Research Article

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# The "changing actor" and the transformation of landscapes

**Abstract:** A landscape is defined as a place which is remarkable because of one of these criteria (or several): esthetics, harmony with a habitus (quality of life), and environment. Also, groups support projects concerning this place. There is a "logical duel" to decide how to format the landscape. The paper focuses on the play of actors, in this context. There are a few theories in social sciences to describe the "changing actor" (how an actor changes his mind). In particular, we refer to the notions from the Latour's sociology of networks, selection, translation, and role of actants. There is a "pressure" on landscapes to transform them in accordance with the needs of the Global Monopoly (defined as a model which is imitated worldwide). But it occurs that the outcome of a "logical duel" is not the formatting of a landscape in accordance with the pressure. It is explained by the "changing actor" and the success of some translation.

**Keywords:** landscapes, liquid nature

# 1 Introduction

To deal with the topic, we have to define a landscape. A landscape is a place which is appreciated by some group (or several groups) considering these criteria: (1) esthetics, (2) harmony with a habitus (quality of life), and (3) environment. One can add: some group, or several groups, support a project concerning this place. A stake is: what group will fix the "sense of place"? There is what is called a "teleological duel" by the French sociologist Tarde. According to Tarde, there are "logical duels" when beliefs are concerned and "teleological duels" when desires (wills) are concerned [1]. When there is a dilemma concerning

society, the involved groups engage in a debate, and the outcome of this "teleological duel" is a choice. In other words, the outcome of a teleological duel will be a decision, which is how to format a landscape, if the fate of a landscape is at stake.

Now we shall make several remarks, which shed light on the approach in the paper.

## 1.1 There are other places than landscapes

A landfill is an ugly site, source of pollution, and is certainly not a landscape. There are other places than landscapes as we have defined them: indifferent places and even destroyed sites. A destroyed site is an indifferent site or a landscape which has been deteriorated or destroyed. Some of these destroyed places are described by Klein [2]. This paper does not deal with the topic of the destroyed sites, but it is admitted that they are a concern.

## 1.2 The perfect conservation of a landscape is rarely an alternative

The time is over when one could claim the perfect conservation of landscapes. It was called conservationism between the two World Wars [3]. For instance, the Sierra Club in the USA had a doctrine which was conservationism [3]. They claimed the creation of natural parks in the USA. Indeed, at this time several natural parks and natural reserves were created. There is something pertinent in this doctrine. We refer to the "hysteresis effect." In one of his books, "The universal opposition," Tarde has explained this: when a dynamic opposition in society exists, there is no symmetry of the opposite terms [4]. Take the example of the emergence and decline of a nation, a political regime, a religion, etc. The decline is not the symmetrical (that is to say the reverse process) of the emergence. Tarde, who did his works around 1900 and did not know the environmental stakes of today,

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spoke of the society, but the idea is pertinent when environment is concerned. For instance, if one wants to restore the ecosystem of the Aral Sea just by carrying water, it raises skepticism. So, conservationism can be explained by the fear of irreversible effects, when ecosystems deteriorate or are destroyed. In some way, we have to admit that the landscapes are transformed by activities. We have to invent an eco-compatible society where the resources in the sites will be used, since production and consumption cannot be sacrificed. To this society, which will be eco-compatible, will correspond new landscapes that we have to invent [3].

