

# European Encounters

Estates and Landscapes

Conference report



European Network for Country House and Estate Research  
(ENCOUNTER)

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## Introduction

From the 6<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> October 2015 *Gammel Estrup – the Manor Museum* in Denmark hosted the international conference 'European Encounters. Estates and Landscapes'. The central theme of the conference was the estate and the manorial landscape. The conference examined the physical, social and symbolic interaction of the house, gardens and estate lands in a historical perspective. It explored similarities and differences in regions across Europe and discussed how estate landscapes are preserved and interpreted as cultural heritage today. Crossing traditional boundaries between history, archaeology, art history, architecture and heritage management, the conference programme presented acclaimed scholars and participants from a number of European countries.

The group of 40 participants welcomed the opportunity to learn about and compare estate landscapes from different parts of Europe, and to share the common interest in country houses, estates and landscapes.

A very positive outcome of the conference was the concluding formation of *ENCOUNTER: European Network for Country House and Estate Research* among the conference participants. The aim of the network is to form European partnerships between scholars and cultural institutions who share a professional interest in research and interpretation of manor and country house history.

As organisers of the conference, we were very pleased to see the network become a reality and we are looking forward to taking part in its future activities. We hope to see common research and education projects as well as heritage projects and public initiatives unfold in the future, not to mention many interesting meetings, seminars and conferences. In addition, we hope the network will expand in the future and thereby improve our opportunities to exchange knowledge with experts all over Europe and work for our common interests and the benefit of the European country house as a common cultural legacy.

It would not have been possible to arrange this conference without the financial support of the *Nordisk Kulturfond, Aarhus 2017 – European Capital of Culture* and the *Central Denmark Region*. Many thanks for this essential support.

Finally but importantly, I wish to thank the conference speakers and all of the conference participants for their commitment and contributions, which were vital to the successful outcome of the two days at Gammel Estrup.

Kind regards

Gammel Estrup – the Manor Museum

Britta Andersen

Museum director, chairman The Danish Research Centre for Manorial Studies.



## Programme

**Tuesday, 6th October 2015**

9.00:	Bus from Randers – Gammel Estrup
9.40-10.15:	Registration and coffee
10.15-10.20:	Welcome
	Britta Andersen, Gammel Estrup – the Manor Museum
10.20-11.00:	<b>Estates and the creation of a modern landscape</b>
	Jonathan Finch, Historical Archaeology, University of York
11.00-11.10:	Discussion
11:10-11.50:	<b>The flower of agriculture. The garden as a model for farming in 19<sup>th</sup>-century Skåne</b>
	Åsa Klintborg Ahlklo, Department of Landscape Architecture, Planning and Management, SLU, Alnarp
11.50-12.00:	Discussion
12.00-13.15:	Lunch
	<b>Sessions: Heritage and research</b>
13.15-14.00:	- <i>The Austrått project</i> , Daniel Johansen, Sverresborg, Trondheim
	- <i>The staged manor landscape. The development of the county of Knuthenborg in the second half of the 19th century</i>
	Jesper Munk Andersen, Museum Lolland-Falster
14.00-14.10:	Break
14.10-15.00	- <i>Research Center Sanssouci: Cultural heritage of monarchies in modern Europe</i> . Jürgen Luh, Stiftung Preussische Schlösser und Gärten Berlin-Brandenburg
	- <i>Short presentations</i>
15.00-15.20:	Coffee
15.20-16.00:	<b>Intersections: History, Heritage and the Country House</b>
	Elaine Chalus, Roberta Anderson & Alison Hems, Bath Spa University
16.00-17.30:	<b>Guided Tour: Gammel Estrup – the Manor Museum</b>
	Britta Andersen, Museum Director, Gammel Estrup – the Manor Museum
18.30:	Dinner at Gammel Estrup (Great Hall)
22.00:	Bus from Gammel Estrup to Randers

**Wednesday, 7th October 2015**

- 8.30: Bus from Randers – Gammel Estrup
- 9.20-10.00: **Power, Grace and Authority.**  
**The cultural landscape of Danish estates**  
Mikkel Venborg Pedersen, National Museum of Denmark, Copenhagen
- 10.00-10.10: Discussion
- 10.10-10.40: Coffee
- 10.40-11.20: **Providing a network for a European Heritage – Manor Houses in the South Baltic Region**  
Kilian Heck, Caspar-David-Friedrich Institut, Universität Greifswald
- 11.20-11.30: Discussion
- 11.30-12.30: Lunch
- 12.30-14.30: **Workshop:**  
**European Network for Manorial and Country House Studies**
- 14.30 Bus from Gammel Estrup to Aarhus Airport
- 14.30-14.45 **Closing remarks**  
Britta Andersen, Gammel Estrup – the Manor Museum
- 14.40-15.00 Coffee
- 15.00: Bus from Gammel Estrup to Randers





