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Conservation de la nature : quel rôle pour les sciences
sociales ?

« Used » Landscape's Cultural Heritage Contra « Virgin » National Nature

*Les paysages comme patrimoine culturel « de seconde main » face au territoire
naturel national « vierge »*

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Les paysages comme patrimoine culturel « de seconde main » face au territoire naturel national « vierge »

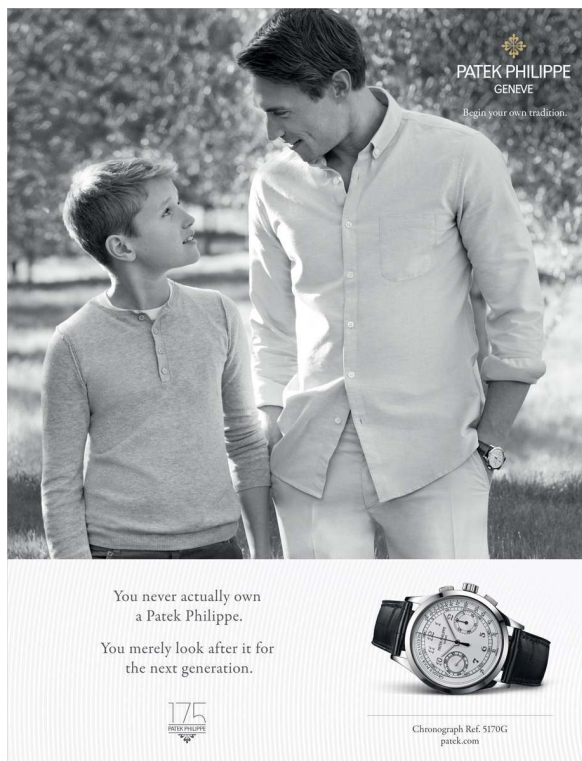
Kenneth R. Olwig

« Used » heritage and time

- 1 Heritage is by nature « used ». Heritage is a form of inheritance from previous generations through time, and what makes this heritage particularly valuable, as in the case of an heirloom, is that it has been used by people to whom one feels attachment – as in the case of my grandfather's Elgin watch, which I wear on special occasions. The idea of heritage is usually attached to something material or immaterial, which has been used by people in the dictionary sense of « valued objects and qualities such as cultural traditions, unspoiled countryside, and historic buildings that have been passed down from previous generations » (NOAD 2005 : heritage). Heritage is thus concerned with things that *matter*, in that they are both generated by a previous generation (the word *matter* derives from the Latin *mater*, meaning mother) and a subject for discourse in-so-far as a *matter*, as in a court of law, is something of importance to be discussed (NOAD 2005 : matter)¹.
- 2 How heritage matters is cleverly illustrated by the watch advertisement that famously proclaims: « You never actually own a Patek Philippe. You merely look after it for the next generation² » (Figure 1). What apparently makes this material thing valuable, thus, is not its monetary value (because you do not actually own it and therefore cannot sell it), but its identification with those in the previous generations who used and cared for it previously. In this way a notion of generational continuity, and the resources to sustain that continuity (symbolized by the time piece), is preserved. This no doubt well-made and long-lasting watch has, of course, monetary value, but family *custom* deems that you do

not actually own it. « Custom » is meant literally here because custom, which is an important foundation of law, is also by *nature* something that is inherited from the past. Custom is based upon past practice, or use, and it establishes a precedent for future practice by establishing *use* rights. The watch advertisement thus implies that the Patek Philippe watch is customarily handed down from one generation to the next as a kind of birthright which, in turn, establishes the next generation's right to use it until it is time to pass it on. The term *nature* is also meant literally because the idea of nature is closely tied to that of birth, the prefix « nat » deriving from the Latin *nasci*, meaning *birth* (Williams 1980). It is thus a natural birthright to use, take care of, and pass down one's Patek Philippe to the next generation, but it would be *unnatural* to sell it. The word *nature* is here used in a normative sense, and it is perhaps the most powerful normative word in the language (*Ibid*). Here again, there is a link to custom, which in Latin is *mores*, the root of morality. There is thus a certain implication that it would not only be unnatural not to pass one's well cared for Patek Philippe onto the next generation, but that it is a symbol of one's moral fiber that one maintains the sustainability of the things that are to be inherited by the next generation.

