# Toward the territorial meaning in walking and staying: use representational diagrams to invigorate imaginary walking

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**Abstract**

*As a common human behavior, walking has been regarded much as a bodily movement. To better understand the cognitive aspect, the paper inquires about how imaginary walking can enrich a landscape experience and what the role of the representational diagram is in facilitating the dual status of walking. To present the proposition tangibly, the paper raises three case studies, each being featured with a distinct relation between in-situ walking and imaginary walking. The type of representational diagram in each case also varies, which is conceived as a thematic map for the story in Florence (Italy), a historical transect for the scenario in New York State (United States), and a hybrid drawing for the re-imagination in Yuyao (China). These cases are based on personal experiences, with the previous two finished during the study of Landscape Architecture at the University of Pennsylvania and the third one afterward.*

**Keywords**

*Walking, mapping, transect, subjectivity, representation.*

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**Introduction**

The subject matter of 'walking' has been widely discussed in various literature, including the relation between walking and thinking. Philosopher Frederic Gros (2009), for instance, presented Nietzsche and Rousseau as examples to prove the benefits that walking can induce. Solnit (2001), on the other hand, named thinking-while-walking "the mind at three miles an hour," and many great philosophers consecrated walking as instrumental for fruitful thinking. In contrast with a still posture, it seems that rich mental associations are more likely to occur during walking.

Without a given context, however, the meaning of 'walking' is quite abstract to capture, which is flexible to denote both bodily and cognitive activities. Like the blue dot that registers a user's location in Google Maps, our mind can 'walk' with the mobile symbol in the simulated territory under the screen, even though our body stays still. In this case, 'walking' could be understood as an awareness that is projected in the mind to explore an imagined territory.

Here Google Maps works as an interactive diagram (map) for the mind to walk cognitively. It is worth emphasizing the application's key function of bridging one's locational status and the reconstructed presentation of a milieu.

In comparison with the digital mapping tool, representational diagrams could be more conventional in terms of technological advancement yet more profound in terms of potentially embedded meanings. Map and transect, for instance, are capable of mediating the relationship between mind and environment, the nearby and the far away. With the knowledge encoded in the graphics, a walker can connect the immediate landscape view, rich in vegetational and geographical information, with the understanding of regional terroir, which consequently situates their landscape experience in a larger net of territorial meaning.

Given the premises above, this paper would argue that a representational diagram is a crucial cognitive device in activating and integrating the dual status of walking in the landscape. Since walking never takes place in vacuum, it is pointless to understand the human embodiment of speed and its meaning if a specific scale of space and time is disregarded. Therefore, to better illustrate the argumentation, design scenarios are crucial in unfolding the rich connotation of walking in tangible contexts. Three case studies are to be presented for a better understanding of the dual presence of 'walking.' The first two cases (in Florence, Italy, and New York, United States) are design proposals distinguished from each other in terms of design typology, the scale

of actual and imaginary walking, and the application of representational diagrams. The third case (in Yuyao, China), on the other hand, focuses on reinterpreting the diverse facets of walking in an indoor landscape, in which the illustrative drawing hybridizes the genre of the previous two cases. These cases are based on personal experiences, with the previous two finished during the study of Landscape Architecture at the University of Pennsylvania and the third one afterward.

To unfold the narration more clearly, each case is introduced in a sequence of four parts: project conceptualization, site condition, the making of the representational diagram, and the analysis of how walking in dual status proceeds. A conceptual framework (Fig.1) is drawn to show how the representational diagrams work as mediation across time and space. Truncated cones of projected consciousness are outlined to mark the attention from the present moment to the time and milieu where the imaginary walking could ambulate.



**Case study 1: mapping urban mythology for walking in a memorial garden (Florence, Italy)**

In the first case study, a garden that commemorates Gianni Versace is designed for in-situ walking. At the same time, the site is drawn on a map that untangles the relationship among the urban water system, god icons, and political power. In the conceptual framework diagram (Fig.1), the projection of imaginary walking travels from the actual moment of bodily walking on a garden scale to the historical construction of the god-water-fountain network during the Renaissance on an urban scale traversing in a time span of over 500 years. As the chosen genre of the representational diagram, a map could best reveal the layering relationship and the geographical adjacency of involved places.

The city of Florence is a constellation of gods and fountains. During Renaissance, aqueducts were built to transport water from surrounding mountains to the city, which benefited the daily hygienic needs of Florentines and helped resolve some of the economic difficulties that the city encountered then (Campbell, 1996). Although Medici's residential palace was situated at the lowest point in the hydraulic system, the Family successfully presented itself as the distributor of the water resource. As Conelli (2012) points out, the fountain system became a cohesive iconographic program designed by Cosimo I de Medici, making the supply of water an indicator of the Medici Family's strong political influence. Mythological figures, such as Neptune, were effectively used to construct a story that traced back to Roman myths, which culturally validates the authority of the Medici family.

The memorial garden is dedicated to Gianni Versace, for whom the mythological icon Medusa is the symbol of fatal sexual charm. In the context of Florence's mythological discourse, the rape of Medusa committed by Neptune and the afterward persecution from Goddess Athena are untold parts of the existing cultural discourse. By attaching a Medusa garden to the water supply route of the urban fountain system, the proposal renovates the iconographic landscape in Florence and tests speculatively if the power of the Versace family could be enshrined as the new Medici (Fig. 2).

The map consists of three parts: Mount Reggio, the city wall of Florence, and the site next to Boboli Garden (fig.2). Notably, they are not represented in the same scale but are enlarged from left to right so that the visual layout could be more visually balanced. The map showcases two routes of water that feed Florence, one of which from Mountain Reggio flows first to the city and then to Medici's Boboli Garden, converging with another one that bypasses the site from the southern edge of the city wall. The flow directions of water infrastructure and the looped city wall determine the composition of the thematic map, which is centered on the urban fountains inscribed with gods' names.

