apothecaries, doctors, teachers, small-scale entrepreneurs, clerks and civil servants. As they came from the cities, these cities and towns were also the centre of the associations, albeit the hiking took place outside the cities, but not too far away, as the hiking areas had to be reached quickly by train (and later by bus or car). When the growing organisations of the working class, labour parties and trade unions, discovered hiking as a good recreation for their members, they founded their own hiking associations, not just because of class pride, but because the existing hiking associations were quite a closed club of well-off citizens and did not welcome the accession of labourers to their ranks. Other groups who felt discriminated against did likewise, and thus many Jewish hiking associations were founded in the late 19th century.

The hiking associations differed from the alpinist associations, which were founded at the same time. The latter were for practising a sport, much more demanding than hiking, in the mountains, for example in the high Alps. While the members of hiking associations lived close to the areas they used for hiking, and therefore developed a very strong relationship with their hiking area, the alpine societies were founded far away from their target area – for example, alpinists in Hamburg or Berlin, in northern Germany, went mountaineering in Berchtesgaden

in southern Germany. The shelters they built, and the tracks they maintained, were far away and their members would only be in the area for a single stay per year during their main vacation and thus their demands on the touristic infrastructure were different. In Austria, Germany, France and Italy the alpine associations were also caught up in the nationalistic tendencies of their time, partly forming paramilitary structures from which specialised forces of their respective armies were then drawn. The competition for which club and which nation would first be able to master a specific peak in the high Alps, or discover a new route to a famous peak, was a driving force in their development. Hiking associations were less competitive, more drawn to a comfortable leisure activity close to home and with a stronger interest in their landscape and local development.

In that sense the new leisure activity of hiking became truly "walking the landscape". It was perceived that walking allowed for an intensive experience of the landscape, one which was lost in mechanised forms of transport. In a way, only when that loss occurred did walking become something special and something worth thinking about. It was no longer a natural way of getting from one place to another, but rather something specific, conscious, planned and loaded with meaning. It was a respite and good for one's health, but it was also a cultural activity, a way to come into contact with nature, which people just one generation before had not needed, as they were living in nature and experiencing it all the time – and never had any reason to feel that to be something special. Now it became a conscious activity to experience nature, a specific act to learn about nature, about how a forest was managed or crops were grown, how animals were bred and how an environment was turned into landscape by human activities and human concepts. Hiking became an adventure as well as a sport and a pastime. It also became something to be prepared for, with special hiking boots, outdoor clothes, all-weather protection, hiking provisions, tour-planning, map-buying, planning the trip to the hiking destination and back, maybe hiring a guide and finding out about hotels and restaurants or shelters in the forest or hills.

Within the hiking associations it was both a social experience of walking together in organised groups and also a civic engagement in improving routes, helping to build paths, signposting and marking them, keeping the paths in order, organising projects for nature protection, studying local traditions and folklore, collecting memorabilia and even creating local museums, tourist organisations or craft fairs. It became clear that hiking gave the traveller a chance to experience the landscape, but also that travellers need knowledge and will, and so publishing maps and guidebooks to the landscape and training guides became a major activity of hiking associations.

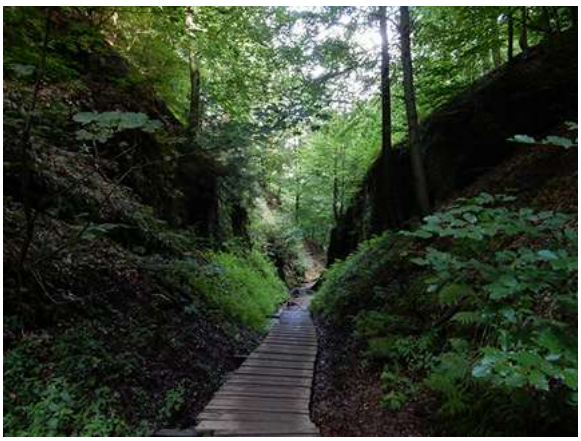

Figure 9. Hiking trail of Drachenschlucht, Germany

This aspect is still strong today, as the European Hiking Association issues licences for trained hiking guides, termed "European Walk Leaders". In the statutes for this licence, the ability to communicate the landscape is a major element. Walk Leaders need not only to know the technical skills, such as reading a map, orientation in the area or use of the Global Positioning System (GPS), but they also need to know about the regional landscape and how to communicate that knowledge to their guests, in a practical and experience-orientated way. Experiencing the landscape with all the senses is seen as the quintessence of hiking – not just making distance and collecting altitudes.

