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Lefebvrean landscapes

Dawn Hollis

Many of the challenges facing the historian interested in the concept of space are also encountered by the historian of past landscapes. Although several valuable paradigms already exist for understanding the subject of landscape in a historical context, this chapter considers the significant analytical potential of adapting and applying Henri Lefebvre’s tripartite division of space to the study of the early modern landscape. It focuses particularly upon depictions, descriptions, and reactions to mountains contained within Thomas Coryate's *Crudities* (1611), recounting his adventurous travels across Europe, alongside several other works of early modern literature and travel-writing. The chapter proposes that Lefebvre’s categories of spatial practice and representational, or symbolic space, offer historians a way to both categorize and articulate the ways in which individuals in the past physically experienced and mentally constructed the world around them.

Many of the challenges facing the historian interested in the concept of space are also encountered by the historian of past landscapes. Both spaces and landscapes are to some extent physical phenomena, with a tangible reality external to the human mind. At the same time, they both have an experiential reality: human beings see, touch, move amidst, and engage with them on both a physical and a mental level. As such, spaces and landscapes are not merely ‘out there’ in the physical world, but are also evocative of internal mental and emotional responses. Even more than that, these responses – and thus, in a very real sense, the spaces or landscapes themselves – are shaped by human ideas of them. These are all challenging, abstract concepts, which I argue can be given valuable analytical shape by the work of the philosopher and sociologist Henry Lefebvre (1901–91). Lefebvre divided space into three categories:

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1. **Spatial practice**, which embraces production and reproduction, and the particular locations and social sets characteristic of each social formation. Spatial practice ensures continuity and some degree of cohesion. In terms of social space, and of each member of a given society's relationship to that space, this cohesion implies a guaranteed level of competence and a specific level of performance.
2. **Representations of space**, which are tied to the relations of production and to the 'order' which those relations impose, and hence to knowledge, to signs, to codes, and to 'frontal' relations.
3. **Representational spaces**, embodying complex symbolisms, sometimes coded, sometimes not, linked to the clandestine or underground side of social life, as also to art (which may come eventually to be defined less as a code of space than as a code of representational space).[1]

In the following chapter I offer a series of simplified definitions of Lefebvre's tripartite division of space and set out demonstrate its potential application to the study of landscapes as cultural phenomena.

A spatial approach to the history of mountain experience

My research focusses on the experience of landscape, and particularly mountains, during the early modern period (roughly 1450–1750). Within landscape studies broadly defined, there exist a variety of paradigms through which to approach the subject of 'landscape'.[2] The one which particularly intrigues me is the concept of the cultural landscape. The term was first coined in 1925 by the geographer Carl Sauer, who defined landscape as 'a land shape, in which the process of shaping is by no means […] simply physical'. He argued that cultures inscribed themselves upon the 'natural landscape' through choices based upon the population, housing preferences, production, and communication of each given culture, ultimately producing the 'cultural landscape'.[3] This move was later echoed in the field of historical studies by W.G. Hoskins, who in 1955 defined the landscape as a 'palimpsest' upon

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which ‘successive generations had inscribed their way of life, while half-erasing that of their predecessors’.[4]

Both Sauer and Hoskins addressed the cultural construction of landscape insofar as it possessed a physical reality or had a physical impact on the form and contours of the land itself. Denis Cosgrove, in his book *Social Formation and Symbolic Landscape* (1984), glossed landscape as a ‘way of seeing’. For Cosgrove, ‘landscape’ was more than just an area of physical space and the mountains, trees, or buildings which that space contained: instead, the term denoted the external world as ‘mediated through subjective human experience’.[5] The cultural landscape could encompass, therefore, not just the physical alterations caused by human society, but the mental ideas, preconceptions, and values with which humans engaged with the landscape. It is this type of cultural landscape with which I am particularly concerned, for it allows me to ask questions both about how people in past contexts experienced mountains (what did they think and feel about mountains?), how they constructed them (how did they depict mountains in writing or art?), and how experience and construction relate to one another (would the literature and imagery which ‘constructed mountains’ in, say, 17th-century Britain result in a certain type of common mountain experience?).[6]

I believe that Henri Lefebvre’s tripartite division of space, as quoted above, offers the ideal heuristic tool for the study of the cultural landscape, and enables historians of landscape to ask more nuanced questions about different aspects of past landscape experience. In the pages that follow, I will read a series of early modern sources relating to mountains through each of the three lenses offered by Lefebvre. I argue that his concept of spatial practice can encourage historians to read sources with an attention to the ways in which non-elite communities both adapted and adapted to the surrounding landscape. His concept of representational space offers, I suggest, an invaluable tool for articulating the complex web of memory and symbolic associations overlaying the experience of both specific landscape sites and landscape in general. Finally, I propose that his concept of spatial representation (also translated as representations of space) can offer a way of appreciating and analyzing the ways in which ostensibly *descriptive* accounts of landscape can in fact be seen as being *prescriptive* of subsequent individual responses and of the cultural landscape more generally.