## 1.3 There are various kinds of landscapes

There is an analogy between Heritage and landscapes. According to the French sociologist Heinich, there are two kinds of heritage, the Great Heritage and the little heritage [5]. They are managed by distinct administrations. An example of Great Heritage is a gothic cathedral. An example of little heritage is a humble house, but built up in a style typical of a region, at some date. In the same way, there are "branded landscapes" and "spontaneous landscapes." An example of "branded landscape" is the Versailles castle. An example of "spontaneous landscape" is a suburb made up of cottages, each with its small garden. It is not nice, but it is charming. And it corresponds to a habitus (the kids in touch with Nature and playing in the garden...). Another example could be some tree-lined courtyard in Paris, where the threat can be the construction of a building involving cutting the trees.[1] The play of actors is not the same in the two cases. When a "branded landscape" is concerned, the actors are politicians, architects, urban planners, etc. They arbitrate between choices like historical truth in architecture or authenticity [6]. The stake is how to fashion the site to make it attractive for visitors. When a "spontaneous landscape" is concerned, the actors are groups of inhabitants, militants, and even the opinion in the region or in the country. The stakes are preserving the environment and protecting a habitus. But it is not to say that a "branded landscape" is an affair of professionals and a "spontaneous landscape" a political affair. It is not so clear. To

fashion a "branded landscape" can involve politics. An example is the resistance in many inner cities in Northern Italy, to these electronic platforms which rent flats for a week or two, to tourists. The citizens fear car traffic, noise, shops for tourists only and the raise of the rents, induced by tourism. And to fashion a "spontaneous landscape" can involve professionals. Take the example of an airport to be built in a rural region: the project will involve specialists of transport, planners, etc.

## 1.4 It is interesting to study the play of actors

This paper is focused on the play of actors. But one needs a hypothesis, concerning this play of actors. This hypothesis can be described as follows:

– There is a pressure exerted on the landscapes, that of the Global Monopoly. The Global Monopoly is, in accordance with the Norbert Elias's sociology, a model which is imitated everywhere. The ultimate explanation is the Tarde's "imitative power." Norbert Elias has shown in "The court society" how a model can be diffused, from some place (the court) to the whole society [7]. In the paper, we describe the Global Monopoly and the pressure on landscapes: the Global Monopoly not only wants technopoles, quarters for startuppers, and mega-resorts for the leisure of rich people, but also transport infrastructures and sites specialized in the extraction of raw materials.

– It occurs that actors support a project not in accordance with the pressure of the Global Monopoly. When there is a logical duel concerning this stake, how to fashion a landscape, actors can change their minds. They can accept or refuse the project which is in accordance with the pressure – hence, the interest of the notion of "changing actor." Even if the "changing actor" is not very much studied by social sciences, there are some methods. In particular, the "sociology of networks" provides tools (like selection, translation, and the role of actants). So, depending on the circumstances, a project in accordance with the needs of the Global Monopoly can be accepted, or an alternative is chosen (when the actors have changed their minds and influenced the decision).

Now that we have coarsely described the approach, we shall provide more details and present the plan of the paper as follows:

First, we have to explain what is the "pressure" exerted on landscapes. Because of this "pressure," the

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[1] This example is similar to the Khrutshevas in Moscow, quoted later in the paper. Also, it is an example of rich people involved in the preservation of a site (since the inhabitants of Paris are often affluent).

landscapes are transformed. Some are preserved, other are affected. Even some are destroyed. Naomi Klein quotes the examples of the region of Fort Mac Murray in Alberta (Canada) where oil is extracted from tar sands, or the region of Apalachees (USA) where coal is extracted from opencast mines, after the blasting of the top of mountains [2]. The pressure is that of the Global Monopoly, to use the ideas of the sociologist Norbert Elias. Of course, Norbert Elias, who died in 1990, has not described the features of the today's Global Monopoly. But it is easy to adapt the Elias's ideas to the current forces (which shape the society and provide models). The Global Monopoly relies on three pillars: innovation, economic growth, and easy money. Of course, there are obstacles, but obstacles can be stimulating, as well. Concerning the landscapes, the Global Monopoly wants technopoles, quarters for startuppers, holiday resorts for rich customers, and smart cities. Also, it needs raw materials which become more and more expensive (it is the "extractivism" described by Naomi Klein). Agriculture is replaced by industry (greenhouses, breeding poultry, or cattle in closed buildings in an industrial way). The coasts are formatted for tourism. The mountains are formatted for leisure in winter and summer.