Figure 1 : Patek Philippe watch advertisement



You never actually own a pastoral wooded commons

- 3 From the era of classical Greece and Rome up until the dawn of the modern industrial era the concept of nature was not generally tied to concrete things, landscapes and environments, but, as will be seen, to the natural principles that give birth to life (Olwig 1993). These principles were symbolized by the pastoral landscape, which was seen to reflect the first « pastoral » stage of human society when people learned to tame herd

animals (notably sheep) and to open clearings in the forest where the animals could graze in shaded glens, forming human communities (and human communality with domesticated animals) that shared the wooded pastures that the pastoralists created together with their herd animals. Prior to this people were believed to have lived as individual wild beasts that acted in an « unnatural » way because they had not learned to cooperate in natural human communities, but instead were effectively animals, not humans. The pastoral stage was thus seen to be the « natural » original stage of society, and the foregoing « wild » state was seen to be « unnatural ». This pastoral landscape ideal, which predominated through to the enlightenment, and which is still powerful today, is reflected in the following statement by the English art critic and social thinker John Ruskin in which he describes the ideal classical environment in terms of the pastoral landscape which includes grass, open woodlands and water:

Classical artists shrank with dread or hatred from all the ruggedness of lower nature – from the wrinkled forest bark, the jagged hill-crest, the irregular, inorganic storm of the sky; taking pleasure only in such portions of the lower world as were at once conducive to the rest and health of the human frame, and in harmony with the laws of its gentler beauty. Thus, as far as I recollect, without a single exception, every Homeric landscape, intended to be beautiful, is composed of a fountain, a meadow and a shady grove (Ruskin 1904 : 234).

- 4 Ruskin is here describing the basic elements of the pastoral commons, or Arcadian, environment, which, as captured for example in the poetry of Virgil, symbolized that « natural » birth stage of humans as a cultured being (Olwig 1993). The wilderness, with its « jagged hill-crest », by contrast, symbolized a wild, savage individualistic and barbaric, *unnatural* state. As Ruskin illustrates, this kind of environment was historically associated with the natural long before the term biodiversity was coined. The grazing/pastoral environment was the primary symbol of the natural in Western art and literature up until the mid-18th century, and in some respects until the present, not only because it was associated with the birthing stage of human culture, but also because it was a symbol of health and hence sustainability because the pasture was customarily seen to be « the mother of the cultivated fields » (Olwig 1996). Without pasturage, and the resultant fertilizer, the cultivation of crops would not be sustainable. Furthermore, even though the fields might be cultivated by an individual person or family, pasture lands were often identified with lands shared by a community according to customary use rights which, like the Patek Philippe watch, could not be sold or « alienated » (Olwig 2005). This landscape was a commons, and it is this landscape, as historically managed under customary law, that inspired contemporary Nordic legislation protecting the *allemansrätt* to the open land. It is and was a shared landscape (unlike agricultural fields) identified with the sustainability and the resilience of a community, and the culture shared by that community. Whereas the individual fields were cultivated intensively with a single crop, the shared pastoral commons carried a huge variety of plant and animal species, and it was identified with resilience not just because such a variety favored a steady level of vegetative production, whatever the climatic conditions during a given growing season, but also because it was a resilient cultural landscape that could support not only grazing, but also human sports and pleasures. Agricultural fields do not support such multiple use, and dense forests are dark and difficult to negotiate. The pastoral landscape, as an environmental ideal, has thus throughout Western history, from classical times to the present been as much identified with human reproduction as with agricultural reproduction. This can be seen in Sandro Botticelli's Renaissance painting

Primavera with its dancing nubile youths, and with its approximately 500 identifiable plant species depicted in the painting, with about 190 different flowers (Fossi 1998 : 5 ; Capretti 2002 : 49) (Figure 2).