## Conference abstracts

### **Estates and the creation of the modern landscape**

*Jonathan Finch*

The landed estate was an important and active agent in the creation of the modern landscape; and as such – as a common cultural phenomenon – it is worthy of study in all its various manifestations across Europe. The estate was a cultural landscape within which, not just the elite, but whole communities lived out their material lives. The landed estate was an integral piece of the state, nation and locality. Definitions and terminology vary across Europe, but there are different associations with the use of manor house and country house in the UK. A number of social, political and cultural shifts helped fashion the 'country house' from the late seventeenth century, but the eighteenth century saw classical models that linked property to power, deployed in the face of increasing commercialism in the economy and the rural landscape as a simile for political and social stability.

Far from being archaic and traditional, landed estates were a manifestation of modernity. The distinguishing feature of the estate was unlimited, or very partially limited, power over the exploitation and physical appearance of an extensive tract of countryside. One of the key changes in the anatomy of the country house was the separation of the productive elements away from the house on larger gentry estates from the mid-eighteenth century. The wider estate land was transformed through improvement and enclosure, though it is important to recognise the geographical distribution of both landed estates and the enclosure movement. Many larger landowners also participated directly or otherwise in trans-Atlantic trade and held lands and slaves in the New World which need to be recognised in our characterisation of the modern landed estate.





## The Flower of Agriculture

The Garden as a model for farming in 19th century Skåne, Sweden

*Åsa Klintborg Ahlklo*

The rural garden as “the flower of agriculture” or as a model for farming in 19<sup>th</sup> century Skåne sheds light on the connection between the garden and farming as illustrated in the model farm landscapes of Skåne. Within the sphere of husbandry the garden played several different roles, as a place for trial, for propagation and improvement, providing small-scale knowledge which could be systematized and applied on a larger scale. At the same time the garden and the work there could be looked upon metaphorically as human cultivation.

My studies demonstrate that the garden, both physically and metaphorically, constitutes a conceptual part in the build-up of the model estate in 19<sup>th</sup> century Skåne and that the perspective of garden history contributes to a deeper understanding of the radical transformation of the landscape which characterizes the Scanian landscape of the agrarian reforms.





## **The heritage landscape of Austrått manor – a development project**

*Daniel Johansen*

In 2014 The Norwegian Science Council granted the record sum of 600 000 euros to a project focusing on the aesthetical landscape plans that have shaped the surroundings of Austrått manor in Ørland in the last 500 years. This is the first time the council has granted funding to a project of this nature. The Norwegian University of Life Sciences (UMB) has been preparing this project together with Ørland cultural centre since 2009. The project will be carried out in cooperation with The Norwegian Institute for Cultural Heritage Research (NIKU) and The Norwegian Institute for City and Regional planning (NIBR). The aim is both to scan the terrain and carry out garden archaeological excavations in the gardens, in the hunting park and along the historic roads leading to the manor. The project will form the basis for a new restoration and reconstruction plan for the Austrått manor landscape.

Ørland cultural centre is working parallel to this with a development plan for the parts of the manor heritage landscape that will not be investigated. The Dowry and the cottages of the different specialized crofters or their remains, are being restored and marked with cultural historical signs. This is done to show the complexity of a historic manor. A program for the reopening of historical roads and paths in the landscape has also started and has opened seven kilometres of paths during 2015. This project is financed by Ørland Municipality and the Directorate for the Environment. The cultural centre is also reconstructing the old millpond that was drained 25 years ago. That will recreate 25 hectares of lake and restore the surroundings partly as a bird sanctuary and partly as a recreation zone for the public.

Austrått is now the cultural landscape in Norway that is undergoing the greatest development and most research work based on cultural historical terms. The aim of all the projects is to use information as a tool to increase the knowledge and appreciation of the manor landscape and through that build local understanding for preservation.





## The Staged Manor Landscape

The development of the Knuthenborg estate in the second half of the 19th century

*Jesper Munk Andersen*

In 2012 Museum Lolland-Falster opened the exhibition project *Manor & Landscape Lolland*. Through studies of selected manor landscapes on the island of Lolland, the project conveys the story of the well-preserved manorial landscape on the island.



The development and staging of the Knuthenborg estate is a good example of the general trend that the manorial landscape of Lolland was subject to in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Beginning in the 1840s with the sale of tenant farms and the cultivation of new sources of income under Frederick Marcus Count Knuth, the holder of the title from 1837 to 1856, the development culminated in the 1860s with the staging of the landscape and marking of the ownership under his successor, Eggert Christopher Count Knuth. The drainage and cultivation of the fields, the investments in industrial enterprises and the beginning of the renewal of copyhold farms contributed to characterizing the estate in the landscape along with the construction of official residences for the employees, the preservation of ancient barrows and the planting of new hunting grounds. From the smallest forest guardhouse at the borders of the estate to the headquarters, and the never-realized plans for a magnificent manor house, nobody could have any doubts about the prosperity and ownership of the Knuthenborg estate in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

In this period the increased staging of the land was a general trend at the manors on Lolland, largely inspired by the English manorial landscape. Particularly in the largest estates on the island and at the fiefs (entailed estates), such as the Knuthenborg estate, the staging was significant. Knuthenborg is a good example because the development and staging of the estate was so closely linked to the two counts, particularly to the youngest count, who was anglophile to a degree that neither before nor since has been observed in a Danish context.

## **The Research Center Sanssouci – RECS – and its program**

*Jürgen Luh*

On July 1<sup>st</sup>, the Prussian Palaces and Gardens Foundation Berlin-Brandenburg brought the Research Center Sanssouci, in short: RECS, into being.

The research interest of the RECS applies — mindful of the links with the Foundation of Prussian Palaces and Gardens and its tasks — such as preserving, studying and promoting the cultural heritage of the Hohenzollern monarchy — first the significance of the monarchy's cultural heritage in modern Europe. Eventually, the Foundation took on responsibility for 32 Museum palaces, about 150 historic buildings and 800 hectares of gardens from the legacy of the Hohenzollern. Based on these cultural assets, i.e. the legacy of the Hohenzollern monarchy, the RECS initiated a long-term program to comprehensively examine the monarchic heritage in modern Europe.



The aim is to derive or develop activities from the stimulated research, activities which are suitable

- To illustrate the importance of the monarchic cultural heritage as a common European heritage
- To preserve this heritage for future generations
- To convey the monarchical heritage and its importance to the people of Europe as fundamental to a common Europe.



## **Rethinking what matters: interpreting English historic houses**

*Alison Hems*

This paper offered a brief survey of current approaches to the interpretation of historic houses in England. It considered the significant changes that have taken place in the interpretation of historic houses over the last twenty years, including the National Trust's moving evocation of a First World War hospital at Dunham Massey in Cheshire and the work of the Thames Valley Country House Partnership. It outlined attempts to remove barriers and to attract a broader audience – or, in the words of a former chair of the National Trust, to 'bring the house to life'. However, it questioned the apparent preoccupation with the domestic details of life below stairs – a superficial democratisation of the story – and the strength of the emotional connection between house and visitor. It asked how historic houses might learn from the best contemporary museums in both revealing the past and engaging with the present; it suggested that bolder, more courageous storytelling might be necessary if the historic house is to redefine its purpose for the future.

## **Intersections: History, Heritage & the Country House**

*Elaine Chalus*

This presentation focused primarily on the work that is being done at Bath Spa University at undergraduate, graduate and academic levels to develop teaching, training and research examining various aspects of the intersections between History, Heritage and the country house. The University provides an excellent location for this, as country houses form the core buildings of two of its campuses and the History and Heritage departments have connections with a range of Heritage institutions, including the National Trust. At present, the University offers an undergraduate module in History for finalists (Year 3 undergraduates) entitled *People in a Landscape*, which introduces students to the study of the country house and estate. A new module is also being developed which would use one National Trust country house – possibly Stourhead – as a way of teaching both History and Heritage undergraduates. Postgraduate training is currently being offered to one of our doctoral students via a placement at National Trust Killerton through the University's membership of the South West & Wales Doctoral Training Partnership. The presentation ended with a consideration of the benefits, opportunities and challenges embodied in developing these sorts of connections, as well as academic research projects.

## Humanities at Work: Student Placement Modules

*Roberta Anderson*

This paper discussed a series of placement modules, 'Humanities at Work', at Bath Spa. The purpose of these is to give students the opportunity to complete an undergraduate level project placement, building experience of, and confidence in, essential work place skills. The placement has many benefits. It allows students to develop new skills, build confidence and gain relevant experience in the organisation or industry of their choice.