Second, the choices concerning the traditional, cultural landscapes should be made in accordance with the criteria of Heritage, of quality of life, and precautionary principle. The criterium of Heritage means that sites which are nice because of architecture, beautiful natural settings, or landscapes nicely shaped by human activity should be preserved (esthetic reasons). The criterium of quality of life means that the habitus liked by the inhabitants, as the use of the site that visitors appreciate, should be kept (even if conflicts between inhabitants and visitors are possible). The precautionary principle means that the struggle against global warming should be taken into account: not to destroy wet zones, natural ecosystems having a useful role (for instance, not to replace vegetation by tar).

Third, the "changing actor" should be taken into account by the analysts. The "changing actor" is poorly dealt with in social sciences. However, the notion of translation, from the sociologist Bruno Latour, is very interesting: the goal of translation is to "displace" (move) an actor, who changes his (her) mind and behavior, according to Bruno Latour. It allows to understand why the argument of "obduracy" is fallacious. Suppose somebody wants to live in some site when big changes are planned. He will change his mind after having succeeded in becoming an inhabitant, wanting the preservation of the qualities of the site. Therefore, when he blamed "obduracy", he was not serious. Either he does not change his mind

and the opposition of the inhabitants or users is not "obdurate:" the qualities of the site liked by them are really threatened (since the newcomers will continue to desire the big changes). In a fourth part, we give some examples.

In conclusion, there is a role for political contingency. After all, even poor and weak communities (indigenous people in the USA and in Canada) have struggled in a successful way against projects which would have destroyed the environment in the places where they live [2]. Possibly, coalitions gathering ecological militants, users, inhabitants, and organizations struggling against global warming can change the choices made, concerning many sites. The goal is to plan the sites respecting the criteria of Heritage, quality of life, and the precautionary principle. Even the rich people who are concerned by the changes affecting the place where they live could have a role, for instance, in a coalition. They are no more safe from the threats on quality of life in some sites [2].

## 2 Methods: Explaining the pressures on landscapes

In this part of the article, we explain the pressure on the landscapes (which is exerted by the Global Monopoly) and give some examples of the "changing actor." These examples concern general situations, as well, and the transformation of landscapes. The author tries to theorize the "changing actor."

According to Norbert Elias, a civilization process consists of new norms for individual behavior which are invented and diffused [7]. A new habitus is shaped. For instance, it concerns good manners, and some abilities (smartness, politeness, easy speaking and writing...), for the courtiers studied by Norbert Elias in his book "The court life." The new norms (mindset, behavior, abilities) are imposed thanks to constraints (educators), social pressure (anybody is required to adapt to the new norms by the other), and self-constraints (the control of the Self by itself). Thus, from Renaissance to the eighteenth century, one has passed from the Knight (a warrior) to the Courtier. The absolutist monopoly created "safe zones" where life was more secure and less violent. The specialization of functions continued. There was more integration and differentiation. Society became more complex. The chains of interdependent actions became longer, and it requires a more predictable behavior from individuals. That is to say, individual behavior became more disciplined,

less whimsical, or passionate or violent. The successive monopolies are presented in this tableau:

| Monopoly | Main features | Norm of behavior |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Absolutist monopoly | Double monopoly of the King: physical force (army, police) and taxes | Court life |
| Bourgeois society | Statute | Morality |
| | Monetary gain | Good reputation |
| Industrialization/ developmentism | Modernity | Individualism |
| | Economic growth | Efficiency |
| | Extractivism | |
| Global monopoly | Innovation | Consumerism (shopping...) |
| | Easy money | Innovation more than work or qualified work (no routine...) |
| | Economic growth | Liquid life |

The places of the Global monopoly are the large metropolises. The three pillars are innovation, easy money, and economic growth.

- *Innovation.* Innovation triggers "disruptions" which are wished. They generate uncertainty.