The walking trails laid out by the early hiking associations are the backbone of the modern European hiking network. Of course, trails have had to be abandoned and new trails have emerged, but the basic system is still in place, very much akin to the railway trails laid out in the same period. While many new hiking trails were created, the hiking associations also used historic routes as a basis for the hiking trails. These routes were already there, and many were falling into disuse, as the railway and later the roads, highways and motorways were finding new routes for new technologies. Those routes comprised long-distance connections which had been the major trade routes or pilgrim ways for centuries. They therefore became a natural grid for long-distance routes. The majority of the hiking trails were set in a clearly defined close area, such as the many upland regions of Europe, either as round routes or as day tours connecting railway stations, to allow hikers to approach them from one end and make their journey back home from the other. As most were hiking on Sunday and during holidays, breaking the routine of a six-day working week, the walking routes would not run for hundreds of kilometres. Only when hiking started to become a more challenging leisure activity, using a week of vacation to hike a longer distance, and to explore a greater area as a backpacker, did those long-distance trails become a

focus of the hiking associations. However, the existing trails were mainly local and regional, and local authorities could not support them. This became a task for the national hiking associations, which were formed as umbrella organisations later in the 19th and early 20th centuries.

Figure 10. Hiking trail along the European Green Belt

Long-distance hiking became more popular with the development of the industrialised society, as well as individual traffic, based on motor cars in the 1920s. Today a network of long-distance trails stretches all over Europe, organised by the European Hiking Association and marked with an E and number for European Trail. With the fall of the Iron Curtain, hiking associations could be re-formed in the former Soviet Empire and the newly-independent eastern European States, spanning from the Baltic region to Greece and Malta, from Spain to Poland, Scotland to Sicily. The old pilgrim trails have also become more and more popular, and the Council of Europe has set the pace here with the European Cultural Route following the old pilgrim route to Santiago de Compostela. A network of St James' Routes has developed around the official Cultural Route, and hiking to Santiago has become once again a mass phenomenon. Other pilgrim routes have followed, and also routes taken by persecuted Christian sects, such as the Waldenses and Albigenses. People are not just following these trails by car or coach, as tourists visiting the main attractions along the old roads, but actually walking the whole way or great stretches of it: they often come close to the concept of mediaeval pilgrims, maybe not seeking God but more seeking themselves, looking not for absolution and indulgences but for purification of body and soul in an extreme situation, doing something which was once normal and now has become special: walking the landscape, not just for a few hours, but for days and weeks.

The European Hiking Trails are a sign of a unifying (if not united) Europe and they pose a challenge for hiking associations. Organised by the European Hiking Association they require co-operation between national hiking organisations, but the actual work of signposting and maintenance of the paths is up to the regional and local associations, the historic core of the hiking movement and independent organisations in their own right. That demands a great deal of planning and communication, but it also helps to overcome borders, for example in re-opening historic hiking routes between Austria or Germany and the Czech Republic. Similarly, in the border regions of Germany and France, one finds the distinctive signs of the Black Forest Association (*Schwarzwaldverein*) on hiking trails and signposts, even in Alsace and Strasbourg. When the European Hiking Association organised the first Euro-Rando, a hiking event which takes place every five years in a different country of Europe, it was done through the regional sister organisations in Germany and France in the Strasbourg region. It was also organised in close co-operation with the Council of Europe, and the main event took place in Strasbourg. A monument in the Park of the Orangerie, just opposite the main building of the Council of Europe, the Palais de l'Europe, commemorates this event.

Figure 11. Euro-Rando Monument, The Orangerie Park, Strasbourg, France

It is not without deeper meaning that one can find a mural of a hiker painted by the Alsatian artist Tomi Ungerer in one of the office corridors inside the palais of the Council of Europe.

Figure 12. Hiker, Tomi Ungerer

4. Walking the landscape: an impression

Landscape was defined by Alexander von Humboldt as "the totality of all aspects of a region, as perceived by man". This is a definition mirrored nearly word for word by the European Landscape Convention of the Council of Europe. Experiencing this totality of all aspects of a region is the great strength of walking the landscape. Before the Industrial Revolution this idea was already expressed by artists, long before a conscious debate about landscape had started. When Ambrogio Lorenzetti created his famous painting for the Palazzo Publico in Siena, depicting the consequences of good and bad government for the urban and rural landscape, he already understood the fundamental that there was an urban landscape and a rural landscape. He expressed very clearly how landscape is connected to people. The theme of his major frescoes expresses a deep belief that human actions have a massive impact on the landscape, not just physically, but a positive or negative perception is reflected in the landscape as much as in the people who live in the landscape. Landscape is the living canvas on which human life is acted out.

