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Walking the Line Between Past and Present: 'doing' phenomenology on historic battlefields

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Abstract	The purpose of the Bloody Meadows Project[1] (Carman and Carman 2006a, b, 2007, 2009) is to investigate historic battlefields of all periods, and we choose to do so from a broadly 'phenomenological' perspective. Our aim is specifically not to recreate what the battlefield was like on the day of battle or the events of that day, but rather to explore the historicity of particular kinds of places through the experience of being there.

Chapter 7
Walking the Line Between Past and Present: 'Doing' Phenomenology on Historic Battlefields

John Carman and Patricia Carman

Introduction

The purpose of the Bloody Meadows Project[1] (Carman and Carman 2006a, b, 2007, 2009) is to investigate historic battlefields of all periods, and we choose to do so from a broadly 'phenomenological' perspective. Our aim is specifically not to recreate what the battlefield was like on the day of battle or the events of that day, but rather to explore the historicity of particular kinds of places through the experience of being there.

Following Tilley (1994) and others, a phenomenological approach to the study of landscapes as taken by archaeologists has generally been limited to the monumental 'ritual' landscapes of European prehistory. The approach is, however, also of more general relevance to any encultured space, especially any marked as a particular kind of space. Tilley justifies taking a phenomenological approach to landscapes as follows:

> [What] is clear [from the ethnographic record] is the symbolic, ancestral, and temporal significance of landscape [to peoples]. The landscape is continually being encultured, bringing things into meaning as part of a symbolic process by which human consciousness makes the physical reality of the natural environment into an intelligible and socialised form.
>
> (Tilley 1994:67)

As he emphasises, the enculturation of landscape turns it from mere topography to a 'place': "Cultural markers [such as monuments or the memory of large-scale violence are used] to create a new sense of place.... An already encultured landscape becomes refashioned, its meanings now controlled by the imposition of [a new] cultural form" (Tilley 1994:208).

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[AU1]

28   The typical interpretive device in battlefield research is the battlefield plan
29 (see e.g. English Heritage 1995), which is presented as an objective view from
30 above, divorced from the action. But as Tilley also emphasises, place is not some-
31 thing that can be understood 'objectively':

32   Looking at the two-dimensional plane of the modern topographic map with sites [or artefact
33   scatters] plotted on it, it is quite impossible to envisage the landscape in which these places
34   are embedded. The representation fails, and cannot substitute for being there, being *in*
35   *place*. [The] process of observation requires time and a feeling for the place.
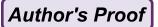
36   (Tilley 1994:75)

37   The same is true of the traditional battlefield plan: it cannot substitute for direct
38 experience nor for movement through the space. We therefore draw upon the ideas
39 of prehistoric archaeologists who are developing ways of utilising the idea that the
40 way of moving through particular kinds of spaces can be considered a form of ritual
41 or performance (Carman 1999:242; Pearson 1998). For example, Barrett writes of
42 prehistoric monuments in Wiltshire, England, that

43   for the distinctions [between people] to have operated… it was necessary for people to
44   move between these [architectural] regions; to enter and leave each other's presence,
45   to observe passively or to act, to lead processions or to follow. The practice of social life
46   is thus… performed.

47   (Barrett 1994:29)

48   Here, ritual activity is considered as a form of 'acted out' discourse (Barrett
49 1991:5; Thomas 1991 34), focusing on the physicality and (apparent) 'objectivity'
50 of actions (Barrett 1991:4–6). Participants in rituals are guided through a series of
51 specific meaningful actions, leading them to make the approved connections
52 between them (Thomas 1991:34). Taking such ideas further, Thomas (1991) and
53 Pearson (1998) argue that the focus of early Bronze Age 'beaker' burial ritual in
54 Britain was on the body of the deceased. Objects which were put into the ground
55 "constituted material signifiers whose role was to ensure that the intended reading
56 of the dead person was made by the audience [at] the funeral" (Thomas 1991:34).
57 Here, the space of the grave itself acted as the 'stage' of a theatrical performance
58 (Pearson 1998:36–37). Mourners thus became active participants in the funerary
59 ritual (Thomas 1991:39), players in the drama as well as spectators (Pearson 1998).
60 The often slow and deliberate movements of bodies of troops across the space of a
61 battlefield, frequently in defiance of common-sense, have obvious ritual conno-
62 tations. The same is true of aspects such as drill, the proper use of equipment,
63 standardised formations, and the focus on the capture of enemy standards and
64 correctly worn regalia (Keeley 1996:62–63).
65   Putting these two styles of approach together, gaining a feeling for the place as a
66 place and a focus on how one moves through it in performance, one can perhaps
67 gain a specific sense of what a particular historic battlefield represents in terms of
68 experience and meaning. The purpose of the Bloody Meadows project is thus not so
69 much an attempt to recreate what an individual battlefield was like on the day of
70 battle (or indeed the events of the battle). It is rather to establish a meaning for the

historicity of the place in the present: hence our simultaneous concern both for   71
an understanding of the nature of war in the past and preservation and public inter-   72
pretation in the present.   73

