CHAPTER 13

Landscapes and memories

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INTRODUCTION

All landscapes are ‘historical’, provided that they are now – or were once – altered, inhabited, visited, or interpreted by people. Indeed, the problematic and theoretically flawed use of the terms ‘historical landscapes’ and ‘historical archaeology’ presume that only societies with written sources have ‘history’ embedded in, and mediated through, their landscapes. In fact, it can be argued that very few parts of the world do not fulfil the criterion of being ‘historical landscapes’; landscapes in which the past accumulates or is created through human action. Since landscapes can embody memories, and therefore be ‘historical’ in many different ways, this historical dimension of practically all landscapes can be actualised through material remains or knowledgeable understanding, evoking the past in the mind of the beholder (Schama 1995) and through social practice and inhabitation (Ingold 2000a). Moreover, we cannot even restrict historical landscapes to the study of human action and transformation since the ‘natural’ landscape is often itself ‘read’ by people as the result of the actions of past generations, ancestors, ancient peoples or supernatural forces (Bradley 2000). In as much as they can thus evoke, or indeed hide, the past, landscapes are linked to socially or culturally mediated remembrance and memory. By memory, we refer to the increasingly common conceptualisation of ‘social memory’ as collective representations of the past and associated social practices rather than personal recollection (see Connerton 1989; Samuel 1994). By landscape we refer to the inhabited or perceived environments of human communities in the past and present incorporating both natural and artificial elements (see Ingold 2000a; Lynch 1972).

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In this essay, through a series of case studies we shall explore examples of how archaeologists, particularly those studying the last 500 years of human history, have considered the relationships between memory and landscape. This topic has in recent years attracted great interest among archaeologists dealing with this period (e.g. Lahiri 2003; Reckner 2002; N. Saunders 2003b; Shackel 2001; Tarlow 2000b) and lies now at the heart of the discipline. We intend to argue that any division between ‘prehistoric’ and ‘historical’ periods is false, and has tended to obscure broader themes in the way in which landscapes are implicated in social remembering and forgetting. We will start by considering ‘accumulative landscapes’ – landscapes composed of the traces of human action and natural features that form the focus of retrospective memories. We then move on to discuss created landscapes and the prospective memories they contain. These distinctive types of landscapes, although often interacting and overlapping, provide a valuable theoretical starting point for understanding the ways in which both past and future memories are produced and reproduced through spatial action. Many of the case studies are taken from European contexts, although it is hoped that they illustrate broader themes relevant to the archaeological study of landscape and memory throughout the world.

Memory in Accumulative Landscapes

Archaeologists have previously studied a wide range of accumulative landscapes, and have increasingly addressed important themes in the landscape change of the last half millennium, such as the process of rural settlement and land enclosure, the development of townscapes and industrial landscapes. Some studies have even specifically addressed commemoration in the landscapes of recent centuries through the study of battlefields, war memorials, burial grounds and cemeteries (Mytum 2004a, 2004b; Tarlow 1999c; 2000b). However, most of these studies lack an explicit consideration of the landscape context of death, burial, commemoration and ancestors (but see Mytum nd.). Many archaeological studies regard the landscape as the ‘richest historical record that we possess’ (Hoskins 1955: 14) from which the character and evolution of the landscape can be ‘detected’, ‘deciphered’ and then ‘interpreted’ by ‘those who know how to read it’ (Hoskins 1955: 14; see also Muir 2000). Yet the landscapes in question are most often landscapes of living people and their contemporary environments; they hardly ever encapsulate the dead and the past. Ironically, studies intended to chart objective ‘landscape history’ risk denying the importance of history for people inhabiting past landscapes. These studies rarely consider how memories
(including mythologies, genealogies as well as cultural, community, and personal histories) were inherited, inhabited, invented and imagined through the landscape. Equally ironic is the fact that those archaeological studies that have begun to address the relationship between memory and landscape have tended to focus on prehistoric and ancient societies (e.g. Bradley 2002; Chapman 1997), rather than those of the last half millennium. This is despite the fact that recent centuries offer considerably greater potential for rich, contextual and interdisciplinary analyses of memory and landscape incorporating archaeological evidence.

Viewing the landscape will often involve seeing the remains of very many different periods of the past from a single vantage point (Lynch 1972). By providing information on how to observe and how to interpret what is seen, onlookers can ‘remember’ both recent ‘familiar’ pasts and earlier pasts from the existing remains. The landscape of Hanabergsmarka at Jærmuseet near Nærbø in southern Norway is a good example (Figure 13.1). Viewing and studying it reveals a temporal collage, the elements of which are each explained to the visitor:

– a burial mound from the Bronze Age
– a stone wall from the Iron Age
– a track, probably from the Middle Ages
– the site of a haystack, probably from the Middle Ages
– ruins of German fortifications from World War II
– a clearance cairn from the Iron Age
– house foundations from the Iron Age
– a shooting range from the early twentieth century
– a medieval cultivated field
– a split stone, c. 1920
– a medieval stone wall
– a burial mound from the Iron Age
– a stone wall, pre-1870, repaired c. 1925
– a stone wall, c. 1939
– house foundations from the early twentieth century
– farm buildings from the 1700s
– plantation forestry, c. 1945

A landscape historian would conventionally, and profitably, consider this a ‘palimpsest’, a sequence of traces of the past that have been built up, written over and rewritten over decades, centuries and millennia (Muir 2000). Such a landscape can also be described as one of ‘retrospective memory’; a landscape through which the past appears to impact upon the present through physical and material traces as people look back at what has happened in the
same landscape before their own time. Retrospective memories create the past at particular places and through certain social practices (Holtorf 2000–2005: 2.0). For past societies without the convenient heritage signboard of Hanabergsmarka, memories may be created through social practices as well as oral and literary transmission; in combination these different strategies might serve to create memories from the surrounding topography. For example, memories can be evoked through the enactment of both everyday practices and rituals at certain locations across the landscape and along the pathways connecting them. This kind of ‘looking-back’ is not necessarily about accurately recalling past events as truthfully as possible: it is rather about making meaningful statements about the past in the given cultural context of a present as well as evoking aspirations for the future.
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REMEMBERING AND FORGETTING IN LANDSCAPES

By the same token landscapes can serve to hide the past, or make people forget it. For example, industrial landscapes can be very much about ‘forgetting’. David Gwyn’s recent study of nineteenth-century slate-mining communities in North Wales highlights how chapels and their burial grounds provided an invaluable commemorative focus of class and religious identities for the workers. These were particularly important in landscapes dominated by the planned settlements and slate quarries where other layers of meaning were in danger of being ‘forgotten’ within the spatial structures of the quarry owners (Gwyn 2004: 50). Forgetting can also encapsulate deliberate acts of destruction. For example, in District Six of Cape Town the Apartheid regime sought from 1966 onwards to establish white ownership and occupation in new townhouses and high-rise flats. Its mostly ‘coloured’ inhabitants were forcibly removed and their buildings demolished in an effort to render the past forgotten. However, the dispossessed and displaced former inhabitants did not forget, and neither did the urban landscape. From 1997, after the regime change, many of the former inhabitants reclaimed the remains of their familiar urban landscape and proudly displayed their ‘treasures’ and memories in the new District Six Museum (Hall 2000: 156–176). The past, then, is always present in landscapes, but when certain elements are made visible, this can be at the expense of others that are suppressed, distributed and dispersed. The British commemoration of the 1857 revolt in Delhi, for instance, involved raising monuments and the performance of rituals to remember the British dead, combined with the wholesale demolition of buildings and districts connected to the Indian uprising. This ‘forgetting’ of those that fought the British in the decades after the revolt was a situation only reversed following Indian independence, a century later, in which a nationalist commemorative agenda turned the tables and emphasised a glorious revolt and suppressed the places and monuments of imperial commemoration (Lahiri 2003).

While forgetting can be deliberate and involve violent suppression, such as in District Six during the Apartheid period or with the despoiling of statues of toppled dictators, forgetting is often more subtle, and tied closely to remembering. Rather than separate strategies of commemoration, they are part of the same process. In landscapes where people experienced war, migration or death, all of which are largely invisible and easily ‘forgotten’, selected memories can distil in other media. Whether invested in portable artefacts, the home, or rendered in songs, stories, folk beliefs and ritual performances, memories can be present in landscapes of the imagination.
rather than invested in monuments and physical traces within the physical landscape commemorated.

In fact, many episodes of the past that people remember, whether individually or as members of communities, have a spatial dimension and are linked to certain places in the landscape. In Palestine, for example, numerous locations of events described in the Bible became sacred places of the collective memory of religious groups even though the exact places were often later inventions rather than accurately remembered. In particular, it is likely that the early Christians, including the writers of the gospels, were trying to fortify their memories of events in the life of Jesus by connecting them with locations that were already meaningful in the Jewish religious tradition of the Old Testament (Halbwachs 1992). Halbwachs argues that these ‘legendary topographies’ were drawn upon by subsequent generations in order to construct a meaningful past of the Holy Land.

Archaeologists working in England have similarly explored the relationships between landscapes and remembering. From the late Middle Ages, cathedrals, churches, chapels and their graveyards developed as complex and evolving ‘landscapes’ of memory (see Williams 2003). Increasingly filled with tombs, vaults and crypts, both before and after the reformation, church architecture was a medium for commemoration (Finch 2003; Tarlow 1999c, 2000b). Churchyards were also complex, evolving, sometimes competitive, commemorative topographies. As well as gravestones and tombs, churchyards might include exclusive family burial plots, crypts, mausolea or chapels, through which the history of families and communities were mapped out and materialised (Mytum 2004a, 2004b). Harold Mytum’s (2004a) graveyard survey at Kellington church in North Yorkshire and Sarah Tarlow’s (1999c) study of burial grounds in Orkney have suggested that during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries churchyards took on an enhanced role as spaces of commemoration, through the proliferation of enduring memorials to the dead.

The commemorative significance of churches and their graveyards is further illustrated in instances where churches served dispersed rural communities and in cases where villages became deserted. For example, in the parish of Witton, Norfolk, archaeological research has demonstrated that the church stood in relative isolation in a landscape of dispersed farmsteads for much of the last millennium (Lawson 1983).\footnote{We would like to thank Brynmor Morris for suggesting the relevance of this evidence to the argument.} Therefore, for innumerable generations, living worshippers and the corpses of the dead had to traverse
roads and tracks for long distances to reach their church. Both the place of worship and the paths connecting the church to fields and farms served to create the memories and identities of the parish community (Lawson 1983). Andrew Fleming has made a similar point with regard to the parish church of Grinton located in Swaledale, North Yorkshire. While chapels were available for regular worship serving the farms and mining communities in the dale and on surrounding moors, until the chapel at Muker was granted a license for burial in 1580, the church at Grinton (‘the cathedral of the dales’) remained the only burial site and focus for commemoration. Indeed, corpses had to be carried to Grinton from townships up to sixteen miles away for burial (A. Fleming 1998: 10).

The significance of the church as a place of memory is also shown in the famous case of the deserted medieval village of Wharram Percy in East Yorkshire. Archaeological research by Maurice Beresford and John Hurst has demonstrated that while the village was abandoned by the early sixteenth century, St Martin’s church remained in use for worship, burial and commemoration until 1949 (Beresford and Hurst 1990: 52). Churches, like prehistoric monuments, last for many human generations. They do not only function as landmarks but even act as time-marks connecting the living with ancestors and the past, even in instances where communities have moved elsewhere (Chapman 1997).

**Changing Memories Over Time**

Individuals learn many of their collective memories through socialisation, although they can also modify existing views of the past according to what they themselves consider right or appropriate (Holtorf 2000–2005: 2.7). Although certain dominant narratives about the past are astonishingly resilient to change (Reckner 2002) they often vary at any one time as much as they change over time. Landscapes have largely been interpreted anew by each community of interpreters studying them in the light of their own particular values and worldviews.

Stonehenge in England, for example, has been a mysterious ruin inhabiting successive historical landscapes for far longer than it was ever a prehistoric ritual site. By the same token, other stone monuments originally erected during the Neolithic or Bronze Age across many parts of Europe have remained visible landscape features that have attracted many different types of reuse and reappropriation. In historical times, the stones of megaliths were occasionally reused for purposes such as building houses, roads, or churches, but
in recent centuries they also attracted folktales about giants, treasures, and fairies (Holtorf 2000–2005: 5.2.5, 5.2.7; cf. Chippendale 2004). Attracted by such folklore and influenced by an emerging interest in history and a fascination with ancient ruins, Romantic poets, painters, and travellers visited megaliths increasingly during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. These pursuits were complemented by antiquarian studies of ancient monuments and succeeded by archaeological investigations. Today, many ancient monuments are local tourist attractions and have been comprehensively restored. After studying the twentieth-century restorations at the prehistoric sites of Avebury and Stonehenge in Britain, Brian Edwards (2000: 76) concludes that ‘our ancient past is a ruination plundered by early antiquarians and despoiled by the heritage industry.’ This condemn- ing description can, however, be relativised somewhat by placing the modern changes to ancient sites into a broader historical context. In fact, every age has appropriated prehistoric monuments in its own way as part of distinct uses and interpretations of the landscape; our own time is simply no exception.

Prehistoric artefacts and monuments, and even their seemingly natural and unaltered components, might have lengthy ‘biographies’ (Holtorf 2005: 78–91), and yet the same is true of buildings, monuments and landscapes from historical periods. The archaeology of changing memories is also visible in the reuses of former religious houses in England and Wales after their Dissolution by Henry VIII in the sixteenth century (cf. Crossley 1990: 53–56). Dissolved abbeys, priories and nunneries had many different ‘afterlives’. In many cases, religious houses and their estates were appropriated and reused as readily available quarries and the value of their estates as rich economic resources. Yet frequently these acts of reuse appear to have been bound up with the appropriation and transformation of social memories. This argument explains the careful manipulation of monastic architecture and landscapes in the post-reformation era in which elements of the material past were selectively remembered and forgotten. For example, this applies to the transformation of the Cistercian abbey at Neath (South Wales) into a luxurious Tudor great house by building over the abbot’s house; the prestige and power evoked by its new use was likely to have been enhanced by its former history (Robinson 2002). Similarly, the evocation of the monastic past was achieved by the integration and ‘improvement’ of the ruins of another Cistercian house at Fountains (North Yorkshire) as a centrepiece of the eighteenth-century picturesque landscape gardens of Studley Royal (Coppack 2003: 133–139).
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The wealthy medieval Benedictine monastery at Glastonbury, Somerset was the centrepiece of a medieval mythical landscape that endured and evolved around the site’s ruins and topography from the Dissolution and into the present day. In the medieval period, the abbey combined the cults of numerous Irish and Anglo-Saxon saints, the legend of Joseph of Arimathea, the Holy Thorn and the Holy Grail as well as Arthurian myth. For example, in 1191 during the rebuilding of the abbey following a fire, the monks of the abbey claimed to ‘discover’ the graves of King Arthur and Queen Guinevere: an early example of ‘archaeological’ activity serving to enhance origin myths (Rahtz and Watts 2003: 53–66). Following the Dissolution, the natural topography of the Tor and the Chalice Well, together with the built environment of the town, its churches, the monastic precinct and the abbey ruins, combined to create a landscape of memory and myth that has attracted diverse and competing interpretations to the present day. Like Stonehenge, in recent decades, tourists, Christian pilgrims, Arthurian, New Age and pagan enthusiasts, Glastonbury Festival-goers, archaeologists (and even the local people of this small market town themselves!) have ensured that the Glastonbury landscape continues to materialise many different stories and identities (Rahtz and Watts 2003: 159–166).

And yet memories do not simply reside in impressive monuments and buildings. One particularly interesting approach to how the past is remembered in the modern world has been promoted in a series of volumes edited between 1984 and 1992 by the French scholar Pierre Nora (1984–1992). His ambitious study of realms of memory (les lieux de mémoire) in contemporary France includes not only places such as museums, cathedrals, cemeteries and memorials, but also concepts and practices (e.g. generations, mottos and commemorative ceremonies) and objects (e.g. inherited property monuments, symbols, classic texts and even Nora’s own books). It might be worthwhile in the future to consider extending the notion of historical landscapes from places and spaces to include, as Nora proposes, all realms of memory that together create the historical surroundings within which we live, including those that exist only in our imagination (cf. Hall and Bombardella 2005; Schama 1995). These realms signify a wide range of different histories, and these significations again have pasts that we should seek to understand better in order to put both historical landscapes and historical archaeology into broader perspectives built around the concept of memory. Intriguingly, many realms of memory do not only contain interpretations of the past but also aspirations for the future and what will be remembered then.
memory in created landscapes

‘Prospective’ memory is what those creating realms of memory intend for the future (Holtorf 2000–2005: 6.6). For example, war memorials of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries were built with distinctive prospective memories in mind, namely to remember why they had been erected. Many of them played their part in the national cult of fallen soldiers glorifying death on behalf of the nation. War memorials are effectively attempts at creating elements in the landscape that will evoke a particular version of a (future) past. Yet as already indicated in the previous section, the specific variety of changing (retrospective) memories about a given historical realm could neither have been intended nor foreseen.

As time moved on, the meanings of memorials and their landscape settings have been changing. Grieving relatives, even of the most recent war in Western Europe, World War II, have become rare, and the nationalist spirit in which most memorials were once erected is now suspect, or downright embarrassing, to many. By the same token, many landscape parks containing references to a desired past (see below) are now being frequented increasingly by people who are merely seeking a pleasant destination for a walk on a Sunday afternoon. References to specific events in Classical mythology, the medieval past, or Christian metaphors of religious sacrifice may be lost to those walking past memorials at a railway station, or taking a short cut through a park on their way to work (Marshall 2004). Nevertheless, many memorials have retained some meaning in local communities and become revitalised during times of commemoration through the year and threats to their survival and accessibility can quickly acquire political significance.

Situated in a park outside of Demmin in Vorpommern (Germany) is a huge memorial, commemorating the dead of the 2. Pommersches Ulanen-Regiment Nr. 9, which had been based in Demmin from 1860 until 1920 and fought in the wars of 1864–1866, 1870–1871 and 1914–1918 (Holtorf 2000–2005: 8.9). This so-called Ulanendenkmal was built under the direction of the artist Fritz Richter-Elsner and opened on 3 August 1924, exactly 10 years after the Ulanen rode off into World War I. A chain was put at the entrance to the site and an inscription reminded everyone of Germany’s situation after the treaty of Versailles: ‘As you step over these chains, remember that the fatherland’s honour and freedom must be reinstated.’ The history of this memorial reflects only too obviously the difference between prospective and retrospective memories, and illustrates once again the dramatic changes which retrospective memory can be subjected to. In the 1920s, it was built as a huge memorial for the war heroes, with many symbolic
references to the prehistoric past, Teutonic ancestors and Germanic mythology, thus strengthening German nationalism at the time. After Hitler had reintroduced military service in Germany in 1935, the chain was broken in a symbolic act and its ends fixed on either side of the entrance stones. The site had thus become a political symbol for the Third Reich’s new power. In 1946, after the war was lost, the memorial had become an embarrassing document. It was shut down, the Germanic symbols were removed, and this site of former pride gradually dilapidated and became a huge rubbish pile. Yet after the collapse of the socialist GDR in 1989 the entire memorial was restored and reappreciated as a historical monument of the unified Germany. It was reopened in 1995.

Archaeologists have begun to contribute to the interdisciplinary study of battlefields, war cemeteries and war memorials (e.g. Tarlow 1999c), but the detailed analysis of how the locations and landscape contexts of these places influenced their roles in remembering and forgetting remains to be studied (see also Mytum nd.). Rare exceptions include Michael Dietler’s study of how resistance by the Gallic tribes to Julius Caesar’s armies led by Vercingetorix was portrayed in French national monuments in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The monuments were intended to embody contemporary national identity, and were linked to sustained campaigns of archaeological research. The ‘oppida’ (late Iron Age fortified settlements) of Alésia, Gergovia and Bibracte became associated with particular battles and events recorded in Julius Caesar’s *Gallic Wars*, associations that were built upon through archaeological excavations, most notably those commissioned by the Emperor Napoleon III during the 1860s. These sites were subsequently to become landscapes of national commemoration, monumentalised by statues, monuments and/or museums during the later nineteenth and twentieth centuries (Dietler 1998). Napoleon III paid most attention to the site of Vercingetorix’s defeat; a site where sacrifice and martyrdom rather than triumphal victory provided the most powerful ingredient to facilitate the commemoration of national unity (Dietler 1998: 76).

**Sacrificial landscapes**

Moving beyond the biography of sites and monuments to consider the commemorative significance of their broader landscape context, Nicholas Saunders has discussed the Western Front of World War I as a sacrificial landscape, in which Calvary crosses became symbols of sacrifice and memory. Saunders argues that the Calvary crosses were important because...
they had been such a widespread element of the pre-war rural landscape. Crosses embodied Christ’s sacrifice and were often believed to ‘miraculously’ survive enemy action as the only visible and recognisable monuments in the decimated countryside. The cross subsequently became employed in the memorials and cemeteries that became prominent features of the commemorative battlefield landscapes after the war. For example, Saunders shows how the cross at ‘Butte de Warlencourt’, the site of a Gallo-Roman burial mound and focus for successive military offensives, was memorialised during the war by British and then German crosses. After the war the cross was re-erected in commemoration of the Allied dead, but once more was replaced by a German cross in 1944 during the German occupation of France. Saunders suggests that the constant replacements and removals of the crosses were examples of the symbolic conflict of commemoration in sacrificial landscapes created by war (N. Saunders 2003b: 12).

Similar themes can be ascribed to the commemoration of those who did not die at the front. Marcia Pointin has discussed the complex funerary and sexual topography created by the funeral of Diana, Princess of Wales, in 1997. In this case, commemoration ranged from her place of death in a car crash in a Paris underpass, through the national monuments integrated into her funeral (including St. James’ Palace and Westminster Abbey in London), to the transportation of her cadaver to its final resting place on an island within the grounds of her family’s ancestral home at Althorp, near Northampton (Pointin 1999). Across the United Kingdom, war memorials were some the locations selected for the commemoration of her memory; the monuments served as foci for public expressions of commemoration but reconfigured with new memories and associations contradictory to their original intended significance (Pointin 1999; see also Marshall 2004). The case of Diana also serves to remind us that landscapes of remembrance can incorporate ‘ephemeral’ monuments, even in recent western society when the temptation is to regard all monuments as necessarily public and enduring (see also Küchler 2002). What are the more memorable ‘monuments’ to Diana in the public imagination and disseminated worldwide by the media? It might be argued that the short-lived carpets of flowers that surrounded her London residence at St James’ Palace and her grave at Althorp were powerful ‘ephemeral monuments’ created by many separate commemorative acts. In many ways they have served as more effective commemoration monuments than the officially sanctioned ‘memorial fountains’ and other statues that have been subsequently erected across the United Kingdom.
Creating Landscapes of Death and Commemoration

War memorials are only one of many evolving contexts of landscape commemoration. In Europe, for instance, the dead were present in post-medieval landscapes in many other ways. While we have discussed churches and churchyards as places of memory, during recent centuries we see increasingly complex topographies of commemoration, from memorials and statues, parks and gardens, the growth of Nonconformist chapels and their adjacent burial grounds, and the rise of garden cemeteries.

Landscape parks contain carefully created references to a desired past. They could incorporate churches and contained the tombs of aristocratic families close to their country houses (R. Morris 1989: 377–384). Further aspects of these elite commemorative landscapes are specifically designed family mausolea situated as prominent features within parks. Mausolea were ‘objects in space, set immutably in the landscape, silent and grand’ (Curl 1980: 168). They were designed to evoke the designs of antiquity, and the rotunda at Castle Howard in North Yorkshire has been described as ‘one of the greatest of all examples of buildings in this genre, and probably the first monumental free-standing tomb built in Western Europe since Antiquity’ (Curl 1980: 179–180). These were mortuary monuments explicitly intended to dominate the designed, idealised and timeless landscapes of the eighteenth-century country home. As antique monuments situated in Arcadian landscapes, they served to freeze mortality in the distant past (R. Morris 1989: 385; Mytum nd.; Schama 1995: 517–578).

Richard Bradley has recently discussed the relationship between memory and the landscape gardens at Stourhead made by Henry Hoare, grandfather of the famous antiquary Sir Richard Colt Hoare. Hoare created an English Palladian landscape filled with water features, trees, temples, a grotto and statues. The landscape materialised Virgil’s Aeneid in the English countryside, perhaps an attempt to connect the classical past to the narratives of Hoare’s family and biography (Bradley 2002: 150–151). In turn, such overt appropriations and creations of mythical past through the manipulation of landscape may have provided the motivation for Sir Richard Colt Hoare’s subsequent passion for investigating ancient burial mounds. Indeed, the antiquarianism and archaeology of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries might be seen, in part, as an extension of a burgeoning consideration of landscape as a vehicle for social commemoration.

The ambition to create specific sceneries in the landscape that support particular memories has also influenced cemetery location and design. Created as mnemonics for the dead, they were also built with a particular
form of future commemoration in mind, starting with the process of the funeral itself. Dying, death and the dead have a special place in our discussion of landscape and memory (Williams 2003) because interpretations have tended to ignore the landscape dimension of mortuary practices which has instead been subsumed within ‘church archaeology’ and a focus on skeletons, coffins and gravestones, detached from their spatial and landscape settings (cf. Mytum 2004a, 2004b).

The planning and arrangement of garden cemeteries provides an example of the link between death, landscape and memory. These cemeteries were a response to the hygiene problems of urban churchyards and were driven by the Nonconformist desire for interment away from Anglican influence. Yet their design suggests an arcadian theme with close similarities to eighteenth-century landscape gardens including lawns, winding paths and tree plantings (Tarlow 2000b: 223–224). The strength of antiquity, and the timelessness that these landscapes of death evoked, was central to their evolving mnemonic roles. In a detailed analysis of a York cemetery, Sue Buckham (2003) has discussed how these cemeteries became landscapes of memory that incorporated the competitive display of elites, but also the selective expression and suppression of class, religious affiliation, age and gender identities in the location and form of grave monuments (see also Mytum 2004b: 137–155). Similarly, the growth of Nonconformist burial grounds in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries provided an alternative commemorative topography to those provided by Anglican churchyards in which religious identity, language and class were negotiated (Mytum 2003).

The procession of the corpse through the landscape was as important a means of commemoration as the places where the dead were finally interred. These themes of place and movement are incorporated in Tony Pollard’s discussion of the repeated close geographical relationship between medieval and post-medieval burial grounds and the sea in Highland Scotland (T. Pollard 1999: 34–36). For many in these fishing communities, the sea was a grave and beaches perceived as liminal places where those drowned at sea were washed up and buried. Burial grounds also tend to be situated on promontories, cliff tops and knolls within sight of the sea or on islands within lochs. Such locations, away from the dispersed settlements they served, required long ‘coffin tracks’ winding along the coast from settlements, their routes punctuated by cairns where the coffin would be rested. Therefore both burial ground and the procession to the burial ground were related ways in which death and commemoration were mediated by landscape.

The commemoration of the dead has not been limited to churches, churchyards and cemeteries in recent centuries. Boundaries, crossroads and
old mounds were often perceived as liminal places, locations distant both physically and spiritually from the church at the centre of the community. They were therefore places seen as appropriate for the execution and burial of criminals from the late Saxon period onwards but they were also intended to be places of memory situated to enhance commemoration of the ‘bad death’. In this context, Nicola Whyte (2003) has recently explored the location of gallows in the Norfolk landscape of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Executions were public and memorable events in themselves, but subsequently travelling through the landscape of Norfolk would necessitate encountering the decomposing bodies of criminals hanging from gibbets beside roads in prominent locations away from settlements. These served to remind the living of mortality and the authority of the elite that could assert such power over criminals. Gallows were therefore mortuary monuments to bad deaths, the antithesis to the ‘good deaths’ provided by the tombs of the wealthy in and around the church.

A further category of ‘bad deaths’ provided with a distinctive landscape location are the *cillin* (infant cemeteries), found in Ireland and used from medieval times into the twentieth century. The sites selected are usually abandoned burial sites or ancient monuments, perceived as suitably ‘liminal’ places for the interment of unbaptised babies and suicides distant from the churchyard burial (Finlay 1999). Therefore, landscapes in recent centuries can constitute complex mortuary and commemorative topographies that incorporate a range of different locales associated with the commemoration of the dead and the past in diverse ways.

‘THEATRES OF MEMORY’

In the contemporary world, all sorts of newly created shopping malls and heritage sites have transformed landscapes and surroundings into what Raphael Samuel (1994) has described as ‘theatres of memory’. Among them are open-air museums, performed events such as historical re-enactments, or large visitor destinations like Stonehenge, as well as theme parks and other themed environments like the hotel–casino–shopping malls of Las Vegas and similar destination resorts elsewhere (Hall and Bombardella 2005; Holtorf 2005: 130–149). Insofar as it makes people remember episodes of a collective past, the cityscape of Las Vegas can be seen as a complex historical landscape.

For example, Caesars Palace opened in 1966 as the first Las Vegas resort to embody consistently an archaeological or historical theme. It signifies the popular myth of a decadent and opulent Rome associated with excess
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and indulgence as it is depicted in movies like Ben Hur, Cleopatra, or (more recently) Gladiator. Arguably, Caesars Palace creates a museum for the mass audience, a museum free of admission fees, velvet ropes, and Plexiglas panels and (falsely) appearing to be free even of security guards. Its architecture and design bear the signs of historicity but lack the tedious labels. Almost the same might be said about the Luxor, a more recent Las Vegas resort. Here, too, an atmosphere of exotic luxury is created to stimulate spending. Completed in 1993 in the shape of the world’s largest pyramid, and with a gigantic sphinx in front of it, the Luxor embraces the clichés of ancient Egypt, incorporating the pyramids, pharaohs, mummies, occult mysteries, fabulous wealth, and archaeological excavations. The main lobbies of the building are filled with full-scale Egyptian architecture, and in each room walls, wardrobes, and bed linen are adorned with Egyptian-style murals and hieroglyphics.

Further interesting examples of contemporary theatres of memory are zoological gardens, which since the beginning of the nineteenth century have been built in many parts of the world. Although some zoos contain historical remains from various periods, they are also historical landscapes in the sense that they deliberately create representations of the past, which are best appreciated by moving through the zoo (Holtorf nd.). Firstly, zoos often commemorate individuals: usually people who have acted as benefactors to the zoo. To sponsor a bench or contribute financially in some other way earns you the right to have your name, and occasionally a personal message, displayed to later generations for as long as the bench or the plaque will last. A more lasting memorial in the form of a portrait bust is only given to former zoo directors like Carl Hagenbeck in his Tierpark in Hamburg or to particularly generous benefactors like Lord Swaraj Paul in the case of London Zoo. London Zoo also features a memorial commemorating five employees who died during World War II. Virtually the only animal individuals for which one occasionally finds memorials in zoos are primates and especially gorillas. In Bristol Zoo, for example, lowland gorilla Alfred remains unforgotten as a local icon and celebrity of the 1930s and 1940s and is honoured with a bust in the zoo (Figure 13.2).

Secondly, zoos commemorate collective pasts in order to appeal to visitor preconceptions. Until well into the twentieth century, exotic animals and ‘exotic’ people were exhibited in zoos, side by side, as strange curiosities. In Hagenbeck’s Völkerschauen, this practice was pioneered through demonstrations of the appearances and customs of ‘primitive’ cultures seemingly living in a timeless, natural state of primordial humanness. Even today, many contemporary zoos continue to contrive crude connections between
Landscapes and memories

Figure 13.2 The farmstead of the Meyer family. A created landscape at Hannover Zoo. Photograph: Cornelius Holtorf 2002.

the animals displayed and the native people living in the same area, sustaining an idealisation of ‘primitive’ cultures in the ‘wild’ in antithesis to ‘modern’ civilisations. The new Tropical Zoo within Copenhagen Zoo, for example, features a display about people of the rainforest, from where visitors access directly the living quarters of the chimpanzees. Similar displays are now also being created about farmsteads in the Western world. Hannover Zoo, for example, features Meyers Hof, complete with happy cows, cute ponies, dirty pigs, and cheeky geese, signifying a nostalgic idealisation of assumed former farming realities (Figure 13.2). In this way, zoo architecture serves to commemorate the image of a timeless preindustrial past that forms such a widespread element of European nationalism. Whereas many old zoo buildings resemble the architectural styles of the animals’ countries of origin, in some cases styles of the past were chosen, much in the way English landscape parks featured romantic follies such as artificial ruins (as in Stourhead discussed earlier). That is not coincidental, as modern zoological gardens emerged when these landscape parks were popular too. The ostrich house in Berlin, for example, was opened in 1901 in the style of an Egyptian temple including painted murals and hieroglyphics as decorations.
This was done with so much attention to detail that the building was later used as a teaching aid for the local university students of Egyptology.

Thirdly, zoos commemorate animal species that are extinct in the wild as well as other episodes of ‘natural history’ such as human origins. Some zoos, for example, display life-size models of long-extinct species like dinosaurs. Also, many zoos are particularly proud to keep animal species that are either endangered or already extinct in the wild, and this is increasingly considered to be their main justification. Sometimes living specimens of preserved animal species are being reintroduced into the wild, as in the case of the przewalski horse which, thanks to successful zoo breeding, roams freely again through Mongolia after thirty years of extinction. By making up for historical extinctions, zoos are thus even undoing the past for a better future.

With this complex conflation of past, present and future, the landscapes of zoos are but one instance of the invention in the present of pasts for the future. Many shopping malls and heritage destinations too take aspects of popular conceptions of the past and mould them as a space for the future (Hall and Bombardella 2005). It is therefore increasingly difficult for archaeologists to consider heritage parks and archaeological sites as exclusively contributing to the relationship of landscape and memory.

CONCLUSIONS

Although prospective and retrospective memories are theoretically distinct, they are often combined with each other in specific landscapes. Churches and their environs can be regarded as landscapes of commemoration that incorporate both prospective and retrospective memories; evocations of the past and aspirations for the afterlife. Meanwhile, particularly dense cityscapes like that of Exeter, a city that provided the home for the famous landscape historian W. G. Hoskins (Hoskins 2004), are both rich historical palimpsests of subsequent occupations and places for ‘remembering’ certain futures. Like many European cities, Exeter is a tapestry of the ancient, medieval and recent past with early remains including the preserved Roman city walls with subsequent Saxon, medieval and Tudor additions. The city retains its medieval cathedral, churches and chapels, townhouses, guildhall, underground passages that brought water to the city, and the bridge that once conveyed traffic across the river Exe. Also preserved are elements of the early modern, Georgian and Victorian expansion of the city as well as the substantial redevelopments of the modern era. Equally significant however are the many losses through fire, war and city planning (Hoskins 2004) that
has seen large parts of the city transformed over the centuries. The cityscape is constantly ‘on the move’, and a new redevelopment at Princeshay is likely to bring more of the city’s past back ‘into memory’ through archaeological excavation. The contrasting periods and selective retention that has become embodied within Exeter’s cityscape is no better emphasised than in the location of the medieval church of St Pancras, the only structure to be retained during the development of the Guildhall Shopping Centre. Perhaps this serves as an example of selective remembrance incorporating retrospective and prospective elements. The church is now stranded and detached from the cityscape it inhabited in former times; marooned by the concrete paving slabs of a modern plaza surrounded by shops. However, the church is not only a lonely leftover of a historical palimpsest that was once far richer. It has also become an element of the new ‘theatre of memory’ that is the shopping centre in contemporary civic life. Through renovation and restoration, old buildings such as this are effectively employed to construct new pasts and aspired futures out of selected elements of the old.

Likewise, the presence of the dead in the landscape implied both prospective aspirations for the future and later a retrospective evocation of the past. As we have seen, the landscapes of the period from c. AD 1500 contained dramatic changes in the way the dead were perceived, engaged with, and the way the dead and the past were remembered. Rather than confined within specific locales, memories saturated the landscape. In this way, memories of the past, and aspirations of future pasts, were both a consequence of, and something that had a profound impact on, the identities of those inhabiting and experiencing town and country.

However we view the dead and the past though and whatever we do with its remains and evocations has to be understood within a particular present context. In other words, how people relate to the past and its remains is not subject to some unchanging principles but is always governed by the specific agendas and interests of the people involved. As some of the examples discussed in this chapter illustrate, memories in landscapes, whether accumulated or created, are therefore often contested (cf. Bender and Winer 2001; Shackel 2001). Key questions to be raised in relation to remembering the past in any landscape have to include the following: Who benefits in each case? Who is disadvantaged? Are anyone’s interests affected other than those of people directly involved? Which power relations are at work, and have all living people represented or evoked been adequately consulted and listened to?

At the beginning of this chapter, we argued that studies of the landscape of the last five hundred years have focused on ‘reading’ its character and
evolution, whether the focus is on industry, towns, rural settlements or the enclosure of fields. While these are valid and profitable approaches to the study of the landscape of recent centuries, archaeology is in a strong position to address the importance of the past, the dead and memory. From this perspective, archaeologists cannot fully consider the complex significance and meanings of landscape to past people without considering the memories that were deemed to have inhabited them.