Figure 13: Fresco, the "Allegory of good and bad government", Ambrogio Lorenzetti

Pieter Brueghel the Elder is seen as the father of landscape painting and his art has helped to shape the term landscape and the modern understanding of landscape. Landscape and humans are inseparable in his œuvre. In his great painting *The Fall of Icarus* he puts three people in the foreground: most prominent is the ploughman who shapes the landscape with his plough, next to him is the shepherd with his flock of sheep and finally there is a fisherman on a promontory, holding his fishing rod over the sea. The true meaning of the painting is hidden in the bottom right-hand corner, the fallen Icarus only visible as a pair of legs disappearing into the sea. The enigmatic paintings of Brueghel were a conundrum to his contemporaries and still pose an intellectual puzzle to anybody who wants to go deeper into their meaning. The landscape presented is a stage full of surprises, in which the story of humankind is acted out.

Figure 14. Landscape with the Fall of Icarus, Pieter Bruegel

For the Romantic painters, this idea of landscape as a stage seemed the most natural one. In his most well-known painting, *Hiker above the Sea of Fog* (*Wanderer über dem Nebelmeer*), the famous German Romantic painter, Casper David Friedrich, combined the landscape stage with a single hiker. The hiker appears as a solitary person who has mastered the mountain peak (in most unsuitable city dress) and looks over a spectacular alpine panorama, well above the clouds. He stands with his back to the viewer, a lonely, heroic figure, deep in thought but also a symbol for the changing view of landscape in the industrial era.

Figure 15. Hiker above the Sea of Fog, Caspar David Friedrich

Carl Spitzweg, on the other hand, looks at the human in the landscape in a much more ironic and down-to-earth way. In his painting *The Sunday stroll* he depicts a well-off family from town on their Sunday stroll through the pastoral landscape. The town is visible only as a blur on the horizon, and the family is walking through a field of wheat, emphasising the rural character of the landscape they have chosen for their outing. The sun is hot: father in front of the family has taken off his jacket and opened his vest, his massive belly strutting in front, his top hat resting on his walking stick and used as a sunshade. The ladies have their parasols and wide-brimmed straw hats to protect them from the rigours of nature. The small daughter on daddy's hand is nearly completely hidden by the corn; the older one walks along demurely, holding a bunch of flowers, while the son has happily distanced himself from the group and is hunting butterflies with his net. These are the good burgers out in the countryside for some fresh air, an experience of nature and the untainted rural landscape as a holiday resort from the rigours of life in the city.

Figure 16. The Sunday stroll (Sonntagsspaziergang), Carl Spitzweg

With industrialisation, people's interest in the landscape, its history and peculiarity, grew and it was no longer just a very small group of young gentlemen who could go on the grand tour to visit foreign countries. Here was the start of tourism, where people of means could travel through Europe in comfort by train and visit the places of romance and poetry. Spitzweg has drawn the perfect picture of these early tourists in his painting *The English in the Campagna*. It is the sun-drenched landscape of expectation, with the rolling hills in the foreground and the mountains in the background, antique ruins and Mediterranean plants. The cicerone, the tour guide, is pointing at some antique fragments just before him and making huge gestures with his right hand, while the father is standing rigid in his check trousers and broad brimmed hat, the guidebook open in his hand, obviously testing the accuracy of his guide's description. His wife is standing next to him, tinted sunglasses on her nose and a sketch-book under her arm. The daughter has already distanced herself from her parents and the loquacious guide, to draw in her sketch-book. Their coach driver stands aside, obviously quite bored and taking time off. Replace guide book with tablet, sketch-book with smartphone and it could all be happening today. The people walking in this landscape expect to see exactly what will satisfy their expectation – a typical human trait, especially when it comes to consuming landscape. One can easily depict a wind turbine in this idyll and envisage the debates that it would cause today.

Figure 17. The English in the Campagna, Carl Spitzweg

Some painters followed the lead of the folkloristic poets who depicted the "whole and healthy" landscape of the past, while others were fascinated by the massive change happening before their eyes. Adolf Menzel became famous for his historic paintings, particularly depicting Frederick the Great in a thousand different poses and historic settings, but as an artist he was fascinated by the changing landscape, painting the encroachment of Berlin, the city into the countryside, the black and smoking industrial

complex in the background and the dwelling of the poor in the foreground, reaching further and further out of the historic city centre. Elsewhere he depicted the smoking and glowing train running on its tracks from the great city into the countryside, which was cut in half by the rails. Others painted the journeyman of old, romantic paintings of young men hiking through a "mediaeval" landscape on their path from small town to small town, seeking to practise their trade and wearing old-fashioned costumes to remind the viewers of a better era, in which time was slower and change was invisible.

This tendency is also reflected in popular hiking songs, like the German song "The mill clatters merrily by the rushing brook" (Es klappert die Mühle am rauschenden Bach) reflecting a technology which in the 16th century was modern, but in the 19th century had become the symbol of change – the old-fashioned water mill being replaced by steam engines and the single miller in his mill on the outskirts of the town being replaced by industrialised mills producing flour, and big bakeries producing bread for the working masses. The idyll of the old time was something sought after and expected by city dwellers going out into the countryside for their Sunday hiking tours. It is still so today, when old water mills are lovingly restored, old windmills are transformed into restaurants and hiking paths are certified as quality paths or premium paths for the tourist industry, being now carefully laid out to avoid any modern "disturbances" and following a track which is scenic and beautiful, and gives at least the illusion of a natural or historic landscape.

This evolution is not, however, inevitable and some experiences of "ways to walk the landscape" in a sustainable manner can be presented. Over the past 20 years, the Archaeological Spessart Project has created close to a hundred thematic trails in the Spessart area, an upland region in the heart of Germany. This regional project to improve the quality of life was begun in 1994-5 by a group of biologists, geographers, geologists, historians, archaeologists, cultural scientists and defenders of nature, and it became a charity in 1998. With local volunteers, they created "European cultural trails" enabling citizens of the region to explore and study together their local landscape, raise its profile and share their knowledge with locals and visitors. The trails were designed as a "walk in the landscape". The association is dedicated to hiking as a physical activity, but also works to protect heritage and nature, to maintain the landscape, to communicate information about it, to create infrastructure for tourism and to promote local products – in essence, all aspects of the landscape. The activities were developed with the regional hiking association, the Spessart Union.

Figure 18. Opening of Cultural Path Marktbreit, Germany

All those trails were developed with the local people, empowering them to show what is important for them in their own landscape. Most are hiking trails, with some biking trails. Not all go through the most beautiful or "untainted" landscapes of their localities. People often wanted to show what was important for them – an industrial complex as the main employer and driving force of the place, the water reservoir serving the big city 30 kilometres away, a former mine or the encroachment of woods over former farmland. In the case of Mainaschaff, a borough next to the city of Aschaffenburg, it was the motorway that was built in the 1950s, the artificial lake of the former quarry that provided gravel for the motorway and the apartment blocks built there after the motorway was finished – the first high-rise buildings in the vicinity which still dominate the landscape. Many people said how crazy it was, to put a motorway and modern apartment buildings at the core of a hiking trail, but it has developed into one of the most successful paths so far. Local people, and people from the wider region as well as tourists, now visit this trail. Most importantly, the local guides tell the story of the motorway and how the high-rise buildings were erected, the quarrels and struggles that ensued and how the village has changed with all the new inhabitants of the metropolis of Frankfurt who were attracted by the modern flats, the setting and the motorway connection, which allowed them to go to work in the big city on a ride lasting less than half an hour.

People do not just want the sugar-coating of the cake. When walking the landscape one can explore the landscape, find the stories of its people and learn about its history, but also learn about the landscape of today and the challenges and problems it faces. People explore the landscape which changed so much during the Industrial Revolution, a landscape of coal mines and steelworks which was famous for its black soot, stink and noise. It is a landscape which again is undergoing a dramatic change with the de-industrialisation which left those centres of heavy industry derelict or decaying. The rivers are no longer

poisoned, the air is not unbreathable for the unwary; and the blue sky and renaturalised rivers and brooks offer congenial paths. But the most interesting ones, the trails people really love to hike, are the ones leading to the gigantic ruins of the former industrial complexes, landmarks of an industrial era of the past. It is the charm of decay, but also the fascination with such an obvious change, a landscape in transition, and, in this case, a landscape in its second transition – from rural to industrial to ... well not really rural again, maybe leisure, maybe something completely new? The visitors walking this landscape can ask themselves how to manage such a change, where should the landscape go in future, how to deal with it today?

Figure 19. From Ruhr industry to leisure park, Germany

These trails into the landscape of change refer to the landscape as defined by the European Landscape Convention, which states that landscape is not just rural, natural or historic, of outstanding beauty, scenic or happy, just for leisure, but also urban and industrial, derelict and problematic. It therefore concerns the huge pit left by opencast lignite mining just as much as the highly-protected landscapes; both require good management and planning.

5. Walking the industrial landscape

There is no better way to understand a vast industrial landscape, and especially an industrial landscape in transition, than walking through that landscape. For example, when the Ruhr area was de-industrialised, the now-clean air and clean landscape allowed hiking and biking trails to be created and these have become very popular. In 2010 the Ruhr District as a whole became European Cultural Capital. The most popular of all the many events in this year was walking the Ruhr Motorway. This motorway, running through the conurbation of the Ruhr District, has become one of the most densely "populated" motorways in Europe. Normally cars drive bumper to bumper at a snail's pace in a permanent traffic jam, a caricature of the notion of a motorway, which is to move quickly from A to B. It should be possible, basically, to study the landscape through the windows of a car, but often people are too distracted and do not see more than just the mass of cars in front of them.