Figure 2 : Sandro Botticelli's *Primavera*



Source : http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Primavera_%28painting%29#mediaviewer/File:Botticelli-primavera.jpg

- 5 Though the concept of biodiversity had not yet been invented, even in ancient times people were aware of « the principle of plentitude », which is to say the Platonic idea that the creator saw it as being natural for the world to be populated by a plentitude of beings (Lovejoy 1973 ; Takacs 1996). The pastoral meadow and grove was thus the landscape equivalent of the Patek Philippe watch in that you never actually own it, you merely look after it for the next generation according to custom. It was a *locus amoenus* (a beautiful place) which represented, according to the literary scholar Paul Piehler, « a reconciliation of wilderness and city, the hostile powers of nature tamed but not extinguished » (Piehler 1971 : 17). It was thus in such places that the conflict between the individual desires associated with the wild and primitive and the collective needs of the community to reproduce itself met a symbolic and discursive resolution, symbolized perhaps most famously by the pastoral grove to which Odysseus returns at the end of Homer's *Odyssey*.
- 6 Generally speaking, you never actually own your rights in a pastoral commons. You merely look after them for the next generation. It is for this reason the pastoral commons has provided the inspiration for the park landscapes that typically surround the estates of the sort of people who are depicted as owning Patek Philippe watches. The pastoral landscape gardens that often surround country estates developed in England, and became popular throughout Europe, including France, at a time of enclosure in the 18th century. This was a time when common pastoralized lands, which included groves of trees as well as open grazing lands, were being turned into privately owned cultivated fields. The stylized pastoral parklands with their lawns and groves came into vogue at this time of enclosure, not only on rural estates, but also within the rising industrial cities to which

rural people were moving at the time. Today, versions of this pastoral landscape are treasured as cultural heritage in places ranging from New York's Central Park to Paris' Parc Monceau, and the lawn has become a ubiquitous element in places ranging from suburban sub-divisions to social housing. Versions of the pastoral landscape are also treasured in wilder forms in many of the world's iconic national parks such Yosemite and Yellowstone in the United States, the Cévennes in France, or the Lake District in England (Figure 3), not only for their landscapes esthetics, but by also for their biodiversity (Olwig 1996). It is this « used » landscape type, I will argue, that continues to be valued as key to the natural heritage of contemporary society, not simply because of the material, qualities of this landscape as physical thing, but also because of its cultural inheritance as a symbol of the things that people share as a « *res publica* », and which they therefore can never own, but can only pass on to the next generation.

Figure 3 : Pastoral scene from the Lake District, England, showing the heritage breed of Herdwick sheep



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Things that matter in the landscape

- 7 I still remember riding through Stockholm, at the time the country was debating joining the Common Market, in a cab driven by the proverbial talkative and informative driver, relied upon by journalists the world over as a news source. Was he especially worried that the country might eventually lose control of *Volvo* and *Saab*, or, worse yet, the ownership of *Absolute* vodka? No, what worried him was the question of how the Europeans to the south would behave in relation to the *allemansrätt*. Would they, for example, take advantage of it and misuse this right of commons to commercially exploit the holy cloudberry, or *hjordron*? This was not primarily an economic issue to the cab driver, but a

moral issue, because it was according to their use of *allemanrätt* that he measured people's moral habitus, and it was on the basis of people's moral habitus that he could judge whether or not the country would eventually be selling out its inheritance. This is a good example of what, according to the philosopher Martin Heidegger, can be called « *res publica* », meaning « not the state, but that which, known to everyone, concerns everybody and is therefore deliberated in public » (Heidegger 1971 : 176).

