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**What is a landscape?** – movement, energy, positioning, a way of orientating, connecting, a quality of space located outside of town centres and cities, a locus of rights and responsibility?

**What does it mean to be part of a landscape?**

“ ...the landscape does not stand there itself; because we are moving, it must at least take on a counterpoint. Man has made the landscape able to move. The mobile forces, as it were, of man's relation to the landscape. This is the mobile attitude we can take towards the landscape. What is close to us passes quickly; what is far away goes along with us ‘ (remains within our sphere of vision)  
Paul Klee The Thinking Eye p361

Klee's idea of landscape is temporal, musical. For him landscape exists only in relation to human perception and movement.

This insight is resonant of a personal experience - living for twelve years in a village of 300 inhabitants in the Ladder Hills of Aberdeenshire. One might still walk through this landscape for seven days without encountering another soul across ancient routes from the 'dreich' treeless Cabrach (OS grid reference NJ3827) towards a forested, fertile Don valley (OS grid reference NJ35091320), a landscape that is both remote and rural.

Imagine traversing this terrain as if drawing through time. The drawing would configure the many discrete and visible signs of human inhabitation from 2,000 BC to the present. It would encircle the *ancient security* of the hill fort, then dip below ground to the *archaic colony* of an Iron Age souterrain, inhabited approximately in 400 BC. The line would continue on to enclose three further configurations. Five or so farms in a 'fermtoun' might form *an organic microcosm*. The line would then rest on a single point of an *agrarian hearth*, a lone tenant farmstead with a bothy for the workers. They had previously been occupants of the fermtouns and had been evicted and then hired back onto the land by tenant farmers. The line circumvents itself. These places of rugged survival would stand in contrast to the *arcadian enclosure* of a walled garden and adjacent estate house. From the *linear concentration* of the current 19<sup>th</sup> century planned village, it might become apparent that only three people owned the horizon above the village whereas in the past people had lived all over the landscape.

Can we ever *own* land(scape)?

At the turn of the millennium Gavin Renwick worked with Chris Fremantle and me to develop a visual methodology for understanding changing patterns of inhabitation, drawing on Patrick Geddes (*Inthrow* 2000-2004). This research resulted in the configurations above. Had our drawing continued into the present, it would show the appearance of industrial scale wind farms necessary to renewable energy as well as housing estates that mimic the inner city, concentrated in a single field. "What is close to us passes quickly" - the line of our drawing through time would indeed increase in pace, hurtling into the present and future. It would mark a growing tension with the speed of industrialisation, an increased angularity that would obliterate the traces of earlier patterns of inhabitation, the potential these represent for exploring alternative approaches and values.

What does it mean now to look after the land? Every city is reliant on its hinterland for water, food, timber, uranium even and oil. Does this imply ownership by a few or

might it provoke a new configuration? Can we move through land and city in such a way that these become inextricably linked in a new direction?

591 words

Anne Douglas with Chris Fremantle, October 2015