The purpose of the paper was to introduce the group to the concept of students helping to develop the archives, libraries and cultural history interpretation of their country houses. Not only does the placement allow students to use the skills they are developing as historians, but they are able to provide a useful service to the placement providers, who, in many cases, do not have the staff, time or finances to complete projects which they have on their books. In this way, students can be given a specific project, which they can see through from beginning to end. Over the years these projects have included curating exhibitions, writing new and updated interpretation boards, archiving, book conservation, etc. all under the supervision of experts in the field.

So, a project placement can be a key part of personal and career development and provides opportunities for students to put theory into practice and to identify the relevance of their academic studies in the world of work; to value and develop the key skills that are in demand from employers, including effective communication, time management, working as part of a team, self-reliance and the ability to solve problems; they can gain marketable experience and skills that will be of benefit when they are looking for a job following graduation; learn about workplace cultures; gain experience of working to deadlines and test whether a particular sector of work or individual company is of interest as a potential employer when they graduate.





## **Power, Grace, and Authority**

### The cultural Landscape of Danish Estates

*Mikkel Venborg Pedersen*

Denmark is marked by its cultural landscape and to a great degree the estates and manors characterize this cultural landscape; Danes even speak of a distinct manorial landscape. This is true for the way the lords have made their mark with main buildings, parks and symbolic expressions manifested in avenues and the many smaller houses and cottages of the estate, etc. And it is also true for the way agriculture and other production have marked the landscape. The manorial landscape is a colourful bouquet consisting of the manors, their people and their history.

Thus manors are not just big houses, but form central points in greater environments, both physically and mentally. The lecture served both as an introduction to this totality and its elements and was also a methodological discussion of fruitful ways to perceive such a historic and ever-transforming landscape, acknowledging that many manor owners more consciously than is often appreciated almost 'furbished' their landscapes, guided by their own ideas of how the world ought to be in the little part of it they could and should rule. Alternating between seeing the landscape as a mono-vocal scene (view of the masters) and a multi-vocal arena (including other masters and a variety of subordinates), motives, strategies and perceptions were addressed as well as the very physical elements used and kept in the manorial landscape. Place itself and the spatial construction of place stood in focus.



## Providing a network for a European Heritage

### Manor Houses in the South Baltic Region

*Kilian Heck*

The architectural and historical relations between the manor houses in the countries around the Baltic Sea provide an interesting framework for comparative studies. Individual architects would work in different countries and manor houses across vast distances display striking likenesses in form, shape and detail. This study thus exemplifies how the history and heritage of manor houses must be perceived in a European context. Manor houses in the region of former East Prussia are often in a poor state of repair and decaying fast. A transnational cooperation project between Germany and Poland seeks to create digital reconstructions of baroque castles and gardens as a way of preserving and presenting an important architectural heritage of manors, otherwise often neglected.

A development plan for the manor house *Steinort/Sztynort* involved processes of historical documentation, preservation and reconstruction of the park, buildings and interiors, and several different concepts for future use. The analysis of the heritage project showed how competing interests (economic, political, aesthetic, cultural) by different shareholders could jeopardize the historical and aesthetic values of the estate landscape, and advocated for a strong stand by scholars and professionals to guard and protect heritage values in manors – locally, nationally and internationally.





## Conference summary

### European Encounters at Gammel Estrup – the manor museum

#### Workshop

The conference programme concluded with a workshop where participants were invited to plan future initiatives for the ENCOUNTER-network. Divided into four groups, participants discussed issues such as research interests, activities and organization; partnerships, projects and funding options. Key points from the groups were presented to the conference by the group chairmen.

Oliver Cox, TORCH, Oxford University, pointed on behalf of the group to the areas of *educational policies* and *digitalization* for developing joint projects within the network, and to the possibility of establishing a *catalogue of best practice-case studies* in the field of country houses. *National networks* would be useful in support of the international work. Addressing organizational matters, Britta Andersen, Gammel Estrup – the Manor Museum, suggested forming a steering group to head the network.

Elaine Chalus, Bath Spa University, addressed the question of group identity and suggested coining an easily recognizable name, and that the network may take steps to secure ‘patrons’, who could endorse the network and license its projects towards donators. The network should be organized through Facebook, Twitter, a newsletter and short-term workshops. Göran Ulväng, Uppsala University, added his opinion, that larger conferences preferably could be held at two or three year intervals.

The network should be outward-reaching and involve public programmes and interpretation. The network should consider contacts or an affiliation with the *European Landowners Association*. To get started, network members should look for local and national *small money grants* as upstart measure for seeking larger research grants. Patrik Olsson, Regional Museum Kristianstad, mentioned how European-wide popular publications could be achieved with small grants.

