

Session: #210

Theme & Session Format

Theme:

4. Persisting with Change: Theory and Archaeological Scrutiny

Session format:

Session with keynote presentation and discussion

Title & Content

Title:

Breaking Traditions: Sudden Change and Abandonment in Archaeological Landscapes

Content:

Archaeology is often a discipline of the long durée, tracing resistant frameworks of thought and action over lengthy periods. But there are points in the material record where we see rapid disruption and remodelling, or even abandonment, of ways of life. One of the most archaeologically visible forms of change is in the use of space. The distribution and spatial organisation of mortuary and dwelling sites, land-use, cultic devotion, artistic expression — all and any human traditions may be subject to abandonment or fundamental reshaping if their maintenance is no longer warranted or if active distancing from the past becomes desirable. This session will explore sudden change or abandonment in the use of space at levels from landscape down to archaeological feature. Can we identify the trajectories, agencies and timescales of cataclysmic change? Under what circumstances do communities radically relocate their places for the living and the dead? Do spatial changes necessarily involve new practices and new ontologies? What are the implications of spatial change for community life? What becomes of those who cannot or will not adapt?

One approach to radical change in the archaeological record has been to show that stops are not as sudden as they may appear, with aspects of older practices continuing or adapted. Instead, in this session we ask what happens if archaeology recognises moments of total change? Can we study multiple forms of abandonment that traverse our societies? How do we understand time and material being if we look at the from the idea of their abandonment? And not least how do we deal with abandonment in situations of displacement by colonialism and wars?

We welcome papers which deal with aspects of the ending of spatial traditions in any chronological or geographical perspective, including both material memories and their loss.

Keywords:

Change, Resistance, Abandonment, Tradition, Landscape

Session associated with MERC:

no

Session associated with ClfA:

no

Session associated with SAfA:

no

Session associated with CAA:

no

Session associated with DGUF:

no

Session associated with other:

No

Organisers

Main organiser:

Cecilia Ljung (Sweden) ¹

Co-organisers:

Alison Klevnäs (Sweden) ¹

Marcia Hattori (Spain) ²

Marianne Sallum (Brazil) ³

Koji Lau-Ozawa (United States) ⁴

Affiliations:

1. Uppsala University

2. Institute of Heritage Sciences (CSIC)

3. Laboratório Interdisciplinar de Pesquisas em Evolução, Cultura e Meio Ambiente LEVOC
(MAE-Universidade de São Paulo, Brasil)

4. UCLA