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**EDUCATIONAL LANDSCAPES OF THE PAST FOR THE FUTURE**

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***Abstract***

The article discusses the question of whether it would be possible to investigate educational past as both a complex and sequence of several landscapes of education, either sequential or adjacent. Educational landscapes in the history of education are spaces of places, levels, spheres, biographical paths and strategies, learning processes, moral education, and lifelong educational algorithms. Landscapes of education may be created, changed, destroyed, or transformed. History of education has a broad range of approaches and research methods for working with sources of the pedagogical past allowing us to study the evolution of teaching landscapes of a person in a specific eras in historical past. In the paper we consider specifics of studying classical, medieval, and modern educational landscapes from the point of view of the history of pedagogy having defined them as places that tie in spatial and educational practices of human beings in their everyday, social, economic, political, professional, literacy and scholastic life. Our key questions are: what is 'educational/learning landscape/milieu/area' as itself? do the educational places in the past created the whole leaning environments particular for every different time period? Usually people say about educational landscape toward the nowadays situations. Nevertheless one could trace, reconstruct and investigate landscapes of education in the different epochs of the past epochs of education. Such places could be classical polis or civitas in Antiquity, a street or a quarter in medieval town, the network of medieval urban schools and universities, the milieu of particular periodics in education or regional/supra-regional standards in curriculum.

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## 1. Introduction

The question of what “learning/education environment/landscape/space” constitutes today is among the most hotly debated topics. Technological answers proceed from the premise that a landscape may be called educational when the teacher and the learner feel more or less comfortable within the educational process. Methodological answers presuppose a consideration of factors defining the evolution of educational milieu that not just constantly go beyond (beyond a schoolroom or a university classroom) but push out the walls, the limits, and, with enviable regularity, re-define the system of the learner’s educational bearings. Any pedagogical theory has a certain conventional understanding of an educational landscape.

## 2. Problem Statement

Topos does not exist without chronos: discreetness/continuity of constructing education in various times is linked to the topology of its construction in a particular culture. Thinkers of classical antiquity strove to define spaces where education was to be undertaken. The educating role of a city (polis) as an educational landscape of teaching skills and culture was asserted daily: by looking at marbles with dedications to outstanding gymnasiarchs, by statues of heroes, by temple altars, by the rituals of feasts, games, and celebrations. Today’s practices that allow practicing educational strategies in spaces an individual holds sequentially or simultaneously often go back to classical antiquity. “Care of the self”, for example, is one such classical element; it emerged in the ancient Greek polis and it still retains its relevance today. Classical and modern practices of “care of the self” differ significantly in the spectrum of various educational options in the polis/civitas. Compared to classical antiquity, today, we see both expansion (online education, digital educational content, etc.) and narrowing (institutionalized curricula, career aspects, etc.) of educational options. Spaces are expanding, paths are narrowing down.

## 3. Research Questions

Let us define the concepts by posing a dictionary question: what is an educational landscape of the past epoch? The phrase “educational landscape” is one of today’s trends and it is defined through an entire range of meanings, one of them being the broader concept of a “landscape”. It encompasses meanings from a real physical space to a metaphor, as when we speak of the space of a person’s biography. We believe that the term “educational landscape” is somewhere in the middle of this gamut of meanings. It covers an individual’s biographical paths, his/her schools and universities; it spans the spaces of school buildings, or the higher school as a system.

Over the last two centuries, many branches of learning have formulated their own definitions of a landscape, from “the most solid rock formations of the geologist to the soft ‘layers of memory’ of the historian” (Kolen & Renes, 2012). The 2000 European Landscape Convention makes it possible to consider landscapes as a special type of heritage that requires protection, management, and long-term planning. People preserve landscapes thereby working toward maintaining the past for the sake of the future. Reconstructing the historical pedagogical landscapes and educational landscapes requires new methodological approaches to studying the past from the point of view of both the history of culture and the history of pedagogy.

#### 4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of our research is to determine possible approaches to educational environments in the history of pedagogy. We would like to discuss the methodology of approaching a historical study to landscapes of instruction. All eras and cultures, countries, regions, and loci have different “experiences” of their educational landscapes. Europe (and any other continent) is “like a mosaic of many different landscapes occupied by a great variety of communities embodying numerous perceptions and memories” (Bloemers, 2010). Sometimes, these ‘landscape pieces’ are assembled from individual memories tinged with personal associations and emotions. They are put together from the architecture of school buildings, from the “architectonics” of curricula. Politicians, textbook writers, teachers, students, their parents, philosophers of pedagogy, scholars of education and teaching, methodology experts operate within the educational landscape.

Every educational landscape is unique and “can never be at rest,” (Paludan-Müller, 2010) since “spatial practices” and “everyday practices” change (De Jong, 2013). Emerging histories of education prove to be inevitably rooted in a spatial path. There is certain unavoidable desire to standardize those paths and there is inescapable variety of personal educational byways, of the accidents of individual perception, and of setting one’s foot on a particular stretch of the road.

What transpires in educational landscapes is somewhat similar to what transpires in human memory. We cannot remember everything, since we will be overloaded, and we cannot forget everything, since we will be hollowed out. The same happens to the landscapes, since every subsequent era and culture introduce their own ordering principle, their own pedagogical correlation between *les mots et les choses*. This correlation can be seen, for instance, in linking together the pedagogy of apprenticeship and urban planning. Wim Hupperetz used eight centuries of history of a single street in the historical downtown of Breda (the Netherlands) as his material to study professional traditions. Using “the memory of a street” metaphor, he juxtaposed “socio-cultural developments” and “spatial-physical developments” to see both continuity and breaks with various traditions (Hupperetz, 2015). Hupperetz’s study could be taking further by focusing precisely on educational landscapes, on the “complex and layered memory” of them, the memory that clearly has spatial boundaries. Defining a landscape through memory opens up an entire range of options for historical and pedagogical study of the “dynamic and cyclical aspects of the past”. In particular, as in this case, studying a city district or street with several centuries of generations of teachers and students from the point of view of historical pedagogy.

Possible results: what will we find? Teachers and areas of learning and education. A key question for today’s scholars is “who (or what) are the authors of the landscape?” (Kolen & Renes, 2012). Any landscape, including an educational one, emerges because people are building their life in the world that is both ready for them (otherwise no building would be possible) and not ready for them (since the building process is still underway). The human presence and the implementation of human plans create “landscapes of [pedagogical] expression” (contents of the material taught and means of its presentation) and “landscapes of impression” (learning, scholarship and erudition) (Samuels, 1979).

Today’s software, digital tools, e-databases of texts and visual sources allow us to consider the possibility of comprehensive reconstructions of the past based on an extensive source base (Rekittke & Paar, 2010). Means traditionally used to forecast the future are now with increasing frequency used to study

the past, too. Those means allow us to see all the “authors” of a specific landscape, their actions, embodiments, algorithms suggested for following what has been embodied, its use and application.

The part technologies play in shaping today’s landscapes and reconstructing landscapes of the past does not cancel out those who consistently, creatively, in a way traditional and “natural to the pedagogical process” “work out” creating and studying educational landscapes.

## 5. Research Methods

Unlike creating pedagogical landscapes, studying them is fiendishly difficult. De Jong writes, with undeniable irony, that any attempt at “reconstructing the biography of a landscape is like trying to unscramble a scrambled egg. You just cannot do it. Due to the variety of authors, the multiplicity of their actions, as well as the evolving condition of social relations, any attempt to unravel the social processes that underlie the transformation of our physical world is reckless. Moreover, it would be an impossible challenge to describe in detail the reverse impact the environment had on the knowledge, perceptions and practices of people that lived in the past” (De Jong, 2013).

However, when studying something is hard, it does not mean that the right way to proceed is to deny that something and to declare that a landscape of education exists only here and now, and its previous states cannot be studied, since those states are no longer present and have not been clearly documented. In order to illustrate “the power of place” landscapes have, T. Bloemers quotes R. Brandt, “What you see is what you take” (Bloemers, 2010). A researcher must be keenly aware of that “power of place”. The researcher has to consider the power permanently. Architectural edifices that were the places of learning and education had that power. Educational texts that were heard, read, reproduced, and transmitted taking their place with them had that power. Laws on education that determined the landscape of their application, contents, and results of pedagogical process within a particular place had that power. Treatises on education determined the specific place held in their contemporaries’ worldview by the issues of the human nature, of the essence and goal of bringing children up, of shaping and socializing them; those treatises, too, had that power.