It is for these reasons that the Bloody Meadows Project looks very specifically   74
at the *kind* of place where the battle was fought. The majority of archaeologists   75
working on battlefields spend their time looking at the ground, trying to find the   76
material left behind by the action. We instead spend time looking up and around us,   77
at the shape of the space itself. A close focus on the shape of the space allows   78
differences of choice across space and through time to become evident. In taking   79
such an approach, and in being deliberately aware of both past and present in a   80
particular place, we walk the line that lies between the past and the present, where   81
neither dominates the other. Instead, they interact in interesting and challenging   82
ways. It is not a search for an experience of being in the past, but rather an experi-   83
ence *in the present* which reflects and derives from the contribution of history to that   84
place. In the case of a historic battlefield, it is not an experience of ancient slaughter,   85
but an experience of a place in the present as read through its history as manifested   86
in material form. This history inevitably includes the event of the battle that was   87
fought there, but not exclusively.   88

Investigating Battlefields as Historic Places   89

The primary data source used in the Bloody Meadows Project is the physical   90
landscape of the place where warfare was practised. Drawing upon the work of   91
previous scholars – who have identified the locations of many battlefields from the   92
past – we focus upon the landscape itself to ask specific questions (Table 7.1). The   93
answers can be ordered as set out in Table 7.2.   94

In Table 7.2, the *rules of war* cover such things as the degree of mutual agree-   95
ment needed before fighting could commence, whether the two sides were required   96
to see each other as 'legitimate' enemies or whether anyone could participate in a   97
battle, some assessment of the level of violence employed, and how (if at all) the   98
battlesite was remembered afterwards. They are a measure of how 'formal' battle   99
was regarded and how distinctive from other forms of conflict at that time.   100

The *characteristics of the battlefield landscape* are addressed in order to identify   101
features present in the battlespace and how they were used by combatants. This   102
gives some insight into attitudes to the battlefield as a place. The query as to whether   103
structured formations were present (such as ordered columns or lines of troops)   104
gives a clue to how participants moved through the battlefield space: if the landscape   105
is seen as architecture, so too can the forces engaged be seen as a kind of 'mobile   106
architecture'. The point is not merely to note those features present and used by   107
combatants, as military historians might, but also and especially those features present   108
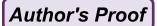but not used, and those present today but not on the day.   109

t1.1 **Table 7.1** Bloody Meadows Project: research questions

Of battlesites as historic places	Of battlesites as heritage
How clearly bounded is the battlefield space (does it have clear boundaries, such as impassable ground or a water obstacle)?	Was the battlefield subsequently marked by a monument or memorial in any way?
Is it located on high or low ground relative to the surrounding space?	If 'yes'
	Where is it in relation to the battlesite?
What kind of use (other than for war) was the site put to, if any?	What form does it take?
Is it near or distant from settlement?	Who or what does it commemorate?
Is it visible from settlement?	Who raised it?
	When was it raised?
Does the ground contain particular types of landscape features – natural or built – which play a part in the battlefield action?	Is there any indication of the specific audience it is intended to address?
What features present in the landscape (if any) played no part in the battlefield action?	What does it say about the relations of commemorator or commemoratee to the battlesite?
	Are links made with other sites or to other events?
	To what use(s) has the battlefield been put, and what is it used for today?

t2.1 **Table 7.2** Parameters for studying battlefields

Rules of war	Battlefield architecture
Agreement to fight: Y/N	Features present
Mutual recognition as "legitimate" enemies: Y/N	Type of feature used
Level of violence: High, medium, low	Type of feature not used
Marking of battle-site	Use of terrain
	As cover
	To impede visibility
	To impede movement
Participants	Structured formations: Y/N
Functional aspects	
Dysfunctional aspects	

The two final sections attempt to summarise our expectations as filtered through an understanding of 'good military practice' derived from military writings (as in the concept of "inherent military probability" discussed by Keegan (1976:33–34)). It is, we believe, the *dysfunctional* behaviour (that is, the apparent mistakes or omissions) which can give a clue to cultural attitudes and expectations of the battlefield space which differ from our own. In applying this analysis to distinctive examples of warfare from various periods, the differences between periods become evident.