If a motorway is closed, people living next to the motorway can experiment by setting up tables and informing neighbours about their projects, offering food and drink to the pedestrians strolling along the road. Motorways can become a walking path, a zone where people can meet, exchange and network – a huge walk and talk. This happened in the Ruhr area and, many years later, people still speak about that event and how it changed their lives, how new friendships emerged, new project ideas were born, how people met there for the first time, and neighbours met by accident – how they took back their landscape, how they felt that they could change something, do something in this landscape of change, with so many economic and social problems, worries and troubles.

Walking the thematic trails through the industrial landscape is also the best way to understand the enormous changes taking place and the challenges posed by the industrial heritage. The mere size of mining complexes, steelworks, gas tanks, workers' settlements now abandoned and looking for a new purpose, can never really be experienced by driving through such a landscape. The slow process of walking and the perspective of a person standing unprotected before those structures is awe-inspiring. As a chief state conservator once said about the Zeche Zollverein, a site inscribed in the UNESCO List of World Heritage Sites:

> If we were to try to fully conserve this single structure it would eat up our full budget year by year and still it would not be enough. One has to walk by the massive brick halls, through the steel structures of mining towers and iron smelting furnaces to fully understand this challenge, and to start thinking about what to do with it. Transforming some structures into shopping malls, museums and art galleries, restaurants, bars and leisure centres has been successful, but that only covers a minimal part of the whole area and its incredible industrial heritage.

Figure 20. Ruhr derelict industrial site with crucible, Germany

Of course, the motherland of industrialisation is England and de-industrialisation started earlier in the United Kingdom than on the Continent. England is also the birthplace of industrial history and industrial archaeology, and so it is not surprising that here the first visitor centres were opened in former industrial complexes and many public paths were used to create thematic trails to industrial heritage. A beautiful example of this is the slate mining district in North Wales. It is easy to visit the museums, demonstration mines and visitor centres and these are impressive and offer many events. However, to fully understand this landscape of slate one has to walk the public paths. For example, visitors can reach Blaenau Ffestiniog pulled by a historic steam engine running along the railway line built for transporting slate from the mountain to the harbour, but it is only by walking through this landscape, climbing over the many stiles built from the slate rubble which was produced in masses by the mining activities, that one can see the small slate-built houses of the squatters who settled the public land in the 18th century and then had to fight for their right to live there when the land was privatised by the parliamentary acts of enclosure, and given to the rich mining barons who now demanded rent from the squatters.

Figure 21. Landscape of slate, Wales, United Kingdom

Only in walking this landscape can one fully appreciate how it was formed by slate mining: artificial ponds, miles and miles of field walls, many small slate houses, the embankments (built from slate) for the railways, the massive hills of slate rubble. One can experience the change, the now-empty houses of the squatters falling into decay, though some of them have been refurbished as holiday homes. This new use for old settlements does change them: they are no longer slate-grey but garishly coloured, walls are plastered and painted bright white, doors and windows bright red, blue or green, brilliant specks in this grey landscape of heather, scrubland and slate. Then the visitor comes to a typical Methodist chapel, but on getting close suddenly sees a statue of the Virgin Mary and pictures of saints on the walls. Only then the hiker will learn, from a chat over the wall, that this abandoned chapel has now been revitalised by a small community of Greek Orthodox monks. Walking on, in the middle of nowhere, the visitor sees a bright red telephone box, the typical historic boxes of the Royal Mail, replaced by grey structures long ago and anyway obsolete in the time of mobile (cell) phones – but here it stands, right in the landscape of slate, with a few sheep close by on a rural lane where no car can be seen in either direction and no house or settlement seems to be close by. While approaching the phone box the walker wonders why it is here. Needing to know if it works, the walker steps inside. On finding that it does work, the traveller still wonders for a long time while walking on. Such landscape riddles can certainly not always be solved by walking, but many are those that could never have been found by any other means of travel through the landscape.

Figure 22. Landscape of slate, Wales, United Kingdom

Walking the landscape will also allow the hiker to find hidden treasures and places of interest which are only accessible by foot. A good example is the Elsava Valley in the Spessart where the Archaeological Spessart Project undertook excavations and research before creating a thematic trail on the iron production in this valley. Along a footpath and biking lane, running on the bank of the derelict railway, one will pass the excavation site of a water-powered iron hammer mill, founded by the Rexroth family in the 17th century, and protected by a small castle; the information plates or tour guide can bring those structures to life again. This mill was active until the early 20th century and now is a private residence and therefore not accessible. Following the hiking path, one crosses the brook and can find the derelict pond, barns and outhouses of the former industrial complex.

Climbing the side of the valley one gets a beautiful view over the whole complex and will finally be led to the hidden private cemetery of the Rexroth family, established in the 19th century. Like the steel barons

in England, the Rexroth family created their own private burial place in a very special way: enclosed by a circular wall around which 12 oak trees were planted. The cemetery was furbished with cast iron monuments produced in the Rexroth factories. The cemetery is open to the public but well hidden from view, and can only be explored by those who walk the landscape.