  A new professionalism appears: one has to be motivated, ready to accept all kinds of tasks at any time, etc. Concerning consumption, the tastes are ever changing. It is the "liquid life" described by the sociologist Bauman [8]. It is impossible to predict the social consequences of innovations. So, first one innovates and then there is a long-lasting and complex political process to assess and master the social impact of the innovations. It is the "risk society" that the sociologist Beck has described [9]. For instance, the new chemical products are a threat for environment and human health. Or, the Information Technologies are a threat for liberties (an example is facial recognition systems). The progress of transportation allows production chains which are cost-effective, but not so flexible, harmful to environment and not enhancing product quality, etc.

- *Easy money.* Central Banks provide liquidities and credit is easy. It works, but there are conditions. No return of inflation is needed. States should not take advantage of this easy credit, choosing large budget deficits every year, because investors could refuse to

buy the State's bonds. The Central Banks would be only buying these bonds. If the balance sheets of the Central Banks become out of control, trust on these banks and trust in currencies would be ceased. Easy money helps firms which have only two goals: to accumulate experience in some fields and trigger the interest of investors. They neglect immediate profit. They want only to obtain the financing of their projects. Indeed, there is speculation on their shares, but this also is allowed by easy money. Amazon was an example. Today, Uber and WeWork are examples.

- *Economic growth.* It is indispensable because the sense of life is at stake. The only pleasure in the "liquid life" is to change one's tastes in all fields (dresses, food, trips) very often [8]. It requires purchase power. But growth has to be compatible with human health, struggle against pollution, preservation of environment, struggle against global warming, and protection of landscapes and heritage. For instance, economic growth requires large infrastructures (airports, harbors) which threaten landscapes.

Following the idea of Norbert Elias requires to not neglect affectivity, since it does not neglect it [10]. Indeed, Norbert Elias answers the question: what was the resentment triggered by the absolutist monopoly? "Vivre plus doucement et plus simplement" ("to live in a softer and simpler way") seems to be part of an ecological program of today. Indeed, it is a quotation from the novel "L'Astrée", written by Honoré d'Urfé at the time of Henry IV (around 1600). It was very successful. According to Elias, romanticism appears when a social group which was powerful and rich is declining, but is unable to revolt against the Order, because the power protects its last privileges. At the time when many aristocrats became courtiers, noblemen in province are unable to have a role in the Court or getting little advantage from the Court could resent nostalgia. They resented the past as an ideal place, a refuge. In the past, life was nicer and less complex. In the novel, there is an ideal country (near the nice river le Lignon, which really exists in the region of Auvergne), where shepherds (Celadon) and shepherdess (Astrée) have good time all the day, speaking about the subtleties of love. Of course, the shepherds and shepherdess of the time of Henry IV were very different (illiterate, living in misery) [7]. To have an idea on the shepherds in France a century ago, one can read the well-known thesis of the geographer Théodore Lefebvre, on "the ways of life in the Pyrénées." The shepherds he describes were very brutal. For instance, the custom (there was no law) allowed a peasant to steal several

sheep if its fence has been broken and the crops have been destroyed by cattle during transhumance [11].

Today, an effort of translation can put the stress on the contrast between competition, dynamism, and success, on one hand, and the nostalgic dream of an easier life near Nature, on the other hand – in other words, realism against dream and resignation. It would be a kind of "construction of obduracy." Inhabitants in a site can be incited to choose a project of planned space involving the destruction of an ecosystem (we deal with an example concerning Denver, Colorado in the USA in the Chapter 3). Moreover, a monetary gain is possible for those making this choice. What is presented is: either the "good choice," or obduracy. Now we give some examples of the "changing actor."

