

# D o s s i e r E d i t o r i a l

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## Cultural Landscapes

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Collaboration between European schools of landscape architecture began with an informal meeting in Berlin in 1989, and the subsequent establishment of ECLAS - the "European Conference of Landscape Architecture Schools" in 1991. Since then ECLAS conferences have been held annually, each hosted by a different landscape architecture school.

The theme of the ECLAS 2010 Conference, held in Istanbul between September 29<sup>th</sup> and October 2<sup>nd</sup>, was broadly established as "Cultural Landscapes" which have been defined by UNESCO as "combined works of nature and of man which are illustrative of the evolution of human society and settlement over time, under the influence of the physical constraints and/or opportunities presented by the natural environment and of successive social, economic and cultural forces, both external and internal."

The preservation and protection of Cultural Landscapes is critical to sustaining the historical continuum of land use across generations. It provides an appreciation of the interface between natural processes and human settlement and provides inspiration and insight into potential solutions to future land use and environmental design problems.

The focus of the 2010 Conference was on four major topics:

- Responses of cultural landscapes to changing natural processes
- Landscape as a reflection of changing cultural processes
- Technology as a driver of cultural landscape change
- Education, research methods and approaches

This volume is a special issue of papers compiled from those selected for presentation at the Conference. The Istanbul Conference received a total of 249 submitted papers from 42 countries. After a triple-blinded review process, 96 papers were accepted covering a wide range of topics, from urban and historic landscapes, to rural & agricultural landscapes.

The first paper of this issue entitled "The Embodiment of Cultural Landscape...A Tour of the No-Monuments" by Lapayese and Gazapo is an essay made of three conceptual actions and an epilogue, which emphasizes the need as perceived by the authors for a new kind of gaze onto the city, in between art and architecture.

The following paper by Mazzino and Burlando, "Cultural Landscapes: Negotiation Between Global and Local" considers the weakening of cultural landscapes in which the rejection and degradation of existing cultural resources has occurred. In this study the authors focus specifically on the landscape in Calcinara-Sestri Ponente, west of Genoa, Liguria, Italy.

The next two papers deal with the problem of water management in two very different cultural landscapes. The paper entitled "Potential Landscape Architectural Contributions Toward a More Sustainable Water Management on the Island of Gozo, Malta" by Beverinotti, Buhmann and Pietsch looks at a steep valley on the island of Gozo, part of which was once a fishing village. The possible responses and adaptations of the cultural landscape to the natural problems originating from rapid tourism development and population growth on the island of Gozo are discussed.

The paper "A Working Landscape for New Orleans" by Hermens, Salm and Zwet proposes that a working landscape can offer a soft and sensible solution to the many challenges posed by water to New Orleans and that such a working landscape could go a long way toward improving the qualities of landscape in the Gentilly and Lakeview neighborhoods of the City. Such a working landscape could help to sustain human life by ensuring a healthy and pleasant living environment, through the integration of ecological processes in cultural functions.

Susi-Wolff emphasizes the importance of historic urban green spaces as an essential part of the urban landscape, in her study "Understanding Changing City Culture; PSR-Method as a Discourse Analysis Tool for Historic Urban Green Heritage". The paper focuses on 6 park conservation projects in Helsinki, Finland which and seeks to define a series of cultural indicators which can be used in a Pressure-State-Response model for park conservation and cultural heritage discourse.

The following paper entitled "Olympics Legacy: the London Olympics 2012" by Güler and Holden reviews a very timely issue: London Olympics 2012. As it is known, the 2012 Games are focused upon East London and are designed to achieve a program of urban regeneration for the Stratford area, which has significant areas of social deprivation and numerous brownfield sites. Güler and Holden analyze these sites, and discuss how the London Olympic 2012 Park and its legacy figure into the overall planning effort for the Greater London area.

In the next contribution "Sustainable Brownfield Regeneration in Istanbul", Başkaya focuses on existing brownfield sites in Istanbul and the difficulties faced in efforts to regenerate them due to a lack of historical documentation regarding their previous use. Information on the progress of brownfield regeneration in Istanbul and the factors contributing to regeneration trends are compiled from the existing scholarly and government literatures, and a GIS analysis, which was completed as part of this study.

Kaiser links recreational forest use and forest management practices by elaborating on a realistic and sustainable development concept for a peri-urban forest in her research work entitled "Balfour Community Forest: Linking Forest Use and Management Through Public Participation in Israel". The paper shows approaches to how local communities can participate in

the development process, particularly when green spaces are planned, designed, established and managed in order to meet the differing demands of urban society. The case of the Balfour Community Forest is presented and approaches to shaping peri-urban forests according to the (ever changing) preferences and needs of local urban societies are discussed.

Last two papers study agricultural landscapes. "Understanding the spatial and historical characteristics of agricultural landscapes in Istanbul" by Başer and Tunçay traces the historic agricultural-landscape mosaic of Istanbul, which still traces of the local agrarian culture, even though it has long since been spatially absorbed into the very dense urban fabric of this rapidly growing city.

The last contribution by Kristiánová and Adamková, entitled "Slovak Agricultural Landscape – Transition Responses", aims to examine the transition responses of the current Slovak agricultural landscape, using as an example the cadastral areas from the Nitra region, a rural agricultural landscape that is a typical representative of the regions cultural landscape. Although not yet protected as a cultural landscape, this area possesses a rich cultural web of aesthetic, historic and ecological values.

All of these selected contributions are immensely appreciated and valuable for the future in the field. Selection of these ten articles for this issue among the 96 excellent articles was a very challenging task. Our decision making process was guided by seeking diversity and balance among their focus, regions, and validity of the discussions. I hope that the thoughts, opinions, methodologies, and the creative response presented here continue to serve as a catalyst for others to follow.

I trust that each of you will find this special issue of the Journal to be a significant and memorable document of the 2010 ECLAS Conference and hope you enjoy these papers as much as I did!

**Acknowledgements:**

I want to express my gratitude to my Dean Prof. Orhan Hacıhasanoğlu, PhD., my Department Head and Conference Chair Prof. Ahmet C. Yıldızcı, PhD., and all members of the ECLAS 2010 Organization Committee for their constant support. I am also grateful to 112 members of the Scientific Committee of ECLAS 2010, who first managed the papers that appear in this special issue. Finally I am enormously grateful to Prof. Sadık C. Artunç, FASLA, Prof. Max Conrad, FASLA, Prof. Ö. Bülent Seçkin, PhD., Asc. Prof. Hayriye Eşbah Tunçay, PhD., and Edward Schnell, AICP, who agreed to provide reviews for prior and final versions of the papers selected for this Special Issue.