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Space cut three ways

Henri Lefebvre's most famous work, *The Production of Space* (first published as *Production de l'espace* in 1974, and translated into English in 1991) has had considerable influence in fields as disparate as geography and pedagogy, and its potential value within the field of spatial history has already been indicated.[7] Lefebvre wrote from a socio-political perspective, and sought to foreground the ways in which dynamics of power were enacted through and within urban spaces. He distinguished first between 'absolute space' and 'social space'. The former term refers to the physical, external reality of space, whilst the latter term focusses on the human experience of space, which he divided into three different categories: spatial practice, spatial representation, and representational space. I believe that Lefebvre's 'social space' offers a close analogue to the idea of the cultural landscape and that, as such, his tripartite division of social space can, with some adaptation, be applied to the historical study of landscape.

Spatial practice, put simply, encompasses how people use a given space: how they move within it, and how they travel from it to a different space. Spatial practice is how we inhabit our homes: what rooms we use and for what purposes and at what times. On a larger scale, it is the movement from, for example, one city to another: it is the overcrowding of the motorways compared to the relative quiet of back roads. Spatial practice highlights the ways in which humans distinguish and create specific spaces based on their intended usage, and emphasizes the links created between them by human movement.

The application of such a concept to landscape is obvious for, as highlighted above, landscape is not 'natural' but very significantly shaped (physically as well as symbolically) by human usage. The concept of spatial or landscape practice prompts historians to ask how past societies utilized different forms of landscape: in what ways did they gain sustenance or economic benefit from it, how did they travel through it, manage its risks, and take advantage of its benefits? What did people *do* on or around mountains, rivers, coastlines, plains, or deserts in the past?

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Representational space is arguably the most powerful of Lefebvre's three divisions, because it captures that which is at once most abstract but which also has the greatest impact upon our experience of the world: the symbolic, metaphysical makeup of space. 'Representational space' is the thing which makes a church a holy space, rather than simply a large building with pillars. Representational space is in the mind of the person experiencing it, but it is also generally a matter of broader consensus, whether at the level of a small community or an entire culture. Whilst it is metaphysical, representational space is very much real, and in turn shapes the ways in which we use spaces, and the ways we represent them or attempt to regulate them.

From the perspective of landscape studies, this concept of representational space brings into full focus the very issue towards which theoretical progress within cultural geography has been tending: that 'the landscape' is not just something which human beings physically shape but one which they also mentally construct. The concept encourages the historian to pay attention to what stories, texts, and ideas are most strongly associated with different landscape features in different contexts – and to consider what these associations *mean* in terms both of the cultural value placed on a specific landscape and the individual experience of it.

The representation of space, or **spatial representation**, is, for Lefebvre, a category of prescription: the documents, visual and textual, produced by architects, bureaucrats, city planners, politicians, and so on. These are the documents which 'create' spatial practice: when an architect designs a house and places the kitchen in a certain room, then that room will inevitably be the space which its eventual inhabitants utilize for the creation of meals, barring their own subsequent acts of domestic re-design (and thus re-presentation). Spatial representation regulates how we use and experience space: whether innocuous (the location of a kitchen) or sinister (the demarcation of ghettoes), they are in important ways an exercise of power.[8]

Within the context of modern history, the historian can certainly identify clear examples of 'landscape representation', or documents which prescribe the use and representational

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significance of certain landscapes. The delineation of national parks, the Countryside Code, and Ordnance Survey maps all encourage people to behave in and think *about* the landscape in particular ways. Is there, however, a way for the historian of the pre-modern landscape to apply Lefebvre's concept of spatial representation to sources such as travel accounts or works of art? I would argue that yes, there is.

The cultural landscape does not, by definition, come out of nowhere: it is landscape mediated through human experience which is in turn mediated by cultural discourses. These discourses – which could just as valuably be termed 'landscape representations' – survive for historians in the form of textual and visual sources: the same sources out of which we can excavate the realities of landscape practice and the symbolisms of representational landscape. Using Lefebvre's category of spatial representation, then, is not so much an analytical tool for attending to particular themes within a source (as in the case of the other two categories) but rather a way of viewing a source – and its expressions of both spatial practice and representational space – in terms of the power it enacted over subsequent experiences of landscape. Writings about or visualizations of landscape had the potential either to reiterate or add to the existing consensus of the cultural landscape, or – in rare cases – to dramatically modify it. Whether drastic or subtle, however, Lefebvre's category of spatial representation allows the historian of landscape to view their sources as not just descriptive but also prescriptive.

The following three sections will take a selection of early modern sources and, with specific reference to the cultural landscape of mountains, will read these sources against the adapted definitions of Lefebvre's tripartite division of space above. Throughout, attention will be paid to the inter-relation of each of the three categories: although their separation is analytically productive, it is also important to acknowledge the extent to which the three categories operate in a constant feedback loop with one another.