The "changing actor" is a theme which is poorly dealt with in social sciences. In general, the theorists prefer the "moments:" individuals' change is explained by "moments" such as childhood and maturity, peace and war, etc. The "moments" are useful to analysts presenting a System: the individuals are explained, thanks to the System. Even, the "moments" can be used in mega stories. One can argue that the "moments" favor decontextualization. At the opposite, the "changing actor" can be useful to cast light on social phenomena.

Now we present some interesting examples of the "changing actor." These examples are the refugee/migrant, the borrower/lender, and the newcomer in some site/ecosystem.

– *The refugee/migrant.* The refugee and the migrant are very different. The refugee who becomes a migrant changes his (her) mindset. As a refugee, he (she) wants to reach some country and survive. He breaks the law. As a migrant, he wants to have a job, win money, and accept the law. Therefore, in European countries we should treat the two in very different ways. Concerning the refugees, since in our values there are the Rights of Man, we should make all possible efforts to save their life if it is needed. Concerning the migrants, it is different: in a European country, there are laws decided by the voters and severity with migrants is possible (if one accepts those having some right to political asylum) if the citizens want it. We should not make the refugees pay for a price, as if they were illegal migrants (since they are refugees). That the refugee has (sometimes) the project to be an illegal migrant does not change the reasoning. After all, if a refugee saves his (her) life in perilous conditions, alone, he (she) is incited to become an illegal migrant (since he has a poor idea of the country where he goes).

– *Borrower/lender.* When a lender lends money to a borrower, as long as the borrower reimburses the loan, there is a fair partnership. But if the reimbursement becomes uneasy, the mindsets of the two actors change: each considers the other as a foe. One should have in mind this possible change of the actor: too often, the borrower trusts the lender, or the lender trusts the borrower, at the start, but this trust is conditional and can cease. Often, the borrower and the lender should be prudent. In general, overindebtedness has dramatic consequences.

– *Newcomers in a site/ecosystem.* Before having succeeded in becoming an inhabitant (or a user), the newcomer is a proponent of change; then he becomes a proponent of preservation (since it is in his interest of owner or user). Analysts should take into account this possible change of mindset of the actors. An interesting example is described in the article "Urban agriculture, revalorization and green gentrification," about Denver. According to the author, in Denver, at the time of the subprime crisis, many properties lost their values, and it was the opportunity for "urban farmers" (some nonprofit, that is to say ecological militants, the other wanting profit) to buy land and farm it. The Mayor's policy was favorable. Then there was the economic recovery and again properties had high values. Many "urban farmers" chose to give up their activity (when they were not owners) or to sell the land (when they were owners), so new quarters for residents appeared. It can be called "green gentrification" since these quarters had a green image, but at the end became gentrified [12]. The trend to plan green spaces in Denver, supported by the Mayor, has led to what is a temporary arrangement: after several years, the urban farmers ceased their activity, and gentrified quarters appeared. These quarters had a green image, which is no more justified, but perhaps helped to attract the customers (new inhabitants). In this case, two kinds of actors changed their minds. The urban farmers preferred to cease their activity or sell their land. The new inhabitants were perhaps proponents of "green quarters" at the start, but accepted a gentrified quarter, at the end. Of course, the change in economic conditions (the subprime crisis, then the economic recovery) and the search for monetary gain explain the process.

As we have already said, the topic is poorly dealt with in social sciences. However, one can quote several examples:

Hannah Arendt, Van Gennep, Festinger, Tarde, and Bruno Latour. From our point of view, Tarde and Latour are the most interesting, but Hannah Arendt, Van Gennep, and Festinger deserve to be noticed.

– *The "natality" of Hannah Arendt.* In her study of modern culture, Hannah Arendt has proposed the notion of "natality" to describe how a new generation has its own sensitivity, its own feelings, and therefore its own way of thinking. This kind of change is a surprise and is unpredictable [13]. Perhaps the young woman Greta Thurnberg, a "voice" advocating an efficient struggle against climate change, is an example. The idea here is that the mindset of the new generation can change, and in an unpredictable way.