“Landscape biography” is not so much new as it is a newly foregrounded research area that entails studying life stories tied to a specific place. It is based on understanding landscape is a synthesis of long-running history and relatively short episodes of everyday life co-existing in memoirs (Kolen & Renes, 2012). Landscape biography is reflected in autobiographies, in purposefully collected personal memoirs and musings of teachers and students. Landscape biographies have a “double historical perspective” since “they refer both to the drawnout histories of places and monuments themselves and to the history of memories and practices” (Kolen & Renes, 2012). Subsequent generations appropriate the memory of the past in different ways including places and events de mémoire into their memories and living worlds (Samuels, 1979). New arrivals on the pedagogical stage created and dreamed thereby leaving their personal imprint on the landscape of teaching and educating, and on their students’ lives. This is the premise of proponents of a relatively new research area studying not only chronological, but also spatial spread of educational phenomena and asserting the need for a historical geography of education as a subdiscipline (Marsden, 1977).

In addition to landscapes being twice (and more) as historical, they are also “doubly cultural” since they are products of past cultures correlated with the present (Fairclough, 2008). This statement acquires a

particular tenor when applied to an educational landscape from the past reflecting specific features of a particular pedagogical culture. Regardless of whether we study educational landscapes of the classical antiquity, the Middle Ages, or the Modernity, we should not discount that all those landscapes have a physical appearance and they are not only like scrambled eggs with a single layer, but also like a cake with different numbers of layers. De Jong's metaphor of a landscape as scrambled eggs is a stark one, but it does now allow us to grasp the key feature of any educational landscape: its ability to balance between "spatial dynamics" and "spatial order" (Woud, 2004).

## 6. Findings

Classical, medieval, and modern landscapes. Even though an educational landscape is a legacy of the past, the desire to preserve everything unchanged is only one possible way of protecting it (Schofield, 2008). The strategy of making the "spatial order" absolute is justified in national reserves and wildlife sanctuaries. Those landscapes that are part of cultural heritage most often do not require conservation legitimately needed by "monuments" to the past states in educational landscapes. As much as it is possible, educational landscapes develop in accordance with the laws of "spatial dynamics" re-creating and changing the past in the name of the future.

Let us consider specifics of studying classical, medieval, and modern educational landscapes from the point of view of the history of pedagogy having defined them as places that tie in spatial and educational practices.

The classical educational landscape is a very heterogeneous phenomenon that changes significantly depending on a particular historical period. Its origins are largely connected with the genesis of the polis. Ancient Greek polices, or city-states, were not isolated from each other, rather, they formed a peculiar network of diplomatic alliances, military conflicts, trade, cultural contacts, migrations, etc. Specific features of this landscape, the relations between sovereign polis communities, were reflected in various works from classical antiquity. "The Homeric songs are a good example of such a shared landscape and memory, in which diverse communities, peoples and lineages could relate to a unifying grand narrative" (Jansen & Pérez Jiménez, 2010). Homeric texts include a large number of toponymic references to islands, regions, and cities allowing readers to identify themselves with the real and invented world. Odysseus' journey is represented as a life path of a man to whom the expanses of the Greek universe are opening up, "Tell me, O Muse, of the man of many devices, who wandered full many ways after he had sacked the sacred citadel of Troy. Many were the men whose cities he saw and whose mind he learned..." (Hom. Od. 1.1) (Homer, 1919). Homer's Odysseus is a hero who sees landscapes and attempts to become part of them by exposing himself to other cultures and canons of a person of virtue. On the contrary, in his *Laws*, Plato suggests taking everything in our hands and building our own cultural and educational landscape based on the natural one. Plato suggests a step-by-step strategy for building an ideal polis: choose a place which possesses what is suitable for a city, build a wall around it and erect temples, give citizens two land plots (one in the center and another at the outskirts), and "thus the settlement shall be completed" (Plato. Leg. 745b, 745e) (Plato, 1967-1968). Having prepared the natural landscape, Plato proposes building up cultural layers and implementing educational models.

In Cicero's speeches and dialogs, events unfold within a specific physical and cultural landscape in accordance with contemporary canons of oral or written speech. Cicero, a lover of the Greek language, and his contemporaries, many of whom, like the orator himself, received a Greek education, had before their eyes one of many examples of extreme pragmatism in treating an educational landscape. During the siege of Athens, the Roman dictator Sulla ordered to cut down the groves of Plato's Academy since Sulla needed timber to build siege engines (App. BC. XII.30) (Appian of Alexandria, 1899). Five years later, Cicero was involved in a conflict with Sulla's minions and was forced to leave Rome. In Asia and on Rhodes, Cicero heard many Greek orators and philosophers (Xenocles of Adramyttium, Dionysius of Magnesia, Menippus, Posidonius; Plut.Cic.4). The Greek schools and teachers impressed Cicero so greatly that he even dreamed of abandoning politics, moving to Athens, "naturalizing" within a Greek landscape and devoting himself entirely to scholarly pursuits. In time, he partially succeeded in creating his own educational landscape in villas outside Rome. Cicero called his villa in the vicinity of Puteoli and his Tusculan villa his "Academies." Cicero believed that the gardens of Academus could appear in Rome, only if the Romans really wanted it.