In approaching the landscapes that are our object, we use what we have called 'the archaeologist's eye' – that is, the capacity of a trained landscape archaeologist

to interpret space and to identify (especially manufactured) features in landscapes 119
otherwise unfamiliar to them – to reach an understanding of the spaces of battle. 120
By approaching such sites with a structured set of questions and by recording data 121
in a standard format (Table 7.2) it becomes possible to recognise what such 122
sites have in common and how they differ from one another. This in turn allows 123
the identification of the types of location favoured as battlesites in particular periods 124
of history, and these can be related to other aspects of the battle as recorded by 125
historians – including the type of participants, the nature of the conflict of which the 126
battle is a part, and the flow of the action. Overall, it presents an opportunity to gain 127
a direct insight into the ideological factors guiding warfare practice in that period 128
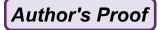and to compare them with those guiding warfare practice in a different period. 129

The Marking of Battlefields 130

Many battlefields are marked by the erection of monuments of stone or concrete 131
which are solid and enduring. Others are marked in other ways: by more ephemeral 132
signs of memory, such as the names given to places and features, or local traditions 133
which ascribe particular events to particular points in the landscape. Others again 134
are marked by the actions of officialdom in recognising the site as of particular 135
historical interest and importance: the traditional manner is to place an interpretive 136
sign at a prominent viewspot and perhaps to construct a circular walk or drive to visit 137
the locations deemed important to an understanding of the events of the battle and 138
its landscape context. Officialdom may also – as in the case of the English Heritage 139
Register – mark the site out on a map, providing it with a convenient border and 140
edge, allowing preservation and management within and less control without. 141

All such ways of marking battlesites – and others – indicate the way in which the 142
site is perceived in the present; and to whom, and in what way, it is conceived to 143
be important. The purpose of investigating these aspects of battlefields is to gain an 144
insight into the contemporary meanings ascribed to such places. The purpose of 145
combining such interests with research into the battlesite as a historic landscape in 146
its own right is to relate the two: to find out if particular kinds of historic places are 147
treated in one set of ways, while others are treated the same or differently, and to 148
what extent, by whom and for what purpose. 149

Battlefields as Cemeteries and Memorials 150

The archaeological study of monuments to the dead and how war is commemorated 151
is an area that has come to the fore in recent years (e.g. Borg 1991). Much of this 152
has focussed on monuments to the wars of the last century – especially the First and 153
Second World Wars (Winter 1995) and as part of the developing academic interest in 154
collective social memory (e.g. Connerton 1989). According to some, the memorialisation 155

156 of the dead of World War One was a process of de-personalisation at the service of
157 a sense of national unity (Parker Pearson 1982): lists of named casualties gave way
158 to monuments commemorating an anonymous 'The Glorious Dead' or simply 'The
159 Fallen'; and annual acts of remembrance denied the opportunity for a consideration
160 of the experience or purpose of war (Bushaway 1992). On the other hand, it has
161 been pointed out that the majority of war memorials constructed after World
162 War One "were initiatives which came from the people rather than the politi-
163 cians…. [Their] erection was instigated by the bereaved public" (Tarlow 1999:162–
164 163). They represented a response to the loss that had been suffered by large
165 numbers of the population and who wished to find some way of marking and coming
166 to terms with that loss. This emphasis on bereavement represents another strand to
167 some recent archaeological work: a focus not only on the physical aspects of
168 remains, but also on the emotional content of particular kinds of object (see also
169 Tarlow 1999). In looking at monuments to the dead from this point of view, the
170 question of who they were for comes particularly to the forefront and opens up a
171 sensitivity to the meanings they carry.