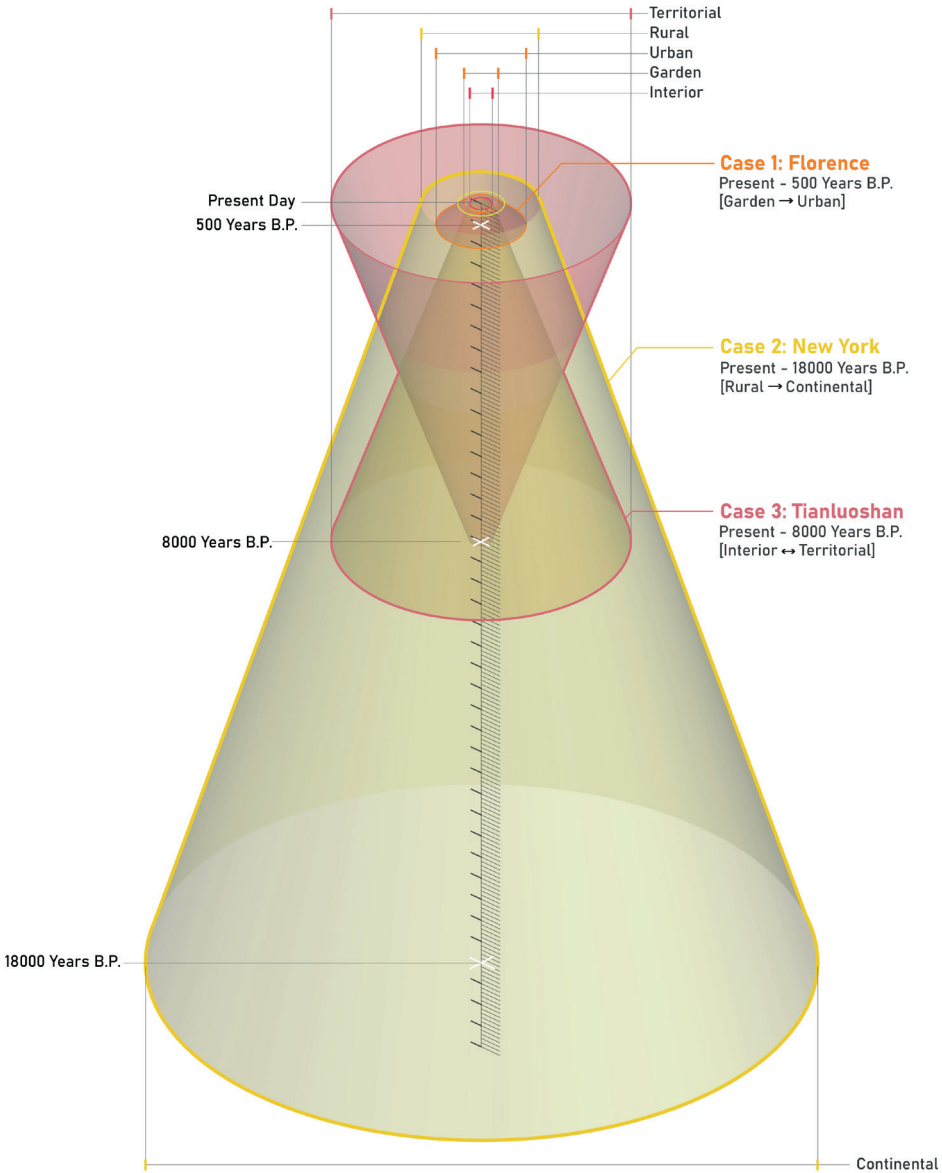


**fig.1**
Conceptual framework diagram of Projective walking

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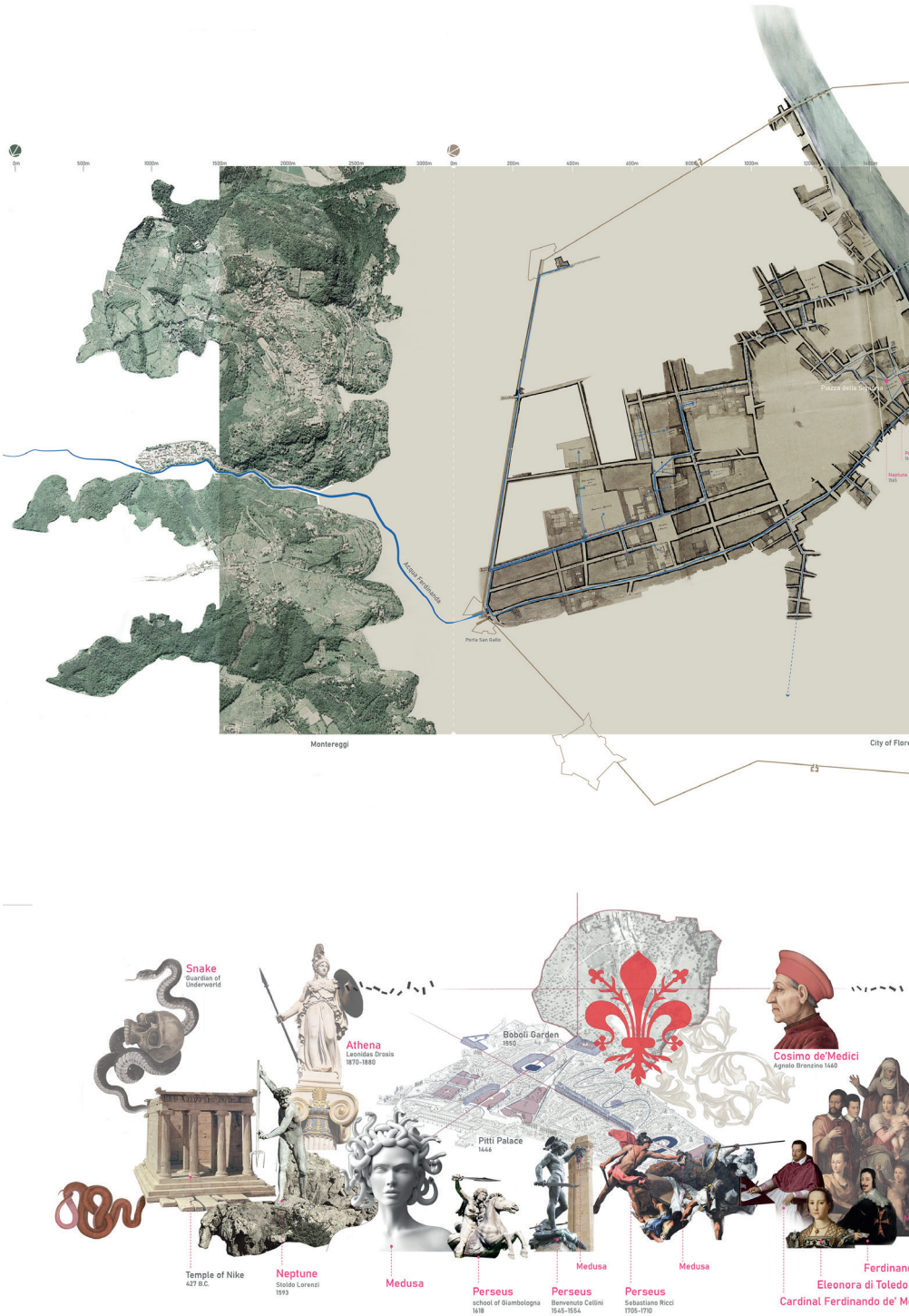
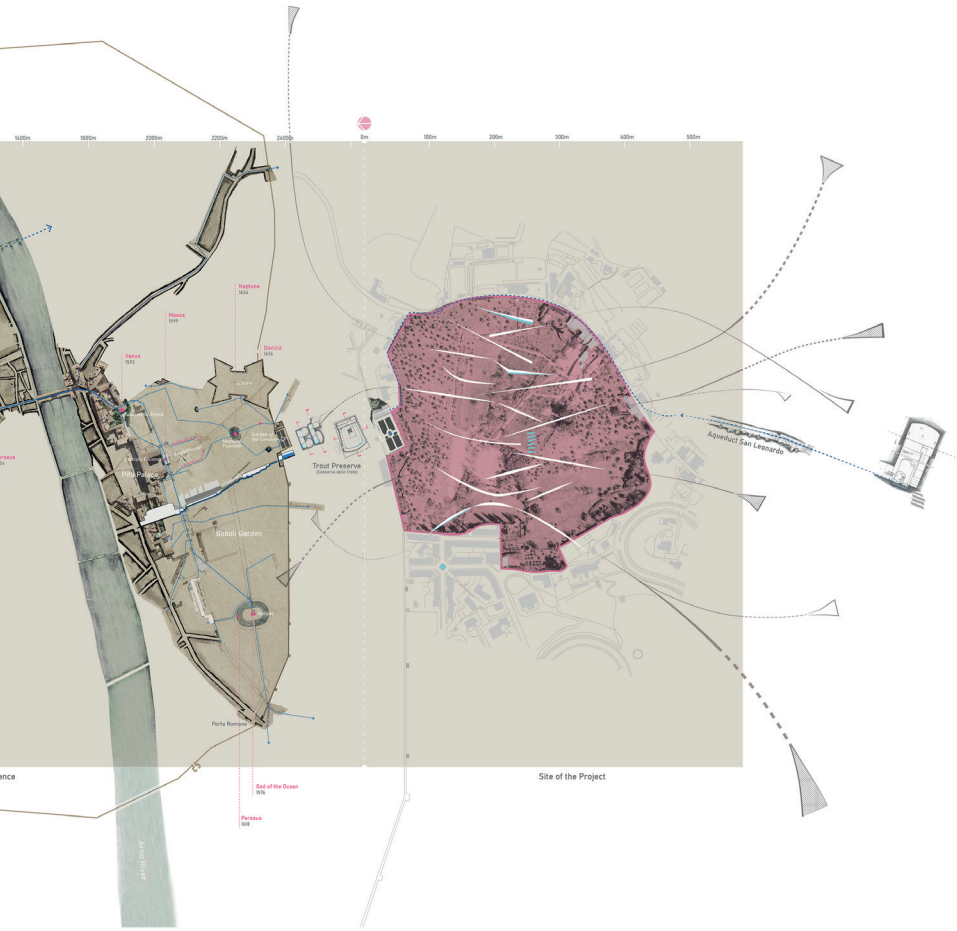





**Fig. 2**
Thematic map and historical collage of Florence water-fountain-god system


1400m
1800m
2000m
2200m
2400m
0m
100m
200m
300m
400m
500m
Neptune
1634
Mosca
1599
Venus
1593
Dovizia
1639
Pitti Palace
Boboli Garden
Trout Preserve
Aqueduct San Leonardo
Porta Romana
God of the Ocean
1576
Perseus
1618
ARNO RIVER
Site of the Project


Gianni Versace 1958
Barocco Bel Canto
Ballet Show
Boboli Garden June 1997
Remembering Show
in Milan, Spring 2018
BREAKING NEWS
GIANNI VERSACE SHOT DEAD
Assassination
in Miami, July 15th 1997
Donatella Versace
in Milan, 1978
Gianni Versace
do II de' Medici Justus Sustermans 1650
Agnolo Bronzino 1545
edici Scipione Pulzone 1580


**Fig. 3**
Plan of Medusa Garden

The site of Medusa is painted in pink, from which abstract snake heads stretch out. By weaving Medusa into the existing mythological context, the symbolic meaning of the garden agitates the dynamics among the existing deity icons. Between the site and Boboli Garden, a specific detailed illustration is given to show the connecting part between the Garden of Cavalier and the Trout Preserve, which underlines the intimate water exchange between the edge of the site and the established Medici residence.

Different from the idea of *derive* in Situationist's metropolis, this map does not mean to explore the psychogeography of Florence. As Careri (2017) points out, the Situationists wanted to make creative adventures and reclaim territories playfully through *derive*. In comparison, this map intends to single out the invisible relationship between power and hydraulic infrastructure under the street surface, eloquently calling for a themed urban walk.