– *The rites of passage of Van Gennep.* In his book on the rites of passage in the previous societies, the anthropologist Van Gennep describes the conditions in which the child was initiated to the adult's life: confinement in a "neutral place" during some time, away from the society, initiation, ordeals, and finally reintegration of the individual, who has become an adult, into the society. A change of the individual's mindset occurs, which is narrowly controlled [14].

– *The cognitive dissonance of Festinger.* This psychologist has studied the conditions in which one can change his (her) mind. The "cognitive dissonance" is a contradiction between elements of thought, or elements of behavior, which have been chosen by an individual. The change of mindset involves that no cognitive dissonance appears, or if it exists, its reduction. This is obtained by the change of an element of thought or an element of behavior, or the removal. Thus, the new choice is more acceptable, and the actor is incited to give up the old choice and make the new one. Festinger studies the passage from student to professional, from worker to foreman, and the change of political party [15].

– *The Tarde's monadology.* In his book "Monadology and sociology," the French sociologist Tarde compares individuals to monades. Tarde wants to take into account the variety of the universe. He thinks that physics and chemistry, which postulate a homogeneous matter made up of particles (atoms), cannot explain the variety of the universe. At the opposite, sociology could explain variety since it observes it (the social worlds are very diverse) – hence, the hypothesis of the monades. An individual is an autonomous world because of the two forces existing inside him: belief (faith) and desire (will). These two forces fashion the world. But the monades tend toward association. Society is when everybody is "possessed by all." Monades are "greedy" and "versatile." To understand society what matters is not to think about the Being as the philosophers, but about the Have. Who believes and desires, has. There are the Had and the Having [1]. The translation (according to Bruno Latour) influences the Opinion. Changing majorities appear. Monades make conquests. Individuals getting some prestige have a role of leaders (stars).

The successive stages of the civilization correspond to "conquests." Tarde thinks that inequalities will not disappear. Briefly said, there are winners and won. In general, a "better type of civilization wins another." Thanks to an effort of translation, one can change the Opinion, and it is a kind of "conquest." Now, concerning the planned space and the landscapes, one can say this: one can change the opinion of inhabitants or users, and make them accept, or refuse, what is called by Naomi Klein "liquid Nature" (the use of natural resources is the consequence of sophisticated speculation).

– *The Bruno Latour's translation.* Bruno Latour has studied the work of scientific researchers. They are gathered in networks which have to find allies (other networks of scientific researchers) to make a project "interesting." The goal is to play, trigger interest, and find support and financing, of course. There is some role for "actants", that is to say objects which exist through spokesmen. To find allies, translation is useful: it is an effort to present the project in such a way that the (possible) ally is interested and convinced. Actants are mobilized in the translation. The translation "displaces" the actor, that is to say changes his (her) mind and therefore his (her) behavior [16]. In her book "Les guerres de la Vierge" ("The wars of the Virgin"), the sociologist Elizabeth Claverie studies the pilgrimage of Medugorje in Herzegovina (under strong influence of Croatians). There is an interaction between the pilgrims and those who guide them. To explain this interaction, the author uses three notions: selection, translation, and actants [17]. Not only there is a first selection since the participants are pilgrims, but there is a selection more (a pilgrim can choose what he wants to experience). At some stage, a pilgrim is in a state of "critical point" (like a substance which is just at the limit of liquid and gas).

If translation is efficient, he feels Her presence and lives a moment of grace. Otherwise, he is disappointed. The goal of translation is to lead the pilgrim to this state of grace, when the presence of the Virgin is certain. The actants are the objects of the liturgy (rosary, crucifix,

prayer books), some places (chapels and churches, hills where a statue of the Virgin recalls her visit and even the sky, where some light seen by some pilgrims is the sign of the presence of the Virgin...), etc. In the same way, the Opinion (local, national, and in some cases at the world level) can be influenced by efforts of translation which mobilize actants. Choices favorable to the preservation of Heritage and environment can be made. In other cases, the destruction of the habitus of the local inhabitants, or environment, or risks concerning the environment are accepted (the example of "green gentrification" studied by Sbicca).