Landscape practice

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As emphasized earlier, a significant aspect of spatial practice consists of *movement between or through spaces*. In the modern day, mountains act as barriers to movement: roads and train lines either skirt around them or, in some famous examples in the Alps, drill directly through them. Reading early modern sources for evidence of spatial practice, however, reveals that in this period mountains – or at least mountain passes – acted as important routes of communication and transport, despite the challenging nature of the landscape. Thomas Coryate (c. 1577–1617), an English courtier and self-proclaimed 'leg-stretcher' (walker) travelling in Savoy in 1608, crossed the Mont Cenis pass (2,081 m high), and commented upon the twisting yet crowded nature of the path:

> …the [ways] were wonderfull hard, all stony and full of windings and intricate turnings, whereof I think there were at least two hundred before I came to the foot. Stil I met many people ascending, and mules laden with carriage, and a great company of dunne kine [cattle] driven up the hill with collars about their neckes[.][9]

Accounts such as Coryate's provide evidence for a most basic point of spatial practice – that travellers and herdsmen alike passed through the mountain landscape.

Other sources, in particular Josias Simler's *Description of the Alps* (1574) reveal the more complex web of local spatial practice which maintained such paths and passes. A Swiss theologian and historian, Simler set out to describe the 'passes which are frequently used in the Alps', alongside 'the difficulties and dangers which await travelers who traverse them, and the manner in which they successfully conquer their difficulties'.[10] In so doing, he revealed a significant level of local activity invested in maintaining the mountain paths and passes. This activity included cutting paths in the rock, constructing bridges across small chasms, and even creating 'suspended pathways' out of timber along sheer mountain faces. Regular work was required to ensure that the passes remained open, as Simler reported:

> in order to assure the passability of the route, the neighboring residents are compelled by the local magistrates to maintain the path…almost every day the men of the neighboring villages on each side of the slope explore the

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> path towards the col, and if they see any danger they warn the travellers and repair the path.[11]

Sometimes local farmers would bring their cattle up to the snow-line – with a long pole dragging behind them – to help clear the path, and merchants with urgent deliveries to make might hire additional labourers to clear snow. The spatial practice of utilizing mountain passes for travel and trade was not incidental or easy: it was deliberately and laboriously maintained.

Moreover, people who inhabited or spent time among mountains were clearly both conscious of the risks presented by their environment and how best to ameliorate them. Simler noted that 'a great number of cows and horses are herded over the transalpine regions from Switzerland to Germany to Italy' – a circumstance which sometimes resulted in multiple herdsmen using the same path simultaneously.[12] Fortunately, etiquette dictated how such meetings should be safely managed: herdsmen either paused in pre-arranged spots, for example on a plateau, to enable safe passage for two herds, or followed 'rules which determine which of the two groups can stay on the path, and which must yield the right of way'.[13]

Simler likewise makes it clear that those who dwelt amidst the mountains took care to guard against avalanches: being careful not to build their homes beneath steep slopes, and moving quickly, quietly, and early in the morning when 'forced to make a journey in avalanche conditions'. In turn, these locals would 'warn…travelers of the precautions they should take' and, when news of an avalanche is raised, 'the mountain people ask themselves immediately if any travelers had set out that day, and calculating the elapsed time, they can guess where they were buried by the snow', and dig for their rescue.[14] Once again, early modern Europeans, in Simler's account, did more than passively live and move amidst mountains: they adapted to them and had formalized practices in place to respond to potentially dangerous situations.

The risks of the mountain environment were not without their reward. The cattle driven to market, to the economic benefit of the communities who raised them, were frequently at the

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centre of vertical transhumance practices, which saw the movement of cattle to higher grazing lands in summer to allow lower slopes to produce crops.[15] Travelling in the warmer months, Thomas Coryate admired the sight of just such ‘goodly corne fields’ located in ‘wonderfull steepe places’, and spent a long time wondering at the ability of the farmers to bring their ploughs to such high ground. He finally concluded that the Alpine farmers must ‘set their corner with their hands’, just as he had observed in certain places in England during the course of his domestic travels.[16] This offers not only another example of the adaptation of local practice to the mountain environment, but also highlights the fact that the spatial practice of local communities – i.e., cultivation – had a real and visible effect on the landscape. The mountain-dwellers of early modern France and Switzerland both understood their environment and were able to use and even shape it according to their needs.

