BOOKSCAPES

Call for papers

Considering, on the one hand, that the development of printing and the spread of the printed word across the Western world contributed to shaping representations of the known and unknown world, and secondly, that geographical metaphors structure discursive thought (Baron), this conference open to all the research fields represented in SEAA XVII-XVIII (Société d’Études Anglo-Américaines des XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles) aims to reflect on the interactions between discourses in various book forms (treatises, travelogues, drawings, literary works, works of art...) and the territories and landscapes they evoke. In full expansion at that time, the English-speaking world was also being reinvented. In many respects, the 17th and 18th centuries were a pivotal period; whether we see it as a change of episteme at the archaeological level (Foucault), or as the passage from one ontology to another at the anthropological level (Descola), it could well be seen as the time of a 'great divide' when an operation of fundamental redistribution between subject and object (Latour), and between culture and nature, is taking place--embodied for instance in the unprecedented development of landscape painting. But it is the book that will be the focus of investigation here.

The following topics may be studied:

- the narration and historiography of the discovery of new regions and cultures of the world (cf. Claval 1992) by Anglo-Saxon travellers and explorers (the 'legenda', cf. Foucault, or the work of Alain Corbin and his use of literary texts); narratives of contact between cultures, in the fantastical manner of John Donne ('O my America! my new-found land', '[To his Mistress Going to Bed']) or in the more reasoned manner of St Jean de Créveceur or Gilbert Imlay (The Emigrants, 1793), and the way of giving voice to the Other (subaltern studies); the delineation of future 'places of memory' (Nora); in short, the different forms of territorialization, as well as deterritorialization which they sometimes entail, among others, from the point of view of exile or the exiled.

- the interactions between landscape and literature, for example from an ecocritical perspective (cf. the influence of Wordsworth on the creation of the Lake District); the ways in which a country or a landscape can be read: through walking (Gros, Le Breton), topographical / loco-descriptive poetry, and thus descriptions of countryside, townscape or skyscapes, in literature (London in Moll Flanders, Bath in Humphry Clinker...) and in aesthetic treatises (in the manner of Gilpin's writing on the picturesque); the poetics of toponyms, ekphrasis, literary stylisation as the metaphorical equivalent of the work done by the anamorphic map of a territory; treatises on art, the art of landscape gardening, and in general geopoetics and the artialisation of the world (Roger), insofar as poetising a landscape and putting it into discourse means interpreting it.

- the space of the book itself, open to typographic and illustrative experiments (Herbert, Sterne, Blake...); the genetics of texts, which offer a topographical metaphor for the palimpsest of a text; anchoring, inking or even 'ancrage' (to use Bernard Magné's neologism for
Pérec’s Espèces d’espaces); the places where books are produced (Raven), in short, the different forms of ‘literary spaces’ (Blanchot);

- the circulation of books, in all its forms, which contributes to the shaping of space, whether it be their use as pieces of furniture (Jeffrey Todd Knight), their economic inscription in urban spaces (James Raven), or the impact of their content on the ways in which the world is conceived and travelled.

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References: