



Broadening Horizons 2 – Élargir les Horizons 2 Colloquium for a pluridisciplinary approach of ancient landscapes studies

Presentation of Broadening Horizons

Over recent decades increasing research has been done on past archaeological and physical landscapes, leading to an expanding number of related disciplines and sub-disciplines. The use of field and aerial survey techniques, the investigation of various historical sources as well as the study of archaeological arte- and ecofacts are but some of the means available for assessing and reconstructing these changing environments. The International colloquium "Broadening Horizons", the first conference of which took place at the Ghent University (Belgium) on February 27 and 28, 2006, brought together young researchers (Ph.D. and post-doctorate level) in geography, archaeology and geomorphology who were actively studying past landscapes within the Mediterranean region and the Near East. Interdisciplinary research favor a systematic approach of landscape archaeology, a complex research theme placed at the frontier of human and environmental sciences. With over 120 participants from 9 different countries, addressing issues of archaeology, geology, remote sensing, history and historical geography, and with key-note lectures by Prof. Tony Wilkinson and Prof. Paul-Louis Van Berg, this first edition was certainly a success. After such a successful first colloquium, we decided to organize a second colloquium, to be held at the University of Lyon (Maison de l'Orient et de la Méditerranée), France, at the end of June 2007.

Colloquium goals within landscapes archaeology researches

In archaeological research, the new field referred to informally as landscape archaeology discusses the methods and goals of past landscape analysis. Those discussions were mainly conducted by Western European archaeologists since the XXth century. After studies based on idealized landscape reconstructions, archaeologists introduced a more scientific and structuralist approach with the aid of various survey types. Those first studies, thank to their systematic focus on micro-regions, promoted general models applicable in all environments.

Increasing research modified the perspective on the environment; its evolution is no more thought as a succession of layers caused by various human actions. Now, the majority of researchers have a better-resolved and more dynamic idea of landscape and environmental evolution.

It seems now essential to define the word "landscape", which is used in common language, and can be sometimes be unclear because it has several connotations. Using an archaeological perspective, we will follow here Wilkinson's definition (2003): landscapes "can be recognized from their characteristic signatures that comprise arrangements of features such as field boundaries, artifact scatters, archaeological settlement sites, roads, canals, temples, and inscriptions. In turn, the landscape itself changes through time as social, economic, political, and environmental circumstances vary to include a complex range of interactions between human factors and the environment. [...] the development of different landscapes is contingent upon both local ecology and social or cultural factors."

The interaction between man and nature creates landscapes, which can be seen as the mirror of human actions and natural evolution. It is thus evident that, when trying to study ancient landscapes, archaeology has to be based on environmental sciences. Landscape archaeology is to be thought of as complementary to site analysis and is based on the three following assessments:

- Space dynamics
- Scale importance
- Multidisciplinary dynamics

The aim of this colloquium is to narrow the gap between (1) earth science and ecological approaches to landscape analysis and (2) social approaches applied to analysis of human-landscape dynamics. The main objectives are:

- Review recent methods of landscape analysis;
- Encourage multidisciplinary study, as well as international communication and collaboration;

- Foment dialogue between young researchers from diverse horizons and reinforce those discussions with the help of senior researchers;
- Encourage presentations of studies based on diverse dynamic analysis.

Themes

The main themes of the Congress are directly linked with natural and cultural reconstructions of the ancient landscape. The focus of proposed papers and posters should be limited to the following topics:

1. Exploitation of the natural environment and subsistence strategy.
2. Landscape dynamics: reciprocal impacts on the landscape of human activities and environmental evolutions.
3. Landscape reconstruction based on archaeological, historical or environmental records.
4. Settlement patterns and networks (irrigation, trade, etc.).
5. New tools, new methods.

Subjects which only present excavation results, site-specific artifact studies or environmental science studies based solely on a single site are not eligible.

Public

The conference mainly targets doctoral and post-doctoral researchers who are hoping to improve contacts within specific disciplines and to open a dialogue between members of different disciplines. BH2 try encourages young researchers wishing to express ideas, projects and questions.

MA students wishing a first colloquium participation can also send poster application.

However, to encourage discussion, the organizers also have solicited more established researchers. Two keynote speakers will be invited and will give precise points of view on particular research aspect.

Geographical and chronological scope

Excepting methodological papers, the geographical scope is restricted to the Eastern Mediterranean and the Near East. However, there is no restriction to any particular time period.

Communications

Papers should be 20 minutes in length, as 10 minutes will be devoted to discussions.

Posters

As posters provide an excellent forum for authors to present their on-going work or to give an introduction to interesting, innovative projects, they are heartily welcomed. The posters will be restricted to the topics covered by the symposium and geographically confined to the Eastern Mediterranean and the Near East. They will be located in a public area, viewable for all conference attendees. One or two poster sessions will be organized within the colloquium.

Organization

Interdisciplinary research is the key word of this colloquium and it is reflected by the diverse background of the organizing committee. The committee is composed of five young researchers from diverse Universities and research teams, but all share an interest in Mediterranean or Near Eastern landscape research. Organizing committee members are the following:

- Caroline Sauvage, archaeologist, Doctor in Near Eastern Archaeology, UMR 5189 HISOMA, Maison de l'Orient et de la Méditerranée. Ph.D. subject (2006): "Maritime trade routes in the eastern Mediterranean in the Late Bronze Age"
- Sébastien Gondet, archaeologist – geophysicist, Ph.D. student in Near Eastern Archaeology, UMR 5133 Archéorient, Maison de l'Orient et de la Méditerranée. Ph.D. subject: "Human occupation of the Persepolis Plain during the First millennium B.C. (Central Fars, Iran)"
- Hala Alarashi, préhistorienne, Ph.D. student, l'UMR 5133 Archéorient, Maison de l'Orient et de la Méditerranée. Ph.D. subject: "Body ornaments in the Epipaleolithic and Neolithic in Syria. Techniques and use. Exchanges and identities."
- Aurélie Jouvenel, archaeologist, MA, University Lumière Lyon 2, head of the Lyon district of Orient-Express Notes et Nouvelles d'archéologie. Research subject: "Human occupation of the Neguev and South-Jordania at the beginning of the Iron Age (1200-800 B.C.)"
- Marie-Laure Chambrade, geographer, Ph.D. student in archaeology and environment, Laboratoire de Chrono-Ecologie, Université de Franche-Comté, Maison de l'Orient et de la Méditerranée. Ph.D. subject: "Environment of PPN sites in central Syria : settlement and subsistence strategies".

In order to reinforce the international and multidisciplinary dimension of BH2, professors or researchers from diverse horizons, institutions and countries will be part of the steering committee.

Languages

Official languages are English and French.

Submissions Guidelines:

Potential participants (paper or poster) are asked to submit a 500-word abstract, stating the significance of the paper and its originality.

Poster should not exceed 84 x 118,9 cm (A0 format).

Submissions have to be done on the web site, available on autumn 2006.