The spatial practice of elite travellers such as Coryate – to whom the mountains represented a highway between destinations, or occasionally destinations in themselves – also presented the possibility of financial gain. Simler drily reported that whilst some Alpine-dwellers planted poles in the snow to indicate safe routes for travellers, ‘most of the time they neglect to do this, to force the travelers who don’t know the route to hire their services’.[17] Coryate himself fell victim, against his best efforts, to the money-earning instincts of Savoyard locals when climbing what he called ‘the Mountaine Aiguebelette’, a pass leading towards Chambery. Uncomfortable on a horse, Coryate decided to walk the pass, but soon found himself in the company of ‘Certaine poor fellowes which get their liuing especially by carrying men in chairs from the toppe of the hill to the foot thereof’. Sighting a potential sale, the chair-bearers began to increase their pace, until the ‘Odcombian Leg-Stretcher’, afraid of having to choose between a heart attack and losing sight of the people who knew the way up the mountainside, gave in and engaged their services.[18]

These insights – the result of an attention to traces of ‘landscape practice’ in just two textual sources – are all relatively quotidian and preliminary; people droved, farmed, and knew how to avoid avalanches among the Alps of the 16th and 17th centuries. At the same time, these are precisely the types of details which are easily lost, particularly when dealing with the early modern period. The textual sources which survive are almost exclusively produced by individuals who – by virtue of their privilege in writing, publishing, and having their texts

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distributed widely enough to be preserved – were de facto members of an elite representing only a very small percentage of the population of their given society. Approaching these sources with Lefebvre's category of spatial practice, and the simple questions of what they reveal about how people – not just the author, but the members of the local communities which they passed through – used and moved among the mountains allows the historian to reveal a more diverse range of landscape experience.

The representational space of mountains

Representational space, as noted above, is an abstract but immensely meaningful category, and offers a valuable tool for analyzing and articulating the complex accretions of cultural meaning, symbolism, and memory which overlay experiences of the 'physical landscape'. It can lead the historian to ask an important set of questions: What associations, ideas, and meanings were associated with particular features of the landscape? Were certain exemplars of that feature (whether a river, a mountain, or a cave) assigned particular cultural prominence? What characteristics would people naturally tend to think of when imagining a certain landscape feature – whether or not all exemplars of that feature display those characteristics at all times? How, in turn, do these aspects of the representational space of mountains impact spatial practice?

To apply these questions to the modern representational space of mountains, one might say that mountains are generally associated both with ideas of the sublime, and with the spatial practice of mountaineering – a practice itself tied up in abstract ideas of heroism and of 'coming first'.[19] The most famous mountain in the world is inarguably Mount Everest, a peak itself layered with representational associations – its name points uncomfortably to the Great Trigonometric Survey of India, and the whole imperial project behind it, whilst countless books, photographs, and films memorialize significant ascents of the peak, and above all Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay's 'first ascent' in 1953. In terms of characteristics – although small, summery, and grassy mountains exist just as much now as they did in the 17th century – the modern representational vision of mountains which looms largest is of remote, austere, snow-topped, rocky peaks, photographed in dazzling blue colour and

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adorning a glossy magazine or book cover. Modern spatial practice in turn responds to this compelling representational space, with increasing numbers of hopeful climbers arriving at Everest Base Camp each year, and visitors to less vertiginous mountains seeking out a quiet 'wilderness' which is in fact the subject of careful curation.[20]

These observations point towards the questions which need to be asked in order to understand the early modern representational space of mountains: What specific peaks were most often on the pens of writers, and what distinguished them from others – their height, or something else? What names and stories came to mind when looking at the peaks? How did artists choose to depict mountains – in what shades, tones, and in what contexts? What characteristics came most often to the pens of authors seeking to capture the mountain landscape? How, in turn, did this affect spatial practice in terms of the mountains which elite travellers sought to visit?

One particularly helpful source for providing some preliminary answers to these questions, Joshua Poole's 1657 *English Parnassus*, takes the form not of a travel account but rather of a '*Helpe to English Poesie*': a guidebook for aspiring poets as to the best words, phrases, and ideas to draw upon when writing poetry about different subjects. The book itself was named after a mountain: Mount Parnassus, in Greece, the legendary home of the Muses and thus a prominent metaphor for poetic skill and inspiration. Further classically significant mountains loom large in the extracts cited by the *Parnassus* as excellent examples for young poets to follow: they might choose to write about the 'Scythians snowie mountains on whose top/Prometheus growing liver feeds the Crop'; 'the top of snowy Aldigus'; 'Pindus frozen toppes'; 'Atlas pillars'; 'Athos Mount', and many more.[21] A simple list under '*Hill*' suggests that the poet turn their thoughts to 'Athos, Atlas, Haemus, Rhodope, Ismarus, Eryx, Cithaera, Taurus, Caucasus, Alps, Appenine, Oeta, Tmolus, Aetna. Parnassus, Othrys, Cynthus, Mimas, Dyndimus, Mycale, Pelion, Pindus, Offa, Olympus, Helicon, Ida'.[22] It is apparent that the classical mountains of Parnassus, Pindus, and Helicon were, in fame, the Mount Everest, Mont Blanc, and Eiger of the early-17th century.