The garden plan is a specified version of Medusa's aggressive gesture. The expansive snake necks are translated as sloped pathways, which promote the understanding of the site topography on foot (Fig.3). The scheme provides visitors with a rich walking experience, which is in accordance with Hunt's (2013) categorization of walking as rambling, strolling, and procession (ritual). As shown in the plan of the garden, the garden's central part is for processional walking, from which another set of pathways links it with the upper ground. Finally, the upper ground allows for more spontaneous rambling. Traversing from the lower point to the higher end of the U-shaped landform, walkers can proceed under the large canopies of trees and be enveloped by the greenhouses and landforms that protrude from both sides (Fig.4). Carts of tree planters move on rails, which can also be used for sitting and staying. In a pause, one may situate them-

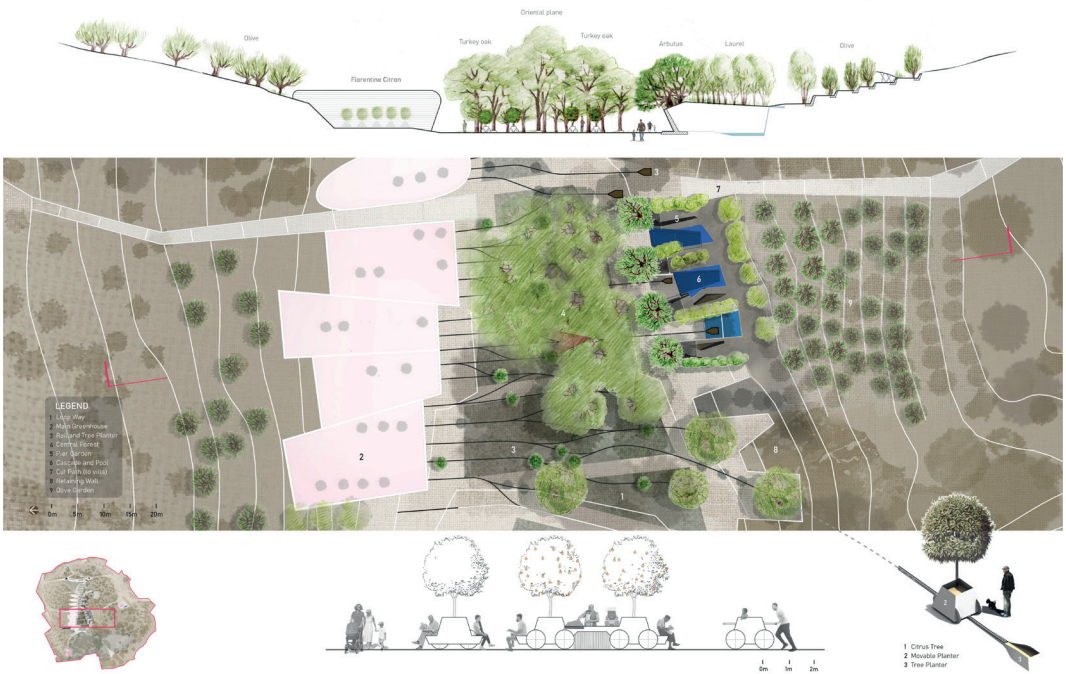



**Fig. 4**
Processional walking in the central part of the garden

self as a participant in the overall network of water and power. By reviewing the thematic map, they allow the mind to walk from Mount Reggio to the edge of Florence's city wall until the imagined self finally meets the actual body.

Walking experience inside the garden means an intimate connection with the land-formed figure of Medusa, who anchors the site as a disobedient place in the existing mythological narrative in Florence. By grafting with a larger map of signs, the garden is no longer an islet. The mapping of symbols of deities is no longer an affiliated action but a crucial one to the walking experience in the designed landscape. With the knowledge of a garden of Medusa by the city wall, the walking experience in the city of Florence is reciprocally changed, given that the representational diagram has iterated the symbolic system of Florence.

**Case study 2: tracing landscape evolution for strolling on a rural pathway (New York, US)**

Shifted from the previous attention on the urban environment, the second case study is featured climbing up an observational tower in rural New York State. Through this vertical walking activity, the reason of groundwater obstruction is manifested as the result of regional ice retreat. In the conceptual framework diagram (Fig.1), the projection of imaginary walking is much extended, pointing to 18,000 years ago in the late Pleistocene period. Spatially, it goes from a rural scale to a continental scale for framing the ice retreat suitably. To directly show the gravitational impact of glaciers, a historical transect is drafted as the representational diagram to tell the story of regional landscape evolution. The Black Dirt Region in the State of New York is locally well-known for the pungent taste of its onions: thanks to more than 80% of organic matter in the dark soil.

Today's agricultural landscape of the Black Dirt Region, however, only occupies a relatively short time in a very long evolution of the place. Approximately 20,000 years ago, in the Wisconsin Glacial Episode (last glacial period globally) of Pleistocene, the Laurentide Ice Sheet once covered half of North America and built the farthest terminal moraines in New York's Long Island (Budnik, 2010; Kraft, 1986). During the post-glacial period of the late Pleistocene (about 18,000 years ago), the 600-meter-thick ice sheet started melting, which triggered a series of cultural and ecological events (Haysom, 2016). Consequently, glacial meltwater was discharged and formed pro-glacial lakes, such as Glacial Lake Albany and Lake Wallkill, that geologists have identified (Connally and Sirkin, 1976) (Fig.5). Simultaneously, Native Lenape people expanded their territories in the region as the temperature resumed to be more suitable for living.

Different from the last example, mere showcasing of pro-glacial lakes and retreat routes of the glacier from an aerial view is not enough to fully understand the landscape story. The magnitude of the ice sheet is straightforwardly reflected in its pressure onto the ground, whose more tangible quality is missing if it is only drawn from a plan view. As an alternative, a historical transect is drafted to illustrate four historical periods under one panoramic view (Fig.6): Last Glacial Maximum, Deglaciation/Paleolithic Culture, Archaic/Woodland Periods, and Post-Columbian Era. It shows readers how indigenous animals and native American Lenape once lived before European farmers settled in this area.

At first glance, it might strike the viewer with the height of the ice sheet in comparison with that of the mastodons. The slight variation of ground heights, disconnected from one another in each subsection, results from diminishing ice weight across time. The transect also plainly compares the time span of each historical period, which frames the duration of the place's agricultural production to be rather fleeting in comparison. At the bottom of the chart, the correspondence between temperature fluctuation and the succession of human tools also helps us understand how human interacts with the environment to sustain a collective livelihood.