- 8 What is deliberated in public is « matters » or « things » – things that matter. In Latin the word for thing, Heidegger tells us, is *res*, and the Romans « called a matter for discourse *res* » (Heidegger 1971 : 176). The word thing, which is common to the Germanic languages including Swedish, originally had the same meaning as a matter for discourse, and the place where discourse concerning things was carried out was duly called a « thing ». And so it is to this day in many Nordic countries where the house of parliament is called a *ting*. The ancient Nordic *ting* was often the place where the customary law of a particular regional landscape polity was formalized as the « Landscape Law » and an important function of the *ting* would be to regulate the public use of the commons. The taxi driver with his discourse on *allemanrätt* was thus engaged in an ancient practice when he discoursed upon a thing that mattered – the *allemanrätt*, or common public right, to the open landscape by the people. Likewise, one could also argue that the ongoing debate concerning the implementation of the *European Landscape Convention* reflects this same tradition in-so-far as landscape, according to the convention is, to paraphrase Heidegger, not the state, but the landscape of places which are known to everyone, concern everybody and are therefore deliberated in public (Olwig 2007). There are, however, areas in Sweden where the *allemanrätt* does not entirely apply. These are the national parks and nature areas, and they might therefore be said to be beyond the ken of the *res publica*.

Virgin national nature

- 9 The Swedish national parks and similar protected areas are landscapes, but in a different sense than polities like Skåne or Öland are landscapes. Though the parks are valued for their properties as objects of natural scientific interest, they are particularly valued for their qualities as landscape scenery, which is identified with the nation. This is why they are « national parks » (Mels 1999 ; Mels 2002). This landscape scenery differs in significant ways from the heritage of such ancient landscape polities as Skåne and Öland. These historical landscapes were defined as the place of a polity from *the inside out*, according to the customary practices that were formalized by the institution of the *ting* at the landscape polity's core. The place of a landscape such as Skåne was thus not originally defined by a sharp boundary represented on a map, which to the north blurred into marginal woodlands, but by its core at the *ting* place³. The national park, or nature reserve, by contrast, is defined from *the outside in* as a bounded space on the map, within which it is often zoned according to its natural characteristics and the qualities of the scenic space, which unite these differing zones into a visually unified spatial whole, as well according to differing economic and social usages. Thus, whereas the practices of a community of people sharing common resources originally united the diverse environments of an historical landscape such as Skåne before it was later spatially defined as a province on the map of the state, the landscape scene of the national park is united by the spatial perception of the eye and the uniform space delineated on a map. Natural scientists have, for example, focused upon particular biodiverse environments

that are zoned for protection in natural parks and reserves, but which wind up losing their diversity if they are not subject to the grazing and mowing regimes historically characteristic of a commons. This is very different from the role of such meadows in the historical landscape of places like Öland, where a living community would regulate the meadow as part of productive and reproductive agricultural use, according to customary practices as a place which « you never actually own », and which « you merely look after ... for the next generation ». In this case community members would have a moral obligation to maintain (*håvda*) a sustainable pasture or lose their (*håvdvunna*) rights to use it, and with it their status as community members (Olwig 2008a). Reflecting the continued force of such a moral imperative one finds that people in Scandinavia are still surprisingly willing to engage in community projects to maintain such environments through community practice.⁴

- 10 The « modern » European and American conception of landscape, that was later institutionalized in the national park, had its origin, according to the philologist Chenxi Tang, in the early 19th century when the idea of landscape as national scenery was wedded to that of the territorially defined conception of the state that originated in the Renaissance (Tang 2008 ; see also Mels 1999). According to Tang:

The Peace of Westphalia (1648) ... linked sovereignty to territory, stipulating that states hold exclusive power within their territories, and thereby delegitimizing other forms of polity lacking a uniform central government and clearly defined territorial boundaries (Tang 2008 : 17).