172 ## *Battlefield Preservation*

173 The idea of preserving battlefields as important historic places is a relatively new
174 one in Europe. The first *Register of Historic Battlefields* in Europe was produced in
175 England, and has been subject to criticism for treating such places purely as histori-
176 cal phenomena, where the primary sources are written and where the location, its
177 extent, and any physical evidence of conflict it may contain is of secondary concern
178 (Foard 2001). These concerns have been partly addressed in recent Scottish historic
179 environment policy (Historic Scotland 2009) where the archaeological potential of
180 such sites is specifically addressed, and similar initiatives in Wales and Ireland are
181 likely to follow suit. Nevertheless, in both the Scottish and English cases, the fact
182 that a battlefield is included in the *Register* should be taken into account for devel-
183 opment control purposes under relevant official guidance does not equate with full
184 legal protection in the same manner as scheduled monuments and sites. In other
185 parts of Europe, however, gaining official recognition for historic battlefields is a
186 process barely begun.

187 This situation contrasts with the position in, for example, the USA, where bat-
188 tlefields considered worthy of note are taken into full legal protection and
189 stewardship by responsible agencies under the aegis of the American Battlefield
190 Protection Program of the Federal National Park Service (American Battlefield
191 Protection Program 2009). A series of Federal laws relating to the preservation
192 and protection of historic battlefields have been passed, primarily to provide funding
193 programmes for suitable initiatives, and the most important battlesites of American
194 history – especially those from the Revolutionary and Civil wars – have been taken
195 into State care by the National Park Service under various designations.

Investigating Battlefields as Places in the Present   196

The interest of the Bloody Meadows Project in the way battlefields are subsequently   197
marked (whether soon after the battle or a considerable time later) is reflected   198
particularly in the research questions (Table 7.1).   199
We are always fully conscious that marking a site is not the only measure of   200
its importance or interest. Failure to mark a site can itself constitute a statement: 201
sometimes this will be a representation of a lack of recognition of any importance   202
or significance the site may carry for certain people, but other times a more positive   203
omission with a purpose to it. By looking closely at such sites and the monuments   204
and other marks they bear it is possible to come to an understanding of the meanings   205
they carry in our own time, which can make a contribution to the study of collective   206
memory (Connerton 1989; Foote 1997; Jones 2007).   207
These are also reflected in the purposes for which such sites are used. Battlefields   208
from the past rarely offer much in the way of an obvious physical legacy. Where   209
earthwork defences were constructed, or the fighting resulted in significant changes   210
to the shape of the land, these traces may persist to become part of later uses. In those 211
cases where archaeological investigation has been carried out, the archaeology has   212
most often consisted of human remains buried at the site. More recent research   213
has revealed the presence of scatters of material across the battlespace – most typically 214
for battles of the firearms era, bullets and bullet casings (Haecker and Mauck 1997;   215
Scott et al. 1989); for earlier periods, attachments to clothing which may have been   216
torn off in the struggle (Sutherland 2001). Since such remains are generally invisible   217
to the naked human eye, however, the landscape of such places has been seen as 'empty'   218
of archaeology and therefore available for other uses. These uses may extend to   219
the provision of park and amenity spaces, the historical significance of the location   220
giving it an extra attractiveness to visitors. At Northampton, for instance, the space   221
of the battlefield has been converted into the municipal golf course; at Quebec   222
in Canada the site of the conflict of 1759 has been used as a site of recreation   223
since the beginning of the twentieth century. Hence our reason for asking about   224
the subsequent uses of the site up to the present. From this we can ascertain the   225
various uses over time to which the space has been put – other than, or at least as well 226
as, for war making – and from this gain some insight into the meanings the level of   227
significance the place has acquired over time.   228

Choosing Sites for Research   229

The focus of the Bloody Meadows Project is upon the older and perhaps less   230
well known sites of violence in the past. We deliberately stop short of the twentieth   231
century since a wide variety of research is already being conducted into the warfare   232
of our own age (Saunders 2001; Schofield et al. 2002; Schofield 2005) and modern   233
battlefields tend to be both very large and very well promoted. In addition, twentieth   234