Figure 23: Rexroth Cemetery, Spessart, Germany

Other places have been constructed from the beginning with a view to enlarging the experience of visitors. Ironbridge in England is one such place. Situated at Coalbrookdale, in the west Midlands, it is the birthplace of industrialisation, where John Darby melted iron for the first time using just coal, and not charcoal, in 1713. This new technology allowed wood (in the form of charcoal) to be replaced by fossil coal, and this led to an explosion of iron production, mechanisation and all the other consequences of the Industrial Revolution. Later, the Darby family decided to build the first bridge over a gorge simply using iron and thus to show the enormous potential of iron and cast iron as working materials. They travelled down the river by boat to find the best place where a bridge would be visible from both sides, for travellers by boat as well as on foot, for as long and as far as possible. The bridge was then erected at the chosen place, which now is the village of Ironbridge. Paintings were created from the sketches for the production of the bridge showing the bridge in place long before it was finished – and those pictures were published and issued widely as an advertisement. Indeed, when the bridge was opened it attracted many visitors and proved the success of the advertisement – allowing for the development of the new village, with pubs and inns for tourists as its nucleus.

Today it is a UNESCO World Heritage site and still attracts many visitors. Again, the best way to experience the bridge is just as two centuries ago – by walking up the footpath along the river and crossing the bridge (which is now only accessible to pedestrians). Those who follow the footpath at length will find many relics of the industrial era: iron furnaces, potteries and coal ports, slipways and canals and iron bridges telling the story of industrialisation, as well as modern de-industrialisation. It is better to experience, of course, with a skilled guide who will be able to bring the fiery kilns, steaming ovens and loud hammers to life, painting a colourful picture of a time when the romantic (and, along the footpath, quite tranquil) valley was a hotbed of industrial production. The many historic inns and pubs along the way are a bonus, where the hiker can taste the local ale and food and complete the landscape experience, if lucky, even with a barbershop song meeting, adding some very typical local tradition to the experience. While the iron bridge at Ironbridge is a fascinating and great monument to industrialisation, still creating a pathway for the interested hiker today, there are many less spectacular monuments of the era still visible in the landscape – and some have even a direct link to hiking. Beautiful examples are the cast iron signposts erected in the 19th century by the early hiking associations to mark the first hiking paths.

Figure 24. Ironbridge, Coalbrookdale, England, United Kingdom

A special case is also the cast iron signposts in the Spessart. They were created by the Rexroth factory because the doyenne of the family at that time was interested in hiking and wanted to contribute to the development of tourism in the area to help create a new source of income for the population, which in great part was suffering from poverty at this time. Signposts, positioned at important crossroads of the main hiking paths, were fashioned with cast iron antlers on top, to make them more visible and give them a representative appearance. Some are still in place and serve as guides today.

Figure 25. Spessart Signpost, Rexroth, Germany

6. Walking the urban landscape

Considering the holistic definition of landscape, urban landscapes must be considered equally per se, yet in several countries the administrations for landscape planning and urban planning are separated, often situated in different ministries and agencies. At universities they are often taught in different curricula. However, there is essentially no difference and the needs, challenges and methods are the same – or at least very similar.

The very first long-distance trails for hikers ran through towns and cities, but in the 1960s these routes were changed, and the trails moved out of urban areas, bypassing towns and cities wherever possible. This was a result of the increase in car traffic and the fact that it became very difficult to cross urban areas. Walking paths were often cut off by highways and urban motorways, and walking along main thoroughfares in smog and polluted air was no fun. This situation is changing again: most towns and cities now boast extensive pedestrian zones, and not only in their old city centres. Green belts and green lines (or corridors) have been constructed and are planned to give recreational space for citizens and to create bridges of communication, which can also be used by long-distance hikers. So, cities and towns can be crossed once again by hikers.

Moreover, people have started to think about cities as landscapes. In tourism the two booming sectors of rural tourism (often connected to hiking) and urban tourism have long been seen as completely different branches, where tourists in rural areas look for nature and tranquillity, and tourists in cities seek a high life, culture and events. However, it is not so simple because different tourists look for quite different things in both spheres. New concepts are being developed: there are many local and regional initiatives, often at grass-roots level and sometimes promoted by bigger non-governmental organisations, which look at their urban landscape in new and different ways. They want to give both locals and visitors an insight into the workings of their city, into the really interesting stories going on behind the facades. They create guided tours quite unlike the usual city tours to churches and palaces, historic places and birthplaces of prominent citizens. Now visitors can go on a lobbying tour in Brussels, where skilled guides walk with tourists to the institutions of the European Union, the office buildings of big lobby firms and organisations, traditional meeting places, and restaurants and cafés for lobbyists, and tell stories about how politics is influenced and by which means, through lobbying and advocating.