# 3 Results: Intervention of the "changing actor" in the transformation of landscapes

Many examples of landscapes, in the USA or in Canada, which were preserved or destroyed are quoted by Klein [2].

In Europe also, many examples can be quoted as follows:

– *The disappearance of wet zones near large cities.* The "hortillonages" near Amiens (France) were market gardens irrigated, thanks to the river Somme. They disappeared, replaced by quarters of the suburbs of Amiens. The habitus of the growers and of the inhabitants of Amiens used to buy fresh and local vegetables disappeared. The same thing happened to the Huerta de Valencia, in Spain.

– *Large infrastructures.* In France, in 2018, a project of airport in a wet zone, near Nantes, was given up after the struggle of a coalition of local inhabitants and ecological militants.

– *Old quarters.* In Moscow, the Khrushchevas are 5-storey buildings for residents, built at the time of Khrushchev (the 60s). It has been said that they are not robust and should be destroyed, the dwellers being removed in other modern quarters of Moscow. Indeed, if the buildings are not of the highest quality (no lift, low ceiling height, bad soundproofing...), architects say that they can last if the necessary works are done. The inhabitants, who are of the middle class, like them: indeed, by a kind of chance they correspond to high criteria of urban planning since there are no cars, there are plenty of passageways for walkers, courtyards which are pleasant and silent, with trees,

etc. The inhabitants suspect that the project of the municipality of Moscow is to remove them in towers perhaps more comfortable, but with car parks at the foot and highways all around. There is a vote in every building and a majority of 2/3 is required for the move to be decided, but one abstention is counted as a yes. The quarters where the Khrushchevas are would become gentrified: the buildings could be restored or destroyed and then rebuilt, the new inhabitants being rich people attracted by silence, greenery, and the absence of cars.

– *Old, picturesque villages in Spain.* Concerning the future, one can quote the picturesque villages of the valley of the rio Guadiana, in Spain. Agriculture (the growing of olive trees in the region of Sanlucar) uses too much water, and someday the aquifer will be depleted.

When the soil is salted, any cultivation becomes impossible. The region will become void of inhabitants. The picturesque villages will disappear.

To bring some theory when this topic of landscapes is dealt with, one can use the notion of "liquid Nature" which is presented by Klein [2]. There is a trend to pass from "useful territory" to the "liquid Nature." Indeed, the "useful territory" and the "liquid Nature" are very different:

– In the case of useful territory, some parts of a territory are deliberately sacrificed, because it is argued that it is necessary to extract raw materials (or extend cities, or create infrastructures like highways, ports, airports...). Examples are the extraction of coal in the Apalachees, the fracking (if it is confirmed that it pollutes the aquifer and triggers earthquakes), and the region of Fort Mac Murray (Canada) where it is no more attractive to live since the landscapes have been devastated by the extraction of oil from tar sands. Only the "useful territory" is preserved (the large metropolises, and a few sites for leisure and tourism). Outside the useful territory, any effort to preserve environment is doomed useless: for instance, in Russia, when the forest of Siberia is burning, no effort is done to extinguish the fire if there are not "assets" (such as buildings, farms...) in the region. It is argued that it would be too costly and useless (but this kind of decision is challenged).