- 11 Tang's point is illustrated by the way that the contemporaneous Swedish state, at the same time as it appropriated Skåne from Denmark, also began the process of transforming the ancient polity of Skåne into a province, or *län*, of a state which was defined, both internally and externally, by territorial boundaries as represented on a map. All of Sweden's landscape polities were transformed in this way into such provinces, or parts of such provinces. In my personal experience, however, if you ask a Swede from where he or she comes they will tend to give the name of the ancient landscape polity from which they hail, rather than that of the *län*, thus suggesting that the sense of place heritage is still tied to this landscape. To the centralizing state, however, the heritage of this landscape polity, with its own body of law founded upon custom, provided a potential source of divisive conflict to a state that sought to unify itself through the promulgation of uniform policies based upon what was known as « natural » law, which is to say eternal rational principles, like those of geometry, which are determined by « logic », as opposed to the historical heritage of custom, which was based upon inherited practice. The state thereby needed to encourage a new natural, national, landscape heritage to supersede the older identity of landscape as polity and place (Olwig 2002). Though the nation state, as it emerged in the early 19th century, according to Tang, upheld « the territorial principle to the point of sanctification », it was not:

... merely interested in claiming sovereignty over a quantifiable territorial space and utilizing this space optimally It also endowed the territory with a symbolic quality that it took to be the source of the cultural and spiritual identity of the nation. The territory ceased to be merely a physical space, but assumed in addition the status of a primeval ground that brought forth and nurtured national culture and history (Tang 2008 : 17).

- 12 According to Tang the medium through which the territory was embodied with these qualities was that of landscape scenery as utilized by internationally influential German

geographers, such as Alexander v. Humboldt and Carl Ritter, to represent the land as a scenic wild natural stage upon which the national culture organically grew.

- 13 Landscape as a form of scenic spatial representation developed in the Renaissance, as Denis Cosgrove has taught us, out of the techniques of cartography which, through a change of projection, allowed people to represent space through the illusion of central point perspective (Cosgrove 1984). I have shown how the map and the scenic landscape representation was vital to the legitimization of the early centralized state (Olwig 2002). Tang adds further insight by providing an analysis of how early 18th century geography (re)linked the scenic concept of landscape to the globe, and to cartographic scale. Humboldt wished to gain an overview of: « the physical phenomena of the globe, and the simultaneous action of the forces that pervade the regions of space », while Ritter hoped to grasp: « the totality of the general laws governing all the basic and main types of the inanimate as well as the animate surface of the earth » (quoted in Tang 2008: 56). And they did this « by depicting particular portions of the earth as holistic units » which they usually called « landscapes », and which were closely linked to a parallel « landscape » pictorial tradition in the arts that viewed the national landscape as a framed perspectival space organized by the eye (Tang 2008 : 56, 57).
- 14 The landscape of the national park, as understood in terms of Tang's analysis, is not a « used » environment, as is the case with the historical material landscape of landscape politics like that of Skåne or Öland, but a virgin landscape scene. This is in part because, as Tang put it, this landscape is seen to exemplify the « primeval ground » upon which the nation state developed. It is thus, necessarily, a wild virginal nature that pre-exists the cultural landscape. In this way the virginal nature upon which national landscape is supposedly founded effectively obliterates the memory of the cultural landscape of any population, such as that of the Sami or the Native Americans (« Indians »), which might have pre-existed the settlement of the dominant modern ethnic group. Instead, the preceding population is treated as if it, and its landscape, were wild and savage, even though this was not the case. This, in turn, meant that it was now possible to present the contemporary predominant ethnic group (e.g. the Swedes or the American settlers) as having developed their civilization out of a wild primeval nature. The world's first National Parks, Yellowstone and Yosemite, were thus not wilderness, but Native American cultural landscapes, whose open woodlands and characteristic grasslands were the product of Native American hunting, grazing and agricultural practices. Nevertheless these landscapes have been treated by preservationists as if they were wild, rather than pastoral (Olwig 2008b).
- 15 The value of the nation's originally supposedly « wild » and « virgin » landscape was legitimated further by a complementary scientific interest in studying untrammelled environments in which the natural landscape, conceptualized as a holistic, organismic totality, would behave « naturally » without having been previously violated by « man », and which in the future would provide a protected laboratory for scrutiny by the scientist's eye (Mels 1999, 2002). Each national park or natural area, furthermore, could function as an organic microcosm of a larger global macrocosmic nature. The biodiversity of an individual virginal « natural » landscape that is identified and protected by preservationists in a given national park or natural area can thus be seen as a scalar component in a larger global natural whole to which this protection contributes. In this way a natural landscape becomes defined according to a uniform spatial « scale » within the uniform Euclidian space of the map, rather than according to the complex, irregular