There are also, unfortunately, tours of corruption and misuse of taxpayers' money in many capitals, but it is equally possible to find tours of the local graffiti art in a special town quarter, tours of underground art or into the underbelly of a town, the sewer system or the markets and fairs for food, flea markets or underground markets. On these tours the untold stories of the cities are revealed, stories of the lower classes or the outcasts of society, and the stories that people would normally prefer to hide.

Walking the city can also bring completely new perspectives and reveal hidden places that one would not expect in a city. For example, by taking the Oslo tram to Lake Mariadalsvannet and entering the valley of the Akerselva, a walk starts from the idyllic (and quite rural) entrance at the lake and goes through a beautiful river valley, with sometimes the faint noise of traffic above, the only sign that the walker is not really in a remote valley but actually going right through a city, invisibly shielded by the river banks and trees. The walk passes dams, historic mills and finally the first historic factory buildings once established along the river, and from time to time the trees leave a gap to reveal glimpses of apartment blocks and urban structures above the valley. Then the walker is back in an idyll which seems to be just nature, before the next historic industrial structures appear and the glimpses of high-rise buildings become more frequent. Then come the huge brick buildings of old factories, the first concrete buildings just by the river bank and, finally, quite suddenly, the river turns into a canal flanked by rows of apartment blocks. But the scenery changes constantly, as it becomes a park landscape with traditional Scandinavian wooden buildings, a spectacular waterfall, historic industrial brick buildings revitalised as a culture centre, a park landscape again with a historic iron bridge, suddenly a massive concrete high-rise building, and behind that a whole city quarter full of artists' ateliers, galleries and pubs, with artwork in and at the river and art museums, until it finally crosses the historic city centre with a frog's perspective and the river disappears underground at the station, to end at the sea.

Figures 26-27. Oslo Akerselva and Oslo, Nydalen, Norway

Walking the urban environment offers an incredible variety of landscapes to explore and, even more interesting, the many different layers of the same urban landscape. As more and more people become interested in walking the urban landscape, this poses a challenge for the traditional hiking associations. Most of their members still see hiking as an activity done in the rural landscape, in hills and mountains, upland regions or coastal areas, not in towns and cities. But more thematic trails have been appearing in cities, often started by local groups, and local initiatives make people aware of specific tours to match their individual needs, situation and interests. So new training courses are developed for hiking guides to become urban walk leaders, creating and leading fascinating tours through the urban landscape – something younger people are especially keen to do. Such tours are a new opportunity to explore cities from an unconventional perspective and they are equally suitable for hiking associations, ad hoc grass-roots initiatives, local citizen groups and many others.

In Andorra, for example, a walker can climb the mountainside of Andorra le Vella to reach the "sun path", a thematic trail running along the mountain with spectacular views over the city – or, better still, explore the accumulation of towns with various historic centres and the modern urban sprawl squeezed into the narrow valley in a high landscape. The path follows a small canal and leads through the traditional terraced gardens stretching across the steep mountainside over the city. It also opens views into the gravel pits, massive steel nets and concrete pillars that stabilise the steep mountain flank and protect the urban development below from landslides. The information plates along the path present the changes in settlement patterns, agriculture and land use, as well as the consequences of climate change in this most vulnerable environment. Walking the landscape along such a trail is not just good exercise (there are many steps and steep streets to access the entrance to the path), but also a beautiful walk and an educative experience. It is quite different from what one might expect when walking the urban landscape, but the combination of following a traditional hiking path along the mountainside with exploring a city from the bird's-eye perspective is invigorating.

Figure 28. Andorra la Vella Panorama, Andorra

7. Organised walking of the landscape

The hiking associations are quite old, many of them dating back 150 years. They were a product of industrialisation and the development of civil society, the society of burgers, in that they reflected the social development of their time and were mainly founded by affluent citizens of the bigger towns and cities. Their intention was not only to create, provide and maintain the infrastructure necessary for hiking, but also to preserve cultural heritage, local traditions and folklore, to protect nature and to improve the economic basis of their major hiking resorts, especially developing the touristic potential. These associations also reflected the social situation of their time, and so they were mainly founded and frequented by men of social standing, excluding those who did not fit this profile. This led to the foundation of specialised hiking associations for workers, labourers and small craftsmen who were banned from the more bourgeois organisations, and also Jewish hiking associations. These associations

differed somewhat in their focus. While the bourgeois associations were more focused on cultural heritage, the workers' organisations focused from their beginning on nature protection and social aspects, such as providing cheap accommodation for their members. The high alpine mountaineering and climbing associations were more focused on the sports aspect, including a competitive view of sporting activities.