– The "liquid Nature" is when the natural resources are managed as assets on which one speculates. In other words, they are preserved and exploited, thanks to some sophisticated financing taking into account

that they will be of high value in the future. In this tableau are shown projects which can be presented as examples of "liquid Nature" and their drawbacks:

| Project | Drawbacks |
|---|---|
| Geoengineering | An adventure. The people in some poor countries would be more harmed by the change in the rainfall pattern (Asia of the monsoon, Sahel...) |
| Biofuels | Deforestation. Increase of the prices of agricultural products consumed by poor people |
| Forest in the Southern countries to compensate emissions of $CO_2$ of plants in Northern countries | Indigenous loose traditional rights (hunting, fishing, logging, picking, ceremonies...) |
| | At the best, maintains the quantity of $CO_2$ in the atmosphere, does not decrease it |
| Transformation of villages into resorts for rich customers | Specialization of regions in tourism only |
| Carbon as good ($CO_2$ is reinjected in wells to upgrade the output) | Absurdity: one extracts $CO_2$ from the atmosphere to emit $CO_2$ again |
| New enclave[2] | People can get monetary compensations but lose their habitus |
| Obstacles to extractivism are avoided thanks to money | Possibly some territories are destroyed |
| Purchase of territories | |
| Mountains as a décor (as coastlines) | Landscapes are formatted in accordance with the tastes of tourists, and fashion |

**2** In the past, there was an economic enclave in some poor countries, when many firms from a rich country were investing, in particular to get raw materials. The theory of the enclave in Latin America has been made by the Brazilian sociologist Henrique Cardoso. Then at the time of globalization the enclave was due to multinational firms. And today it could be when the owner of a vast piece of land has paid for a high price to use it (extraction, agriculture...) without any control.

## 4 Conclusion

At the time of media and social networks, "voices" are needed to translate the knowledge of experts (like those of the IPCC, International Panel on Climate Change) into "beliefs" (to use the words of Tarde) of people. These "voices" could be called "passeurs" (in French). Their role can be explained thanks to the notions presented by Van Gennep in "The rites of passage." When somebody watches TV or reads a book at home, he is in a neutral space, thinking on social stakes while paying attention to what is said by "passeurs." Then he reintegrates the society after having changed his mind.

Examples are the young Swedish woman Greta Thurnberg, Nicolas Hulot and Stéphane Bern (who is a journalist proponent of Heritage) in France, Van der Beullen in Austria, Al Gore in the USA, and Naomi Klein in Canada.

There is some political contingency. Decisions are strongly influenced by coalitions. Naomi Klein describes some of them, which can gather ecological militants, members of indigenous communities, citizens involved in the local political activity, and proponents of sound management of public goods. Even, rich people can belong to these coalitions. They are also concerned by the deterioration of landscapes [2]. For instance, Naomi Klein quotes a well in the campus of a university in the USA. When there are wells near a property, its value decreases. The intervention of rich people can have a positive impact on a landscape, provided that public access remains possible (so the site, which remains nice, can be visited). Take the example of the lake of Annecy in France. There the proprietaries are often affluent people owning nice villas, and they do not wish large, new resorts, or towers, or estates built on the slopes of the mountains around the lake. The quality of the water is excellent (it can be drunk without any treatment). So, the qualities of the site are preserved, but it can be visited and there are many tourists visiting it.

In conclusion, the main word in this paper could be *liquidity*, for several reasons as follows:
– We live in a "liquid society" [8]. The choices made by people are ever changing in many fields (consumption, tastes, jobs, city). People can change their mind when landscapes are concerned.
– The problems raised by landscapes are complex. Sometimes, some goals are incompatible: one cannot preserve a nice landscape and accept a wind farm, even if it allows struggling against climate change. It is also a reason why people can change their mind on the topic. The debate on a complex topic can hold surprises.

– People are often at a critical point [17]. That is to say, if they meet some discourse of translation, they can be influenced and change their mind on a topic. A new choice becomes possible if a cognitive dissonance is reduced [15]. An old element of knowledge (belief), or of behavior, is changed or given up. A new one is adopted. The discourse of translation helps it.

– The role of coalitions is important. In the future, surprising coalitions supporting projects in the fields of ecology, environment, landscapes, etc. should appear. Coalitions can be efficient when they concentrate on an issue and find the words to translate their goals in such a way that other groups are convinced.

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