To reveal the hidden scene and to engage with visitors, a rural pathway that connects four sites is proposed, among which the second one, Abandoned Sand Mine, has particular value for the discussion of walking. There are seven trapezoid ponds in this location, which are believed to be excavated for mining sand in the past (Fig.7). These ponds are situated on higher ground, with an esker hill on its west side and black-dirt farmlands outside its berms on the east. Striations were marked on the steep slope surface as the result of intensive ice body frictions, whose direction is revealed in the North-East orientation of esker. Peculiar enough, their water level is about 3 meters higher than the surrounding farmlands. This phenomenon is probably due to the intensive compaction by the monumental glacier, which turned ground sediments into diamicton under the water body. The new underground composition effectively obstructs water penetration from the sand mine side to the other, one of the results of glacial retreat revealed in the transect.

To enunciate this height difference between water planes, an observation tower is proposed to offer a vantage point. When one climbs up the tower from bottom to top, the height difference between the sand mine waterbody and the outside grounds would be more and more obvious (Fig.8). As a measured walking movement to compare different views at different heights, climbing becomes an effective action in enhancing visitors' understanding of local landscape history, rather than just offering scenery for nostalgia. When one lingers on the tower platform, the historical transect may be recalled, in which an imaginary stroll connects the scene in front of the eyes with the historical one in mind (Fig.9).

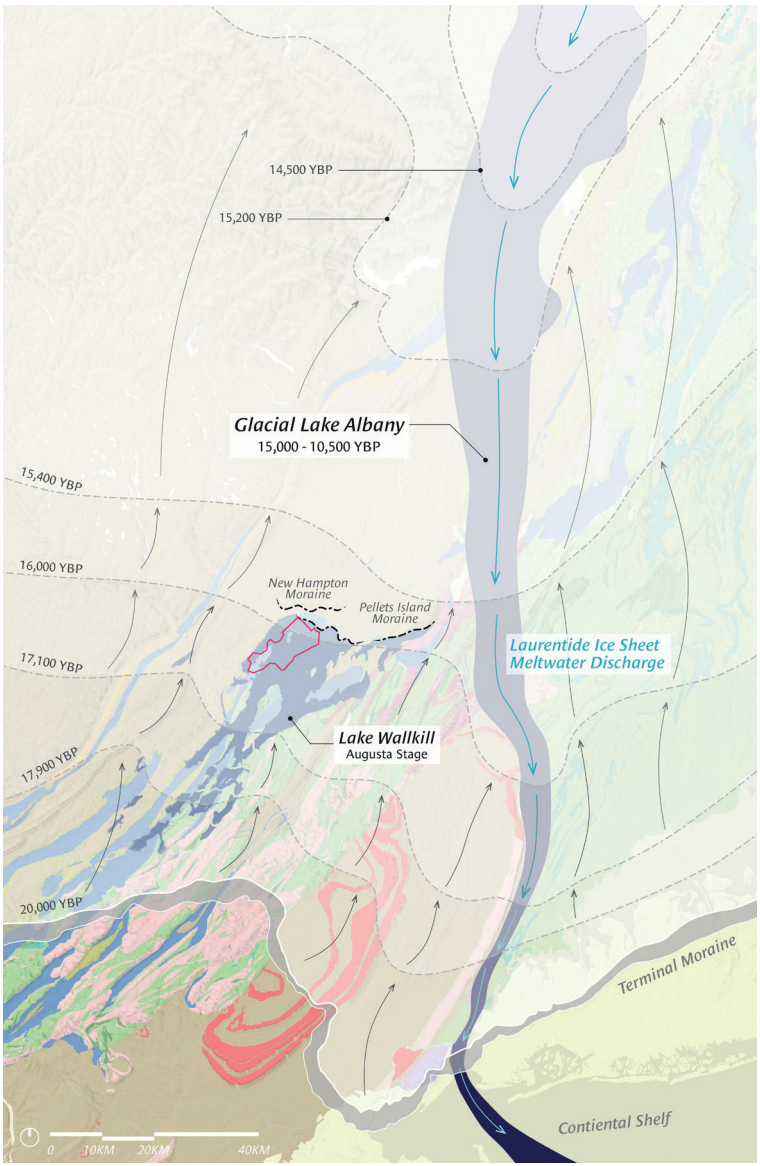



**Fig. 5**
Timeline map of ice retreat after Last Glacial Maximum

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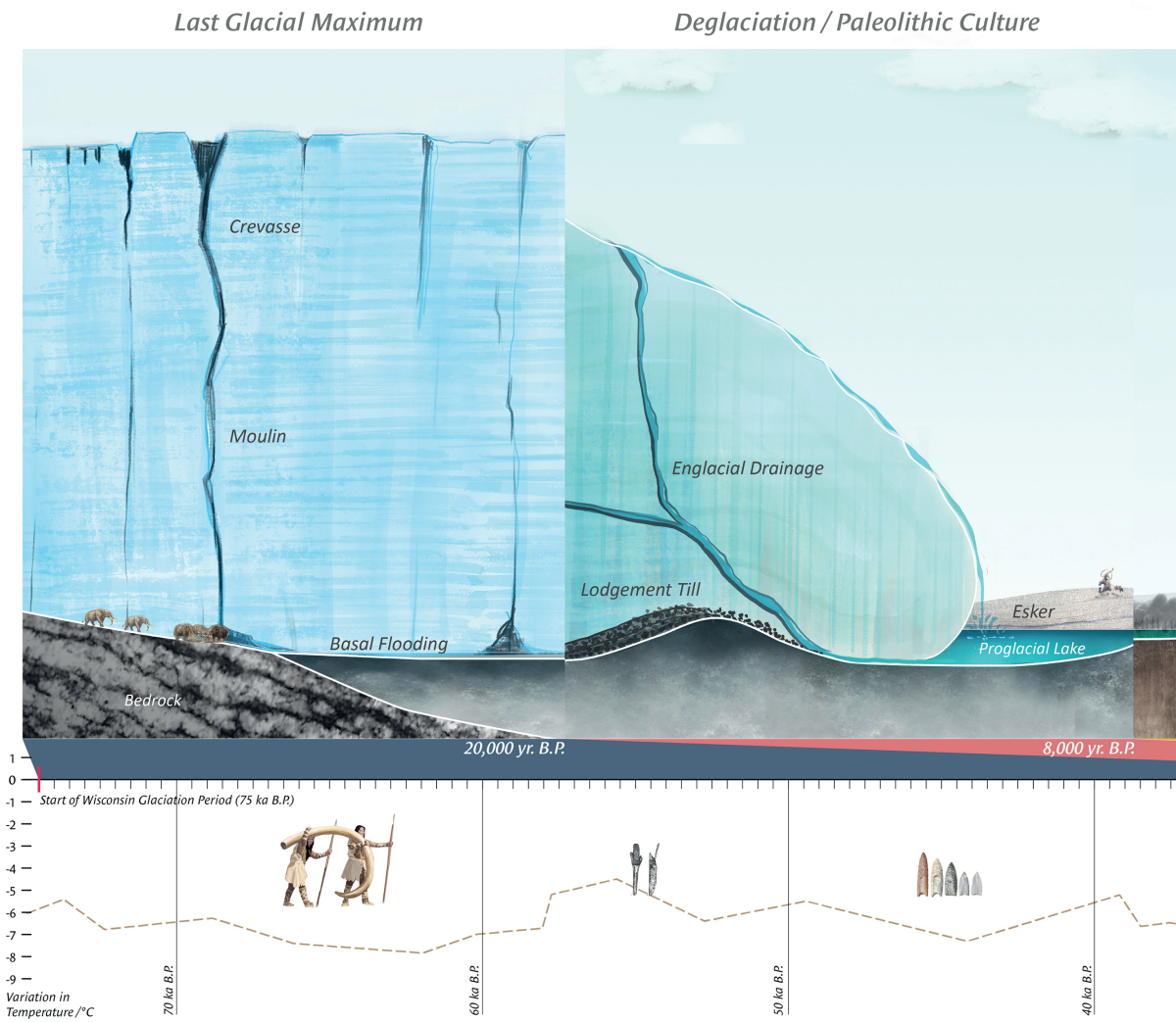