235 century warfare has disconcertingly extended from the surface of our globe into other
236 realms: into the air; under the sea; into the most inhospitable regions of the world,
237 such as mountain ranges, jungles, deserts, the arctic and antarctic; and even into
238 outer space. It has also gone beyond the physical into more conceptual regions:
239 into the relations of government to people (as opposed to being limited to the
240 concerns of a specific 'warrior' caste); into the realm of science and technology;
241 and, with the rise of the computer, into the so-called 'infosphere' and electronically-
242 generated cyberspace (Carman 2002). The battles of our age can be said to have no
243 limits or boundaries: they frequently cannot be seen or measured, nor physically
244 controlled. Unlike the warfare of previous ages, they do not occupy a particular
245 location but are at once nowhere and everywhere. Their understanding thus lies
246 beyond the methodology of this particular project, and we leave them to others with
247 more appropriate styles of approach.
248   In general, the purpose of battle has been held to be the achievement of some
249 kind of decision. However, as Wiegley (1991) has pointed out, the battles of the
250 era from the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries were for the most part *in*decisive.
251 What we tend to remember are those battles that can be held to be in some sense to
252 have resulted in a clear decision: for instance, by forcing a change of strategy upon
253 one side in a conflict; by closing off a military or political option during the course
254 of a conflict; or by bringing about the final defeat of one nation by another and thus
255 an end – however temporarily sometimes – to a conflict. But the majority of battles
256 do not achieve such decisiveness: instead they lead to more violence elsewhere
257 at a later time. These battles, which are more readily and more easily forgotten,
258 represent the majority of battles fought and the more typical form of battle in any
259 period of history. What their study has to tell us is less about the outcome of wars
260 and the political and social changes they engender than what war was generally
261 like in that period and how the people involved perceived and understood the role
262 of war in their lives. By focussing on such less spectacular and less historically
263 significant events we gain a different kind of insight into war in the past than from
264 much military history.

Standing in Empty Spaces

266 Historic battlefields are locations where events once took place. They are now
267 places marked by those events and accordingly of interest to students of those
268 events. To study them is to stand in a place today, dreaming of an event of yesterday,
269 an event that has passed and is gone. All one can do is stand and look, and that –
270 put simply and bluntly – is the methodology of the Bloody Meadows Project.
271 But there is more to looking than inactivity, and to look effectively one must also
272 take note and respond to the images that present themselves. That too is part of the
273 methodology of the Bloody Meadows Project.
274   For us, taking this approach means walking through the space with a keen eye to
275 the different periods of history – and different human uses of the space – represented

Fig. 7.1   Northampton Street, St Albans, Hertfordshire, England. Site of a battle in 1455

by buildings, monuments, street plans, different kinds of land-use, and different   276
shapes of ground. The result is a kind of 'time travel' – not a one-way trip into a singular   277
and particular past and back, but a real journey through various times, where   278
different pasts and an immediate present are met in juxtaposition. Places have   279
histories that are evident in the experiences of them, and it is in experiencing   280
them as places that the histories become evident. The place has meaning because   281
it has a history and that history is manifested in the material evidences of its past   282
which testify to interesting and different pasts. These material things create the   283
drama of the place which is the experience of its history in the present.   284

It is this historicity that such a 'phenomenological' approach to historic battlefields   285
can produce. In taking such an approach, and in being deliberately aware of both   286
past and present in a particular place, the line that lies between the past and the present   287
is walked, where neither dominates the other. Instead, they interact in interesting   288
[AU2]   and challenging ways, as illustrated in the following three examples (Fig. 7.1).   289

St Albans, Hertfordshire, UK, 1455   290

For the first battle at St Albans in 1455 King Henry VI gathered his forces in the   291
centre of the town, where the wide main market street, as today, was suitable   292
for the mustering of an army. The opposing army launched an attack that travelled   293
up the narrow streets towards the centre of the town. Barricades were thrown   294
down and the defenders retreated towards the town centre (Carman and Carman   295

Fig. 7.2 'Bloody Ditch', Roundway Down, Wiltshire, England. Site of a battle in 1643

2006:97–100. Some of the buildings present today were those standing on the day of battle, and passing up these streets today, you still enter the town centre quite suddenly, going from quiet residential side-streets into the bustling market area. Nearby, a new shopping precinct overlies what were household garden plots on the day of the battle. Its internal arrangement reflects the narrow alleys that criss-crossed the area in the fifteenth century: efforts to negotiate one's way around and out of this confusing space perhaps reflects the soldiers' efforts to climb over fences and through hedges. In both streets and shopping precinct, the effect is somewhat similar to that likely to have been experienced on the day of battle (Fig. 7.2).

Roundway Down, Wiltshire, UK, 1643

The landscape of Roundway Down is typical of its region in the southern part of Britain: rolling chalk downland with mostly gentle slopes although cut by steeper scarps. Roundway Hill itself is a rough isosceles triangle in shape with two long sides to north and south and the higher and broader eastern end immediately above the battlefield. To the south lies the town of Devizes, masked by a lower rise of ground, and linked by a route that climbs the steep southern slope of Roundway Hill. The land was mostly open grazing in the seventeenth century: the ploughed ground that makes up the rest of today's landscape is much more recent in origin. Roundway Down is today peaceful countryside: agricultural, tamed, gentle and empty. To see the battlefield you must walk around it and gaze at it from some distance away, for there is no right of way through it.