These names – and the locations which they represented – were potent because they were imbued with memory, whether of mythical or 'real' events. In the introduction to his

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Crudities, Coryate prominently included a translation of an oration on travel written by Hermann Kirchner, a German professor of history, poetry, and rhetoric. The oration highlighted the benefits that foreign travel offered to young gentlemen. One of Kirchner's justifications of travel offers what could be read as an assertion of the rich representational space of the mountain landscape:

> What I pray you is more pleasant, more delectable unto a man then to behold the height [*sic*] of hilles…to admire *Hercules* his pillers? to see the mountaines Taurus and Caucasus? to view the hill Olympus, the seat of *Jupiter*? to pass ouer the Alpes that were broken by *Annibals* Vinegar? […] to visite Parnassus and Helicon, the most celebrated seats of the Muses? Neither indeed is there any hill or hillocke, which doth not containe in it the most sweete memory of worthy matters: there shalt thou see the place where *Noahs* Arke stood after the deluge: there were God himself dwelt, and promulged his eternall law amongst the thunders and lightnings […].[23]

In advocating for what might be termed a form of mountain tourism, Kirchner emphasised the very idea inherent to modern-day scholarly ideas of the cultural landscape: that a feature of the landscape is more than just a physical landform, but is in fact the sum of its imaginative associations. The associations that carried most weight in 17th-century Europe were those drawn from the classical and Scriptural pasts.

Travellers to 'famous' mountains, then, arrived with preconceptions and ideas already in mind. The representational space of a particular peak, however, could also be constructed for visitors at the point of experience when engaging with local traditions or stories. Thomas Coryate dedicated several pages to his discussion of what he called 'Roch Melow' (now known as Rocciamelone or Rochmelon, 3,538 m), 'said to be the highest mountain of all the Alpes, sauing one of those that part Italy and Germany'. He first admired its height, and the visual illusions this lent it: 'it is covered with a very Microcosme of clowdes' and 'seemeth farr off to be three or four little turrets or steeples in the air'.[24] His experience of its visual aspect was in turn overlain by its representational aspect. He and his travelling companions had been under the care of a conductor from Lyons to Turin, and this man related a 'pretty

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history' of the mountain. The story told of 'a notorious robber' who, experiencing remorse for his sins, acquired a pair of pictures, one of the Virgin Mary and one of Christ, and took these to Rocciamelone, promising 'to spend the remainder of his life in fasting and prayer, for expiation of his offences to God, upon the highest mountaine of the Alpes'. The hapless sinner, however, had chosen the wrong mountain, but luckily 'two pictures more of Christ and our Lady appeared to him', and miraculously gave him to understand that he would need to remove to a different peak in order to fulfil his vow.[25] Representational space was therefore not only revealed and replicated in the elite writings of professors of German rhetoric, but was also the product of local, oral tradition. (Notably, and perhaps hinting at the durability of representational space, an adapted version of Coryate's 'pretty history' is still attached to Rocciamelone to this day).[26]

As noted above, the different categories of Lefebvrian space, whilst helpful to consider in isolation, are closely interwoven. As urged by Kirchner, representational space could inform spatial practice, with travellers making journeys to specific peaks due to the religious or classical associations with them. Travellers in the Holy Land in the 17th century went to great lengths to physically engage with the 'sweete memory of worthy matters'. In February 1668, the traveller Jean de Thévenot (1633–1667) ascended Mount Catherine (2,629 m), a journey which took 'near three Hours' and followed a route 'full of sharp cutting Stones, and many steep and slippery places to be climb'd up, that hinder people from going fast'.[27] After stopping at a basin filled by a spring which had, according to tradition, spouted to slake the thirst of the exhausted monks who had carried the body of St Catherine down the mountain, Thévenot and his companions ascended to the dome under which the body of the saint had allegedly been placed by angels. Although Thévenot was dubious of a tradition which identified depressions in the rock with the miraculous impression of her body (he thought them more likely to 'hath been done by the Hands of Men'), he paid his devotions at the spot before descending 'with a great deal of trouble'.[28] Two months later, he visited Mount Quarantine (350 m), where – according to representational space, at least – Jesus had been tempted by the devil. Thévenot spoke of the stages of ascending the mountain in terms of the Scriptural events associated with specific spots: whilst his companions, more insouciant than he in the face of the slippery rock path, 'went up to the top of all the Hill, to the place where the Devil carried our Lord', he chose to remain at a cave 'where our Lord fasted forty

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days'.[29] Whether the physical markers of significance were man-made or not was irrelevant to Thévenot: the sites he visited still bore the representational impressions of saints and saviours.