Those differences have today been levelled out. Although the mountaineering associations are still more focused on sports than the others, all of them care for cultural and natural heritage as well as for the social aspects and in this sense are actually true landscape associations, dealing with all aspects of landscape, including economic, social and touristic aspects. The associations are also challenged by the social changes and developments of today's society: the gender aspect, the demands of an ageing society, the tendency to individualisation of leisure activities and the significant challenges of a digital society in a very hands-on activity. Hiking has diversified as much as society. There are still many people, including both the elderly and young families, who see hiking as a healthy leisure activity for weekends and holidays. They look for well-signposted and maintained paths in their vicinity, not too long, not too arduous and easy to reach. Unfortunately, that means easy to reach by private car in many cases, as the public transport is often not adequate, especially at weekends and holidays, to cater for hikers who would like to start at one point and return from another. This development has favoured circular paths.

The large umbrella organisations, at European and national level, have favoured the long-distance trails, while local and regional organisations tend to focus on the shorter trails, particularly circular routes. This dual focus seems natural but it has also led to conflict, as these organisations are the ones licensing quality paths. The criteria developed for long-distance trails and sporting hikers walking for many days or weeks do not really fit with shorter pathways, which are mainly frequented by the elderly, young families with children and Sunday walkers who are not in training. The most important criterion for quality paths is traditionally the natural state of the paths. Natural paths are seen as the most valuable and preferable to hikers. While this is true for long-distance trails, and even for fit short-distance hikers, it is not true for the other groups, including people who have limited mobility. Thus, new criteria have had to be developed for these short trails, focusing more on experiencing the landscape and allowing for smooth, even artificial surfaces and limited grades of incline.

Today we see all sorts of different hikers. There are people who walk long-distance trails, but have their luggage transported from hotel to hotel, which must be of high standard, offering wellness facilities and excellent cuisine. Hikers can spend a great deal of money on functional hiking clothes and accessories. However, there is also a new trend to go back to a pure nature experience, trekking and staying overnight in the wild, with just a sleeping bag or a simple tent. In our highly populated and regulated world, that can be quite difficult without breaching a number of laws and regulations. Hiking associations, together with the local authorities and, for example, the state forest administrations, design trekking lodges which are licensed by the nature preservation administration and follow all the necessary obligations. Trekkers can book these lodges on the internet and, on paying a small fee, receive the GPS co-ordinates for the lodges along their route. This system allows for some regulation, avoids overcrowded trekking lodges and avoids too many people wandering off the trodden paths outside the system of signed hiking paths. It also allows trekkers to light a fire and cook at these places, as long as there is no specific fire warning due to drought, and inside the designated times. The hiking associations have also reacted to contemporary demands by revising the training scheme for licensed hiking and tour guides, offering additional training for health programmes or specific new trends such as urban hiking. All these developments reflect current society and its evolution.

Figure 29. Training landscape guides, Rhön, Germany

The greatest challenge for all associations today is to react to the individualisation of the 21st century within the structures of the 19th century. While the laws for associations have not changed much, and nor have the structures of traditional associations, they find that new tax laws, questions of insurance, health and safety, social laws and laws on labour and volunteer labour have become much more complicated and thus require professional administration. The greatest asset of the hiking associations remains their holistic view of the landscape, their

combination of culture preservation, nature protection and social networking. In this sense, walking the landscape, and especially walking the landscape in an organised way, is as much part of the holistic landscape as the landscape is part of the walking activity.

Conclusions

What better way to perceive landscape than by walking! There still is no better way to discover it. Hiking, notably, allows one to experience the landscape with all senses, moving at a natural speed and in a natural way through the landscape. This activity can be strong and even highly emotional and personal, as so many poets and painters have depicted it, especially in the Romantic era, but it can also be a highly social event. People walking together, be it family, friends or a random group of hikers, can walk and talk, exchange thoughts and form a network – at least for the duration of the walk.

The Council of Europe has issued several conventions before the European Landscape Convention and since which deal with cultural and natural heritage, but they are all about objects: archaeological and architectural heritage, about the value of cultural heritage, the protection of cultural goods. The European Landscape Convention is unique because it not only deals with the object, the landscape and how to manage, develop and improve it, but also with the subject: the human being. This convention expressly declares that landscape is not just a mixture of natural and cultural phenomena, but that it is created and defined by human perception.

This is the most important aspect of this convention, because it recognises the importance of the human being in the landscape, not just as a developer, warden or possibly destroyer of landscape, but because it is our perception, our idea of landscape, that shapes the landscape and is of unwavering importance for the way we treat the landscape. The human perception can be studied scientifically, according to different cultural and social backgrounds, learning, age groups and other criteria, describing how diverse groups see landscape differently. Behind all this is ultimately the single, personal experience of the individual experiencing and perceiving the landscape.

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