Fig. 7.3 The modern University at Elviña, Galicia, Spain. Site of the battle of Corunna 1809

For 2 km above the eastern end of Roundway Hill the ground rises gently, but   317
suddenly it falls almost sheer for 100 m: down this near vertical slope fleeing cavalry   318
tumbled and fell, horse and rider, unable to stop or rein in. Walkers today going   319
slowly on foot also come across it with frightening suddenness: one moment the   320
ground is flat, the next it falls away into bottomlessness, hidden by trees. What it was   321
like for fast-moving riders – the panicked screaming of horses and riders; the attempt   322
to pull up only to be pushed on by those coming from behind; the fear, confusion   323
and noise – can at least be guessed at when you are there. The bottom of the slope   324
still bears the memory of the event: it is today called the Bloody Ditch (Fig. 7.3).   325

Corunna/Elviña, Galicia, Spain 1809   326

The battle of Corunna – or as it is known locally, Elviña – was fought by a retreating   327
British army before taking ship from Spain in 1809. The contending armies were   328
formed on two parallel ridges about six kilometres south of the city, and most of the   329
fighting took place on the slopes of the higher and steeper southern ridge on which   330
the French army stood. The most fierce fighting took place in and around the village   331
of Elviña, which changed hands several times. The vernacular stone buildings of the   332
village still hug the steep slopes of the hill and the original core of the settlement   333
remains much as it must have been on the day. From within the settlement, due to   334
foreshortened lines of sight and impeding buildings, a sense of the surrounding   335

336 landscape is difficult to grasp: little can be seen except the village itself. The modern
337 Elviña church lies across the valley, providing a view of the main area where fighting
338 took place. From here it is possible to gain a good view across the flat ground of
339 the valley between the two main ridges and the arable fields occupying it. The small
340 size of the fields and the vernacular buildings set amongst them indicate little change
341 in this landscape since 1809; although on the hills above the encroachments are very
342 clear of the expanding city and especially the new University which has been built
343 specifically here because of the significance of the site in local historical memory.
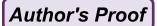
Answering Some Criticisms of Phenomenology

345 The three preceding examples are intended to emphasise that ours is not a search for
346 an experience of being in the past, but rather an experience in the present which
347 simultaneously reflects and derives from the contribution of history to a particular
348 place. In the case of a historic battlefield, it is not an experience of ancient slaughter,
349 but an experience of a particular place in the present as read through its history as
350 manifested in material form. This history inevitably includes the event of the battle
351 that was fought there – and indeed is what attracts us to explore that place – but not
352 exclusively. It is that experience of being in the place that is captured.
353 We have been accused in one review of our work of going to places so we can
354 'dream' the past (Foard 2006). This is a common charge against phenomenologi-
355 cally-derived studies in archaeology. Trigger (2006:474–475) has referred to it as a
356 'contemplative' or 'intuitive' style of archaeology reliant on assumptions about a
357 common 'human nature' and a shared bodily experience that crosses cultural bound-
358 aries. He points out that anthropology has "empirically demonstrated that cultural
359 differences are sufficiently great as to make it unlikely that [phenomenological
360 approaches] could control for ethnocentrism and produce reliable results" (Trigger
361 2006:474): he also accuses phenomenological approaches of relying upon subjec-
362 tive feeling (Trigger 2006:477).
363 By contrast, we believe that our work demonstrates the utility of an approach to
364 landscapes based upon phenomenology: moreover, by applying this approach to
365 historic landscapes we show the usefulness of the approach beyond the study of
366 prehistory. Our approach is based entirely upon the notion that those attitudes
367 towards and the expectations of landscape in the past were different from those
368 held by people in the twenty-first century: if they were not different we would have
369 nothing to say. We believe our approach seeks out and identifies those differences
370 by using an explicitly modern Western mode of investigation of space and comparing
371 it with the use of that space made by people in the past. It is from noting the manner
372 in which space, objects and landscape features are used or any failure to use them
373 as we would today that these differences emerge.
374 Where objects that were present in the past and would be available for use in the
375 present – especially for military purposes, such as facilitating or impeding movement,

for concealment or for protection – but were not used for these purposes, it can be   376
inferred that the objects were not seen as useful. This in turn indicates a measure   377
of difference between the past and the present. We also compare the uses of   378
space in one historical period from those of another, revealing other differences in   379
attitude and expectation.   380