Classical associations were just as potent as religious ones. William Lithgow, a Scottish pilgrim en route to the Holy Land, admired the sight of Mount Parnassus, 'which is of a wondrous height, whose top euen kiss the Clouds'. His account turned immediately to 'the nine *Muses*' and the symbolism of the physical landscape, with its two 'sterile' tops, the one 'dry and sandy, signifying that Poets are always poore, and needy', the other 'barren, and rocky, resembling the ingratitude of wretched, niggardly Patrons', and the rich 'vale between the tops… which painefull Poets, the *Muses* Plow-men, so industriously manure'.[30] The sight of Mount Etna, another mountain famed in classical mythology as (among other things) the home of Vulcan's forge, inspired similar flights of literary fancy from Lithgow's pen. On arriving in Messina, he encountered an old friend, and as a symbol of his affection composed a stirring sonnet on the volcano: '*High bends thy force, through midst of* Vulcans *ire*, / *But higher flies my sprit, with wings of loue*…'.[31] Classical and mythological associations provided the focal point for both the traveller's gaze, and for his recounting of what he saw. The literary scholar Cian Duffy terms this experience of the landscape of Italy as 'classic ground', emphasizing 'the extent to which it is all but impossible for an educated traveller to have a disinterested aesthetic response to a landscape or an environment which has long possessed a range of specific historical and cultural associations'.[32] Representational space did more than inform spatial practice related to mountains; it also informed the experience of them, and in turn the way in which they were represented for subsequent readers.

Landscape re-presentation

The hyphen in the subheading above is not accidental. Adapting Lefebvre's concept of 'spatial representation' – a category linked with urban space and the enaction of power through documents of bureaucracy such as town plans – to the study of the premodern landscape requires more divergence from the original definition than in the case of spatial practice and representational space. Where the other two categories promote a new way of reading the

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content of historical sources of landscape (with attention either to practice or symbolic associations), I argue that the category of spatial re-presentation can best be understood as a way of considering the extent to which those sources themselves either reiterated existing ideas or values of landscape or promoted new or divergent ones. The category therefore takes a step back from close engagement with a piece of source material, and instead considers it in the context of wider discourses regarding landscape. Did a given source either reiterate the existing cultural consensus regarding a particular landscape feature, or did it *re*-present the landscape in a new light?

This theme is particularly relevant in the case of attitudes towards mountains in (published) 17th-century British discourse. Readers familiar with the traditional historiography of Western mountain engagement may well have found themselves surprised by references in the preceding pages to sources which expressed admiration for mountains and revealed travellers climbing peaks. The traditional narrative states that before the 18th century – before the development of ideas of 'the sublime' and before the first ascent of Mont Blanc in 1786 and the subsequent explosion of mountaineering as a sport – people generally feared and avoided mountains and found them to be visually ugly. One source prominently cited as an example of this 'typical' early modern attitude is Thomas Burnet's *Theory of the Earth* (1684).[33] Burnet, a British natural philosopher, set out the theory that mountains were the result of the Flood, or Deluge, which had split open the smooth shell of the original earth and caused the irregular form of continents and mountains to arise and the seas to fill the spaces in between them. As such, mountains should not be viewed as part of God's design, but rather as a memorial of the sinfulness of mankind which prompted the cataclysm.[34] One of the observations at the root of Burnet's theory was his sense that mountains, although undeniably grand in stature, were 'shapeless and ill-figur'd', and characteristic of 'a World lying in its rubbish'.[35]

Such stark critique of the mountain landscape is nowhere to be found in Lithgow's dizzy sonnet on Mount Etna, or in Coryate's high turrets of Rocciamelone. The *English Parnassus*, offering a list of epithets that the aspiring poet might wish to use when invoking the figure of a mountain, suggests that a mountain could be anything from 'mossie', 'hoary', 'aged', and 'pathless' to 'stately', 'lovely', and 'star-brushing', but never shapeless.[36] By contrast, four

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years after the publication of Burnet's *Theory*, the traveller John Dennis looked at the Alps and saw 'vast, but horrid, hideous, ghastly Ruins'.[37] Daniel Defoe, in his *Tour Thro' the Whole Island of Great Britain*, looked upon the landscape of Derbyshire as 'a Confirmation' of Burnet's theory of the 'great Rupture of the Earth's Crust or Shell'. The Lake District was 'the wildest, most barren and frightful' place he had ever seen, and the peaks of Scotland were indubitably 'hideous'.[38]

Lefebvre's concept of spatial representation offers, I argue, the analytical framework to understand and the vocabulary to explain this apparent *volte face* in British attitudes towards mountains from the 17th through to the early-18th centuries. For most of the 17th century, spatial re-presentation with regards to mountains largely took the form of replication of longstanding cultural ideas and values, which found both representational memory and visual pleasure in mountains. Burnet, in 1684, offered a re-presentation which represented a revolution in attitudes towards mountains. This radical re-presentation, naturally, evoked controversy: numerous scholars and clergymen wrote in protest against his *Theory*, arguing that the utility and beauty of mountains demonstrated that they were the original creation of God.[39] However, Burnet's vision of mountains slowly gained traction, and indeed provided the intellectual basis for new articulations of the mountain landscape as 'sublime': horrifying, but marvellous. John Dennis, predating similar eighteenth-century articulations of sublimity by some decades, experienced 'a delightful Horrour, a terrible joy' at the sight of Burnet's ruins.[40] Each source cited in this chapter offers a re-presentation of mountains; the only difference between them and Burnet's representation is that his changed discourse, rather than simply reproducing it. In both cases, however, the sources still enacted rhetorical power over space. Kirchner's oration contributed to a discourse of the classically and scripturally significant representational space of mountains, and in turn encouraged spatial practices which incorporated significant mountains in travellers' itineraries. Burnet's *Theory* became part of the representational space of mountains which Dennis and Defoe took with them on their travels and informed the nature of their aesthetic experience.