**Fig. 6**
Historical transect of regional landscape evolution

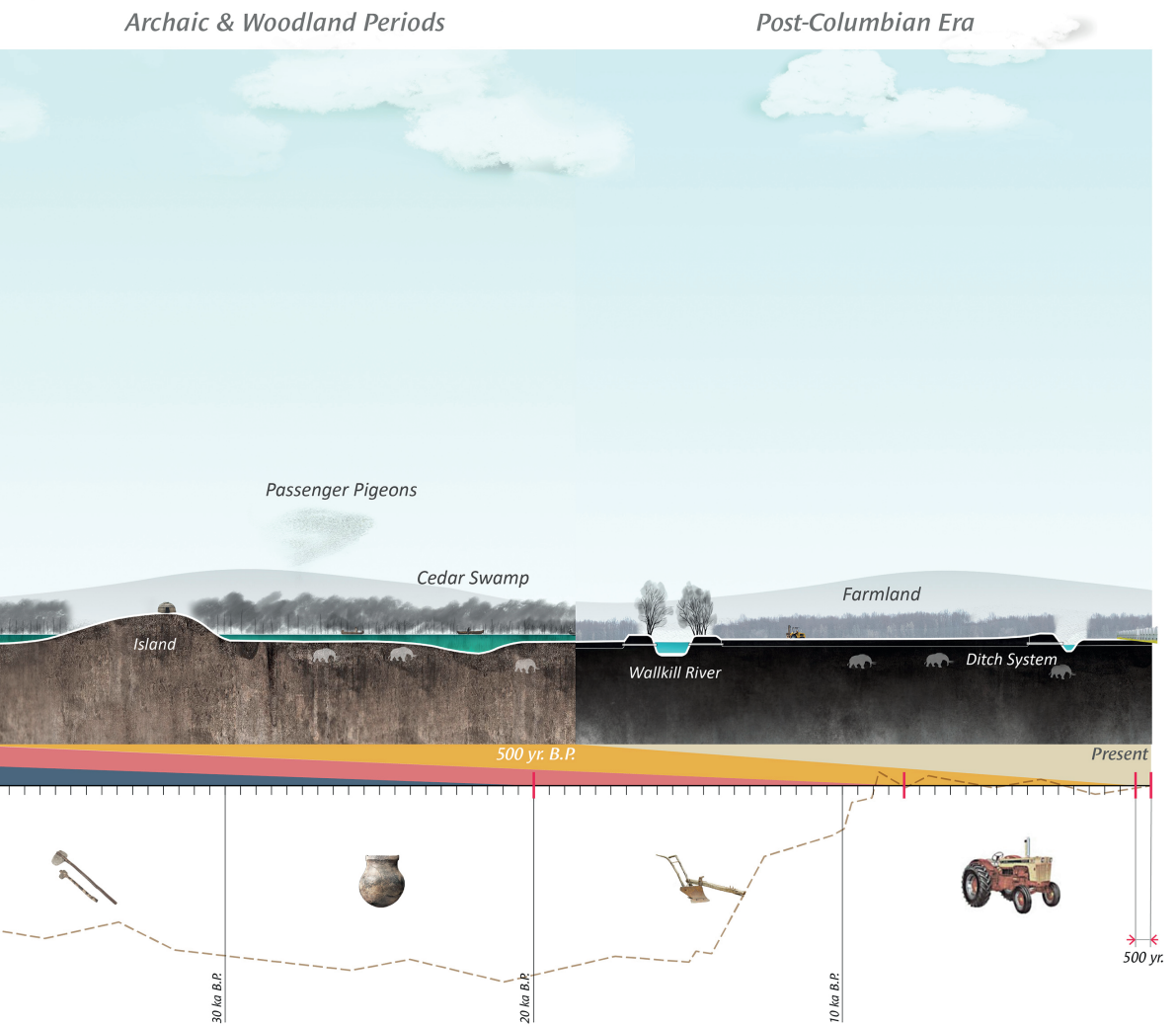
Archaic & Woodland Periods
Post-Columbian Era
Passenger Pigeons
Cedar Swamp
Island
Farmland
Wallkill River
Ditch System
500 yr. B.P.
Present
30 ka B.P.
20 ka B.P.
10 ka B.P.
500 yr.