topological conditions of a diversity of places in which interaction with human communities is often critical to its ecological character. It should be noted, however, that holism is closely aligned with centuries old concepts of the holy. Scientists such as v. Humboldt held an almost religious view of the cosmos, and this was a view shared by the landscape artists that helped inspire v. Humboldt's science. The landscape was thus identified by artists with « the perfection and omnipotence of God » (Tang 2008 : 57) who, of course, in Christian theology, conceived *His* earthly embodiment via the medium of a virgin. Geographers like v. Humboldt thus saw themselves as providing a means of reading the *Book of Nature* as if it were a Bible through which people could attain a grand and holistic view of the cosmos (Humboldt 1849-58). In this way it became possible to think of Nature as an embodiment of God, or even a substitute for God. This idea is manifest in the practice, notably in the United States, to refer to the supposedly virginal nature of the national parks as a form of sacred space (Graber 1976).

Above and beyond the *res publica*

- 16 Whereas the historical landscape identified with polities like those of Skåne and Öland was constituted through discourse concerned with things that mattered to a community sharing the resources of the place, the scenic landscape of the national park was established through the medium of science (notably geography and cartography) in collaboration with pictorial aesthetics, religious ideals and the politics of the nation state. Heidegger feared that science would have the effect of disempowering the discourse of the *res publica* as exemplified by the *things* discoursed upon at the ancient meeting of the *thing*. « Science's knowledge », according to Heidegger, « is compelling within its own sphere », but it has a tendency to obliterate the role of things as matters of discourse because it reduces them to objects exclusive to science. The discourse of natural science, in his view, carries with it: « a twofold delusion: first, the notion that science is superior to all other experience in reaching the real in its reality, and second, the illusion that, notwithstanding the scientific investigation of reality, things could still be things, which would have become manifest and would have laid claim to thought », for example as matters of discourse in the *res publica* (Heidegger 1971). More recently, inspired by Heidegger, the anthropologist and philosopher of science Bruno Latour has echoed, in books like *Politics of Nature: How to Bring the Sciences into Democracy*, the call to restore *things* to their role as matters for a broader public discourse than that narrowly inscribed by natural science (Latour 2004).
- 17 The problem to which Heidegger and Latour point can be exemplified by the case of the national parks and other natural areas. The problem is not, I would argue, just that they are administered primarily for their natural science value and the esthetic scenic landscape values of cultural elites (rather than for their democratic social value), but also that they are administered under the institutionalized hegemonic preservationist authorities, rather than the authority of a *res publica* in which science is one of a number of discursive partners. *Allemansrätt*, and the public discursive realm to which it belongs, thereby does not fully encompass the National Parks. The problem is not that natural scientists should not have an important word in the management of the parks, or the environment in general, but that preservationists have gained so much of a monopoly upon environmental discourse that other discourses tend to be shut out⁵. The situation is very different in the case of the national parks as examples of places where the human

social contribution to environmental diversity is recognized and furthered. Thus, it is characteristic that the Cevennes National Park in France, and Snowdonia National Park in Wales incorporate local and national civil society in the management process. Though this may be inefficient in some cases, in the long run it builds the community participation and identification that is necessary for a park to function properly over time as an environmental and human sanctuary.