Each of Lefebvre's categories of space encourages the historian to ask specific and valuable questions. A generic reading of his category of spatial representation, divorced from the context of 20thcentury urban planning, asks the historian to consider whether and how

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certain sources have power to control space in all of its aspects. I therefore argue that an interpretation which encourages an awareness of the potential power of all sources – however apparently descriptive they may be in the first instance – to prescribe space is not a misinterpretation or warping of Lefebvre's category of spatial representation but rather an important expansion of it. The concept of landscape re-presentation allows the historian to consider how the sources themselves reshaped the landscape, and in turn reshaped subsequent spatial practice and representational space. In most cases, re-presentations of landscape follow the extant consensus (just as the domestic architect would rarely break with established tradition and place the kitchen on the top floor of a three-storey house), and thus their enaction of power is virtually invisible. In other cases, they break with tradition, and – in even fewer cases – those breaks promote a new consensus. Spatial representation thus enables the historian to trace the evolution and revolution of ideas of landscape through time.

Conclusion

Many of the above discussions may seem, once all is said and done, quite unsurprising: of course mountain passes were used as routes of transport and travel, of course a mountain is experienced through its stories as well as its physical stature, and of course historical sources, in their own time, shaped as well as described attitudes. If the reader is unawed by these insights, then that is quite as it should be, for the true value of Lefebvre's tripartite model of space lies in its simplicity. It divides an inchoate concept into three manageable categories, categories which in turn draw the historian's attention to specific features of the sources they study. The model prompts simple questions with revealing answers: what does this source tell us about the use of space? What ideas, values, or stories did people associate with that space? How did this source replicate or reimagine the extant discourse or cultural consensus relating to that space – or, more simply, what power did this source enact over subsequent spatial practice and experience?

In the case study above, I have demonstrated that an application of Lefebvre's tripartite division of space to the question of the experience of mountains in early modern Europe

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reveals a multi-faceted story of mountain engagement and appreciation. The spatial practice of local Alpine communities incorporated a keen awareness of the dangers of the mountain landscape and how best to ameliorate them, as well as an ability to benefit economically both from the landscape and from the practices of elite travel which it promoted. The representational space of mountains, both in literary allusion and in the moment of physical encounter, was continuously overlain by memories of the classical and scriptural past. Although dealt with only briefly, the spatial re-presentation of mountains in the early modern period saw a long period in which positive responses to the mountain were replicated for many decades before a new representation, depicting mountains as symbols of mankind's sinfulness, came to the fore and shaped subsequent discourses.

I believe that Lefebvre's three categories of space have a great deal of potential as analytical tools for the study of the history of landscape. The strength of the concept of 'representational space', in particular, is highlighted by its similarity to other attempts to capture the metaphysical nature of landscape in human experience, such as 'cultural landscape' or 'classic ground'. The difference with representational space is that it brings company: the spatial practice which can in turn be shaped by the cultural prominence of certain landscapes, and the understanding of sources as spatial re-presentations which have the power to reiterate or redefine the values and ideas associated with a specific landscape feature. The exploration above has only scratched the surface of the insights into landscape which the application of a Lefebvrian model of space has to offer.

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[1] Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith, Oxford: Blackwell, 1991, p.33.

[2] These include archaeological, anthropological, ecocritical, cognitive, and phenomenological approaches (or a combination thereof).

[3] John Leighley (ed.), *Land and Life: A Selection from the Writings of Carl Otwin Sauer*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1963, pp. 321, 343.

[4] W.G. Hoskins, *The Making of the English Landscape,* London: Hodder and Stoughton, 2006 (first published 1955), pp. xvii, xxiii, 4.

[5] Denis Cosgrove, *Social Formation and Symbolic Landscape*, London: Croom Helm, 1984, pp. 1–4.

[6] These questions are explored in depth in my PhD thesis: *Re-thinking Mountains: Ascents, Aesthetics, and Environment in Early Modern Europe*, University of St Andrews, 2016.

[7] See Andy Merrifield, *Henri Lefebvre: A Critical Introduction*, London and New York: Routledge, 2006, pp. 99–120; Sue Middleton, *Henri Lefebvre and Education: Space, History, Theory*, London and New York: Routledge,

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2014, pp. 10–11; and Richard White, 'What is Spatial History?', *The Spatial History Project*, February 2010, pars. 7–10. Available https://web.stanford.edu/group/spatialhistory/cgi-bin/site/pub.php?id=29 (accessed 4 July 2017).

[8] See also Despina Stratigakos's chapter on architectural drawings and the floorplans of Hitler's Berghof.

[9] Thomas Coryate, *Coryat's Crudities Hastily Gobbled up in Five Moneths Trauells in France, Sauoy, Italy* [etc.], London: W. S., 1611, p. 80.