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**Fig. 7**
Plan of abandoned sand mine

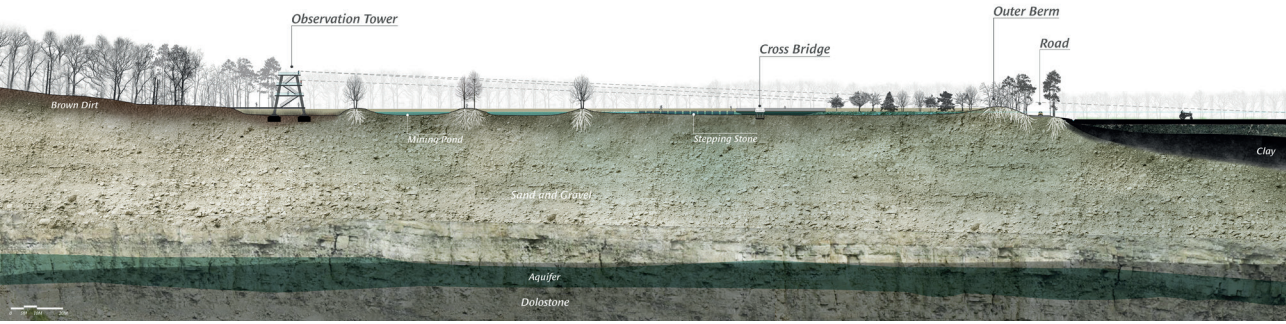


**Fig. 8**
Section of a new vantage point

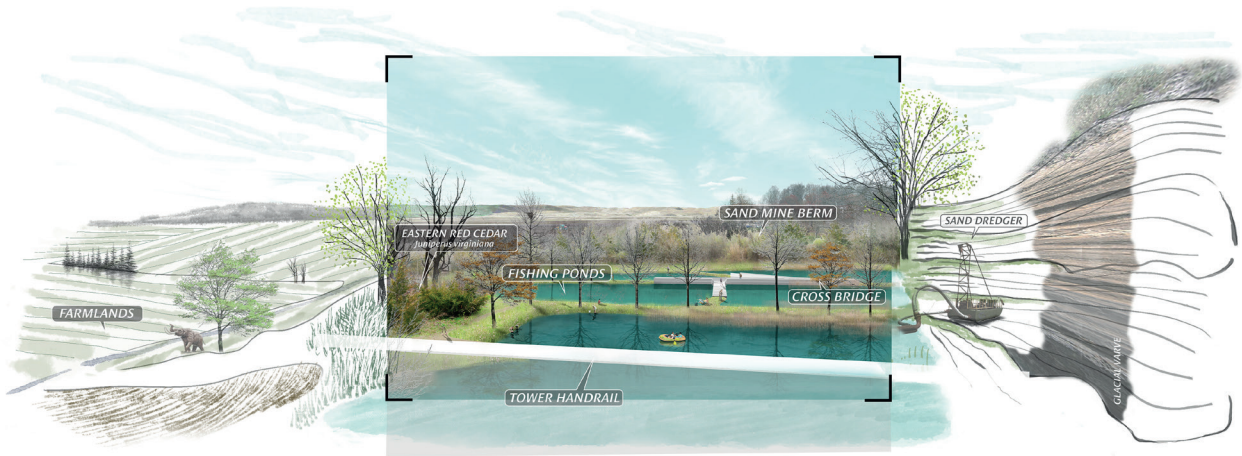


**Fig. 9**
View from the tower in present day and historical imagination

**Fig. 10 –** Aerial and indoor view of the archaeological site in Tianluoshan (aerial photo: Zhejiang Antique Archaeology Institute, 2018)



**Case study 3: reversing the historical imagination in an archaeological site (Yuyao, China)**

As shown in the previous examples, representational diagrams navigate the mind to actively walk in an upscaled spatial and time frame, possibly connecting the walker with unseen landscape agents. The third case focuses on decoding an interior landscape where walkers circumscribe an enclosed archaeological site in Yuyao, Zhejiang Province, China. As shown in the conceptual framework diagram (fig.1), the projection of imaginary walking goes from an interior scale to a territorial scale. It's worth noting that its direction is not solely from today to the past, but a reversed perspective of "the other walkers" who imagine their future is also revealed. By doing so, the diagram manifests the reciprocity in historical imagination and forms a projection shape of a sand glass.

Located in the Xiang'ao Village in Sanqi Town of Yuyao City in Zhejiang Province, China, the Tianluoshan Archaeological Site is enveloped by low hills in the basin of the Yao River (Fig.10). It is about 22 kilometers from its nearest northern coastline and surrounded by low and wet rice fields. Its size is more than 30,000 square meters, and its elevation is about 2.3 meters above sea level with a range of depth between 2 and 3 meters (Zheng et al., 2016). The site was discovered in 2001 and soon identified as a crucial locale for investigating the regional paleogeography and Neolithic culture of the Hemudu people. Subsequent archaeological works started in 2004 and discovered the most ancient evidence of swamp-type rice farming in the world (Wen et al., 2014). In 2007, a protective white dome was built over the site, and the locale was developed into an institution for educational and tourism purposes.

On site, earth strata testify geography and climate morphology in the past, reflecting a complex relationship between the depth of soil and the shift of Hangzhou Bay coastline. The Bay coastline has been enduring two kinds of dynamics in opposite directions. Toward the land, the sea level has been rising since the Neolithic age and pushing the coastline to the continent; away from the land, the re-routed Yellow River in Northern China has transported a significant amount of sand along the east coast, which has been sedimented in the Bay mouth since about 1,000 years ago (Elvin and Liu, 1999).