In the majority of his works, Cicero ties a Roman landscape to Roman cultural elements modeled after Greek originals. Quoting Greek philosophers and poets, Cicero attempts to accompany his quotes with detailed descriptions of Roman landscapes. This device allows him to legitimately present alien texts (as Greek texts were to Romans) in his own culture. Cicero strove to prove that Greek and Latin had not been created "equal," that their prestige is created by those who create their contemporary educational landscape, exist within them and maintain them.

The transformation of a classical (including educational) landscape into a medieval one altered its horizon and its parameters. Theaters and amphitheatres were no longer used for cultural reasons; aqueducts and baths were no longer used for practical reasons; temples were no longer used for religious reasons; gymnasiums and porticos were no longer used for pedagogical reasons, since the strategy of interaction between a teacher and a student, the goals and principles of such interactions had changed dramatically. We could take Rome as our example where the slow, but incomplete absorption of the past transpired during fifteen centuries after the fall of the empire (Paludan-Müller, 2010). Its successors, forced to face an antiquity-modeled landscape, did not neglect opportunities to use, for instance, old edifices for new purposes. Marble and Latin from Roman buildings and scrolls became foundations of new, no less magnificent, ensembles. The builders of the new were often short of materials and labor to embody their ideas, and the new was at first built within the limits of, or in the immediate vicinity of ancient edifices, on the reverse of or on washed off pagan manuscripts (Greenhalgh, 2012). It created a peculiar symbolism: an ancient outline set the development trajectory for subsequent landscapes, educational ones among them.

David Sheffler studied the educational landscape of medieval Regensburg analyzing in detail the everyday life of the locals living among two hundred churches, multiple chapels, religious institutions, libraries, and parish and monastery schools. He analyzed the city residents' educational options; from their school days, many city dwellers either chose a religious path or shunned it, and Sheffler drew a conclusion on the evolution of medieval Regensburg's educational potential, stating that "somewhat paradoxically, Regensburg's economic decline, which began in the mid-fourteenth century, appears to have coincided with a period of increasing lay interest in education and a commensurate expansion in access to learning" (Sheffler, 2008). The spatial dynamics altered the educational landscape and Regensburg's "educational

climate.” In time, as social life evolved and as written communication became more important economic and political resource, city residents gained increasingly greater access to the changing educational landscape of the religious center that was Regensburg.

Similarly, large-scale research was conducted to study the echoes of past educational landscapes in the educational landscape of today. In particular, Vyacheslaw Shestakov studied the many centuries of history of Oxford and Cambridge campuses, and he considered the phenomenon of “Oxbridge” itself from the point of view of the evolving educational landscapes of individual colleges within the world’s two oldest universities (Shestakov, 2017). Shestakov stresses that educational landscapes of Oxford and Cambridge are a result of long-running revision, improvement, and expansion.

There is extensive literature on studying today’s educational landscapes, the extent of their unity or variability, their qualitative specifics and possibilities. Mass media and e-communications are of great help in such research. A group of researchers studied the educational landscape of China’s “principal training” and school leadership developments; their methodology involved studying the status of articles, their subjects and methodological approaches reflected therein; the study focused on publications in Chinese journals between 1989 and 2008 (Chen, Lo & Zheng 2011). The state of post-Soviet educational enclaves after the collapse of the USSR was the subject of many years of fruitful research in the Institute for Strategy of Education Development (Svetlana Ivanova, Vyacheslaw Myasnikov, Tigran Marinosyan, et al.).

## 7. Conclusion

These and other studies demonstrate that educational landscapes constitute a certain type of educational and teaching strategy and curriculum. It could be created, changed, destroyed, or transformed. Today’s history of education has a broad range of approaches and research methods for working with sources on the pedagogical past allowing us to study the evolution of educational landscapes of a teacher and a pupil in a specific era as variants of elucidating, reading, and transforming the person’s nature and the nature of surrounding natural and artificial world.

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