[10] Josias Simler, 'Vallesiae et Alpinum descriptio', in Alan Weber (ed. and trans.), *Because It's There: A Celebration of Mountaineering from 200 B.C. to Today*, Lanham: Taylor Trade Publishing, 2003, p. 22. Weber's is a translation of a portion of Josias Simler, *De sedunorum thermis et aliis fontibus medicates de Alpibus commentarius Vallesiae description*, Zurich: excudebat Christophh II Froschaur, 1574.

[11] Simler, 'Vallesiae', p. 25.

[12] Ibid., p. 23.

[13] Ibid., p. 23.

[14] Ibid., p. 26.

[15] For wider transhumance practices, see Albert Bil, *The Shieling, 1600–1840: The Case of the Central Scottish Highlands*, Edinburgh: John Donald Publishing, 1990; Jesper Larsson, 'Labor Division in an Upland Economy: Workforce in a Seventeenth-Century Transhumance System', *The History of the Family* 19, 2014, 393–410.

[16] Coryate, *Crudities*, p. 72.

[17] Simler, 'Vallesiae', pp. 24–5.

[18] Coryate, *Crudities*, pp. 69–70.

[19] Peter Hansen, *Summits of Modern Man: Mountaineering after the Enlightenment*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2013, has articulated the concept of 'the summit position' – the myth of the individual alone and first upon the summit – as an outgrowth of the intertwined phenomena of modernity and mountaineering.

[20] William Cronon, 'The Trouble with Wilderness, or: Getting Back to the Wrong Nature', in id. (ed.), *Uncommon Ground: Rethinking the Human Place in Natur*e, New York and London: W.W. Norton, 1995, pp. 69–90, has emphasized that wilderness is 'quite profoundly a human creation', both metaphorically and physically.

[21] Joshua Poole, *The English Parnassus, or: A Helpe to English Poesie*, London: printed for Thomas Johnson, 1657, pp. 343–4 [sigs. Cc5r-v].

[22] Poole, *English Parnassus*, p. 345 [sig. Cc6r].

[23] Coryate, *Crudities*, C6r.

[24] Ibid., pp. 78–9.

[25] Ibid., pp. 79–80.

[26] A story of which Coryate's one is an evident cousin shapes the modern-day representational space of Rocciamelone: modern-day guidebooks and newspaper articles relate that the first ascent of the mountain was made by a knight, Bonifacius Rotarius of Asti, who carried an image of the Virgin to the summit in gratitude for his safe return from the crusades. Jonathan Trigell, 'High School: Mountaineering in Chamonix', *The Guardian*, 26 July 2008; 'L'alpinismo? È nato sul Rocciamelone', *La Stampa*, 30 July 2008; Brendan Sainsbury, *Hiking in Italy*, Franklin: Lonely Planet, 2010, p. 26.

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[27] Jean de Thévenot, *The Travels of Monsieur de Thevenot into the Levant*, London: H. Clark, 1687, p. 168.

[28] Ibid., p. 168.

[29] Ibid., p. 197.

[30] William Lithgow, *The Totall Discourse, of the Rare Aduentures, and Painefull Peregrinations of Long Nineteene Yeares Trauayles from Scotland*, London: Nicholas Okes, 1632, pp. 118–9.

[31] Lithgow, *Totall Discourse*, p. 397.

[32] Cian Duffy, *The Landscapes of the Sublime, 1700–1830: Classic Ground*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013, p. 9.

[33] See, for example, Marjorie Hope Nicolson, *Mountain Gloom and Mountain Glory: The Development of the Aesthetics of the Infinite*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1959; and Robert Macfarlane, *Mountains of the Mind: A History of a Fascination*, London: Granta Books, 2003, pp. 22–65.

[34] Thomas Burnet, *The Theory of the Earth: Containing an Account of the Original of the Earth, and of all the General Changes Which it hath Already Undergone, or is to Undergo, Till the Consummaton of all Things*, 2 vols., London: R. Norton for Walter Kettilby, 1697.

[35] Burnet, *Theory*, pp. 145–6 and pp. 110–1.

[36] Poole, *English Parnassus*, p. 137 [sig. K5r].

[37] John Dennis, *Miscellanies in Verse and Prose*, London: James Knapton, 1683, p. 139. See Nicolson, *Mountain Gloom*, pp. 276–89.

[38] Daniel Defoe, *A Tour Thro' the Whole Island of Great Britain, Divided into Circuits or Journies*, 3 vols., London: G. Strahan et al., 1724–7, 3:58–59, 223–224, and 216–221 (second pagination).

[39] The generally positive early modern attitude towards mountains, and the virulent responses to Burnet, are explored in more depth in my PhD thesis, cited above, and summarised in Dawn Hollis, 'Rethinking Mountain Gloom', *Alpinist* 57, 2017, 101–4.

[40] Dennis, *Miscellanies*, p. 134.

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