In a hybrid manner, the site is mapped in its geographical context and differentiated retrospectively into a column of historical transects. The map and transects are placed on two sides in the composition, between which is the deconstructive illustration of the site (Fig.11). Excavated soil profiles from the site are listed on the right side of the drawing in accordance with their excavated depth. Each with distinctive features, these samples are paired with a corresponding transect back in time. The centered site illustration consists of three layers:

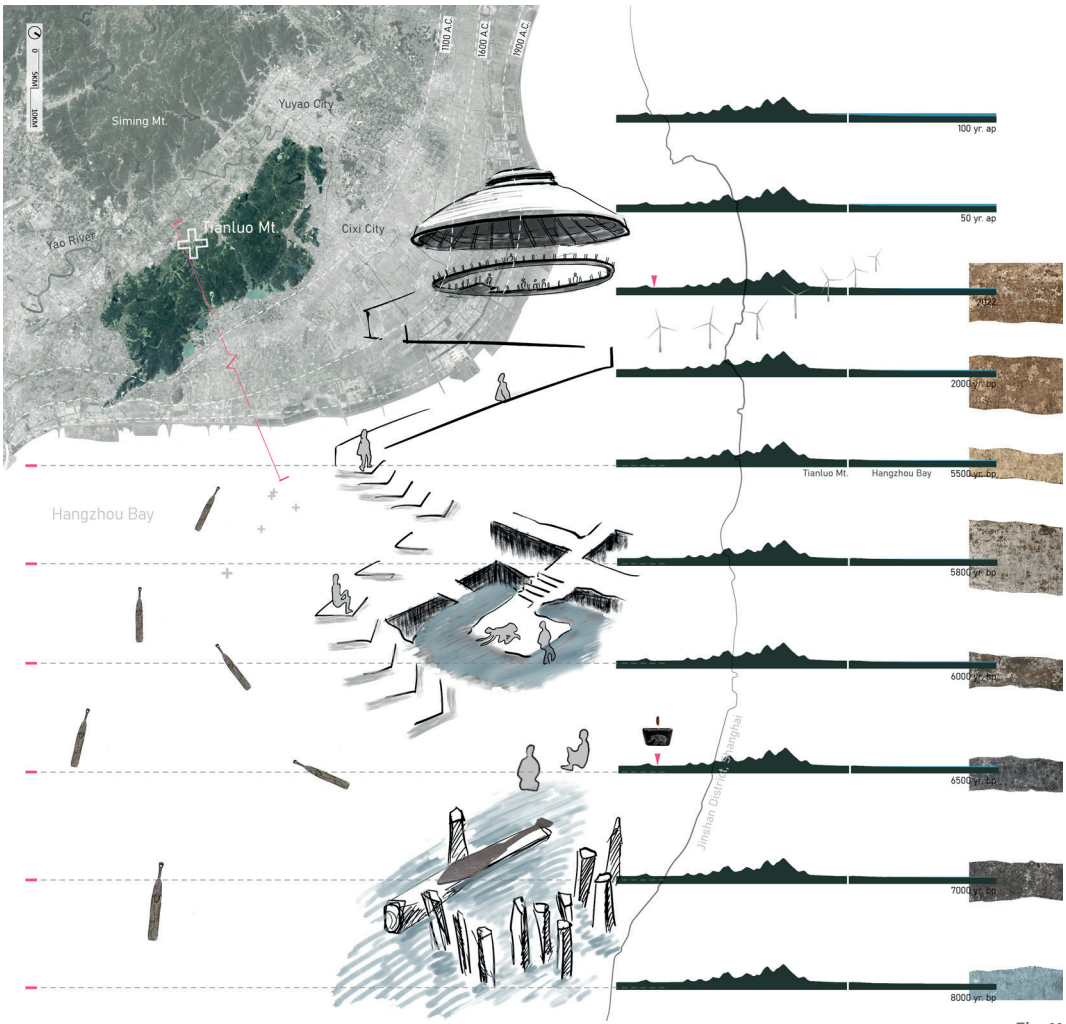


**Fig. 11**
Hybrid drawing of environmental morphology in Hangzhou Bay

the circulation of visitors, the working zone of archaeologists, and the excavated ground of the Hemudu settlement. Despite that the layers share the same space, each designates a unique historical period. A moving figure is drawn like a thread that descends to the underground and connects each layered space in series. By doing so, a projected walking process is depicted to hold dialogues with other human roles in imaginary scenarios. Regarding in-situ walking and staying, the archaeological site is featured with three types of pathways and walking activities, which are elevated boardwalks for common visitors, gridded earth paths for research staff, and traces of the livelihood of the Hemudu people. The excavation area is strictly protected, which means that the excavated paths are left for observing rather than for walking, creating a tension between eyes and feet. Gridded earth paths and structural relics of Hemudu settlements provide visual traces for visitors to imagine alternative use of the space here, which penetrates through 8000 years of history.

Similar to that of the Black Dirt Region in the US, the archaeological condition in Tianluoshan reveals regional landscape evolution. In fact, the rise of sea level contributes to the extinction of the Hemudu culture since more and more evidence has shown that farmlands were inundated 6500 years ago due to the risen water (Wen et al., 2014). Imagining the descendance of in-situ walking is to comprehend human society's succession under environmental pressure, and the diagrammed relation between soil depth and water intrusion reflects precisely this rationale.

As an illustrative drawing, the imaginary walking shown in the third case is rooted in the archaeological site, which overlaps the speculated territory with the scene in real-time. Rather than conceiving both the milieu and the projected figure in mind, the hybrid diagram is based on the current archaeological scene and aims to complement its historical entirety. Furthermore, it invites visitors to imagine ancient walkers' prospect once in this place and thus provokes the consideration of a historical intersubjectivity. By doing so, an empathetic understanding of the reciprocal relation between history and the present is invoked.

**Conclusion**

Walking is not only a bodily movement on the actual ground but also a projective mind exploring an imagined territory. In juxtaposition, staying not only allows for a pause to reflect shortly on the walking experience but also a chance for a projective stroll in mind. The paper tries to demonstrate that a representational diagram, as a cognitive medium, can reconfigure the dual status of walking and staying in the landscape. As Berque (1993) pointed out, landscape is different from environment because landscape, as the sensible aspect of a milieu, relies on a collective subjectivity. Constructing a projective land in mind, the representational diagram itself is the vessel for human subjectivity to operate. As Corner reminded us, the embedded metaphoricity of drawing enables "fountains of possibilities (to) emerge before the percipient" and allows the imagination to "impress itself into the field" (Corner, 2014, p. 184-185). This speculative value of drawing indicates its key role in accomplishing the subjective part of landscape. As a meta-diagram, the conceptual framework diagram delineates the trajectory, depth, and realm of how representation diagrams mediate our cognizance toward a holistic idea of landscape. It reveals that a present-day walking can correspond with an archived moment in a map or transect. In such correspondence, the spatial-temporal dimension of landscape experience can be immensely deepened and its territorial meaning uncovered, being it in Europe, North America, or East Asia.

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