Conclusion

- 18 The term « used » has a negative tone when used to describe, for example, an old run-down automobile. But if that automobile is of good quality, and has been lovingly cared for over the years, and thereby is able to reach an age where it can be classified as an antique, then it can become an heirloom that is valued as heritage, as in the case of a colleague who treasures driving her parents' beloved old Volvo. Likewise, when the pond on the common land at the center of our hamlet became overgrown and was drying out, and we complained to the authorities that a valuable natural habitat was turning into a muddy bed of reeds, we were told it was not valued pristine nature, but just a redundant used old water storage area that should be drained and put to good agricultural use. To the people of the hamlet, however, it was the common core of the hamlet and not something that anyone actually ever owned, or should own, but rather something that the community needed to look after for the next generation. Fortunately, there were biologists working for the municipality who agreed with our feelings about the pond and its surroundings, and who did not think that it needed to be unspoiled nature to warrant care. Together with the people of the hamlet, they helped restore the pond's flora and fauna and soon the pond was its old self, both full of fish, frogs and aquatic birds, and a pleasurable place to enjoy while walking the customary Sunday round of the hamlet with one's family. The « used » landscape's cultural heritage can also be a valued natural heritage, not the least after it has lost its virginity.

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NOTES

1. The notion of inheritance, on the other hand, is defined as to: « receive (money, property, or a title) as an heir at the death of the previous holder ». Money and the title deed to property are

abstract mediums of exchange, and thus surrogate for the material things and qualities identified with heritage.

2. The use of the Patek Philippe watch add is not intended to be an endorsement of either the product or the advertisement, but merely a reflection on the social logical and discursive power of its mode of argumentation. Patek Philippe is an age old family run business that produces quality watches according to inherited Swiss methods, as can be seen on their website, which refers directly to concepts such as « tradition » and « heritage » as well as « values » <http://www.patek.com/>. They would thus appear to live up to their slogan with regard to their company. The fly in the ointment, however, is the fact that these watches are sold at extraordinary prices that have no relation to their use value, and that the advertisements generally, if discretely, portray Patek Philippe owners as being of old wealth. Patek Philippe thus leaches upon the discourse of heritage and custom, as something « you never actually own », in order to sell something that the nouveau riche can actually buy if they spend enough money. This same sort of issue also applies, for example, to landscape heritage, where heritage properties are sold at exorbitant prices to people who hope to achieve social legitimacy through their purchase. This can lead to the creation of well-preserved environments, like that of old-town Visby on Gotland which has been bought up in many places by wealthy non-residents, and which appears in places to be a virtual ghost town during most of the year when the owners are not present.

3. Today, of course, these landscape polities are often represented on maps as having a sharp boundary line, which may or may not correspond with the area of the ancient landscape law that originally defined it. This is especially the case if the landscape has an official governmental role within the modern state.

4. The Norwegians call this practice « dugnad ».

5. This can also be seen by the predominance of natural science in research councils and universities concerned with the environment.

ABSTRACTS

Conservation, whether it be of landscape or nature, is necessarily rooted in human culture, because the perception of what is landscape, and what is nature, and why a given landscape or area of nature is important, is a human judgment. This article focuses on the cultural idea of heritage, and its role in determining why certain landscapes, conceptualized as being « natural », are conserved. It argues that « used », as opposed to « virgin », landscapes have a particular appeal because they have been preserved from generation to generation as a form of common inheritance that individuals do not own, but « merely look after it for the next generation ». To illustrate the point it takes its point of departure in a highly successful watch advertisement that uses this phrase as its slogan.

La conservation du paysage et de la nature fait nécessairement partie de la culture humaine. En effet, c'est du jugement humain que naît la perception du paysage et de la nature, mais aussi le choix de leur donner de l'importance ou non. Cet article examine la notion culturelle de patrimoine, et son rôle dans les décisions de conserver certains paysages, considérés comme « naturels ». Il soutient que des paysages « de seconde main » par opposition à « vierges », ont un intérêt spécifique puisqu'ils ont été préservés de génération en génération comme une sorte de

patrimoine commun qu'aucun individu ne possède, mais « dont on prend seulement soin pour les générations futures ». L'argument de départ pour illustrer cela est une publicité très célèbre de montre qui utilise cette phrase comme slogan.

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