Trees and Buildings   381

Woodland can offer a place to hide troops, may be an area to avoid or simply provide   382
a source of raw material. In the medieval battlefields we have studied, the wood-   383
land areas were avoided by troops and if present at all provided a boundary to the   384
battlefield space. The trees themselves were sometimes a source for the material   385
used to construct barricades protecting the defenders' position. The specifics of   386
particular circumstances seem to determine the role of woodland in battle: as an incon-   387
venience or an asset, as a landscape feature or as merely a number of individual   388
trees. The manner in which woodland is treated by soldiers in different periods   389
may indicate how such features are perceived more generally in that period: our   390
work suggests that trees are more likely to be seen as woodland landscape features   391
(that is, as woods or forests) in more recent periods, and more as sources of material   392
(that is, merely a collection of individual trees) in earlier times. Either: but not both at   393
the same time. There is scope for more research here.   394

Churches and chapels are a significant and common feature in any European   395
landscape; accordingly their presence in the battlefield space may not be remark-   396
able, and also as what is very often the largest stone structure in their area they   397
may inevitably attract attention. Frequently, however, they were ancillary to the   398
battlefield action, and specifically avoided by combatants during the fighting.   399
Monasteries too frequently stand just off the space of medieval battles. The fighting   400
avoided these places, but they provided rescue for the wounded and medical aid   401
once the fighting was over. We think it significant that of our sample of medieval   402
battlefields, almost all are known to be close to or involve churches and monasteries   403
while less than half more modern sites do. Fighting penetrates only one such   404
structure in the medieval period while a majority in the modern period are in the   405
centre of the fighting. This suggests a change of attitude towards such places over   406
time: that while churches and church foundations are not to be fought in or over in   407
the medieval period, their presence nearby is desired or expected; while in later   408
times they form merely another part of the battlefield space and no longer command   409
special respect. Non-church buildings are relatively rare in the medieval battlefield   410
landscape unless the battle takes place through urban space. The incorporation   411
of settlements into battlefields in later periods increases the number of buildings   412
present and such buildings are more likely to be used as part of the fighting, indicating   413
another change of attitude to landscape features.   414

Conclusion

We believe that by choosing to examine landscapes that were used for a very particular kind of purpose in the past makes the identification and examination of differences in attitude and expectation as revealed by differences in use more reliable, and that they therefore reveal real differences between various periods of history and those periods and our own. The differences in expectation and understanding of landscapes thus derived can then be taken up by others who are interested in understanding the use and attitudes towards space of people in the past. Elsewhere (Carman and Carman 2006a, b, 2007, 2009) we have given details of our results and more detailed consideration of what we think we have and have not achieved. Here we wish to emphasise that we believe those results to be meaningful, and that taking our phenomenologically-derived approach to particular places of experience in the past demonstrates the value of such approaches. However, to do so is neither simple nor straightforward: it is a case of constant awareness of one's situatedness in the present while attempting to compare that with a known past.

Ours is not an effort to 'dream' a past, but to compare the past and the present – and different pasts with each other and with the present – in a meaningful way that opens up possibilities for understanding the difference of the past from the present. As Tilley puts it, it is about "being there, being *in place*" (Tilley 1994:75) in the present but being simultaneously aware of that place's past. Accordingly, our research is very largely not about the past at all, but about studying the past as a set of contemporary practices (Shanks and Tilley 1987a, b; Edgeworth 2006). We firmly locate ourselves in the present – and use knowledge of the past as a counterpoint to expose the peculiarities of the modern experience of space and place.

Notes

1. The Bloody Meadows Project is co-directed by the authors and was instigated in 1998. It derives from their joint interests in landscapes as particular kinds of entity, in war as a subject of archaeological enquiry, and as an opportunity to use archaeology to contribute to significant debates of our time. The project studies battlefields from all historic periods and is not limited by geographical region.

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Author Queries

Chapter No.: 7   0001486240

Queries	Details Required	Author's Response
AU1	Kindly include the references "Tilley (1994), Keegan (1976) and Carman and Carman (2006)" in the reference list.	
AU2	Please confirm if the citations inserted for Figs. 7.1, 7.2 and 7.3 is okay.	