Mikkel Venborg Pedersen, National Museum of Denmark, made an outline of potential research themes of interest to the network:

- *Landscape*

- *Identity* (material markers; manor owner identities)
- *Transcultural movements*
- *Preservation and heritage*
- *Database of European country houses* (mapping, social media; comparative studies of estate structure in Europe)
- *Education* (student exchange, student placements, summer school etc.)

He then stressed the importance of communicating to the public, and to present initiatives which demonstrated the importance of the network.

Jonathan Finch, University of York, pointed to the huge potential of country houses as positive, transnational markers of a common heritage and European identity. However, the perception of country houses as representatives of an elitist, traditional and hierarchical societal order meant that special attention should be directed at including the history (and histories) of *all* people working and living at the estate, thus presenting a more comprehensive interpretation of the cultural legacy of country houses and manors in Europe. He then pointed to the *cultural landscape of the country house and estate* as an overall header under which sub-themes could be arranged.

Nina Koefoed, Aarhus University, chaired the ensuing discussion between participants which ended with an agreement on a number of initiatives:

### **Immediate initiatives**

- Dansk Center for Herregårdsforskning/The Danish Research Centre for Manorial Studies will host a website with an introduction to the network, its members and activities.  
<http://herregaardsforskning.dk/netvaerknetwork/encounter-european-network-for-country-house-and-estate-research.aspx>
- The research centre will produce a mailing list for the network to share updates from the conference and future activities. Further down the line a newsletter will be formed. Members of the network are invited to send news for the list/letter to [ssb@gammelestrup.dk](mailto:ssb@gammelestrup.dk)
- A Facebook group was established. Please join at:  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1674516309435914/?fref=ts>



### Mid-term and longer-term initiatives

- The network will establish an advisory board of 5-8 members  
*Subsequently the steering group was formed consisting of:*
  - *Britta Andersen, Gammel Estrup – the Manor Museum (chair)*
  - *Jonathan Finch, University of York*
  - *Göran Ulväng, Uppsala University*
  - *Yme Kuiper, University of Groningen*
  - *Kilian Heck, University of Greifswald*
  - *Arne Bugge Amundsen, Oslo University*
- The network will have its next meeting, addressing some of the themes from the Gammel Estrup conference, in 2016 at Kings Manor, University of York, UK (att. Jonathan Finch)
- In 2017 the Danish research centre will host a conference arranged by the network as part of the Aarhus European Capital of Culture celebration.
- As a first step 'small money' funding initiatives for network activities should be initiated in the individual countries.
- In the long term, the network will produce applications for larger-scale activities such as common research and education projects, heritage projects, public initiatives and other common interests of the network.



## List of participants

<b>Daniel Johansen</b>	Folkemuseet/Austrått, Norway
<b>Åsa Klintborg Ahlklo</b>	The Department of Landscape Architecture, Planning and Management (SLU), Alnarp
<b>Jesper Munk Andersen</b>	Museum Lolland-Falster, Denmark
<b>Mikkel Venborg Pedersen</b>	Nationalmuseet, Denmark
<b>Nina Koefoed</b>	Aarhus Universitet, Denmark
<b>Jonathan Finch</b>	University of York, Great Britain
<b>Elaine Chalus</b>	University of Bath Spa, Great Britain
<b>Roberta Anderson</b>	University of Bath Spa, Great Britain
<b>Alison Hems</b>	University of Bath Spa, Great Britain
<b>Jürgen Luh</b>	Stiftung Preussische Schlösser und Gärten, Germany
<b>Kilian Heck</b>	Universität Greifswald, Germany
<b>Gerdy Verschuure</b>	Delft University of Technology, Netherlands
<b>Aina Aske</b>	Larvik Museum, Norway
<b>Lars Jacob Hvinden-Haug</b>	Norsk Institut for Kulturminneforskning, Norway
<b>Kirsten Bertheau Nøklebye</b>	Freelance, Norway
<b>Jøril Finstad</b>	Forsvarsbygg Nasjonale Festningsverk, Norway
<b>Ulla Strømberg</b>	DEMHIST (ICOM), Denmark
<b>Niels Møllergaard</b>	Styrelsen for Slotte og Kulturejendomme, Denmark
<b>Peter Bering</b>	Arkitekt Bering, Denmark
<b>Ulla Kjær</b>	Nationalmuseet, Denmark
<b>Kristine Dyrmann</b>	Aarhus Universitet, Denmark
<b>Jesper Meyer Christensen</b>	Museum Midtjylland, Denmark



<b>Jesper Hjermind</b>	Viborg Museum, Denmark
<b>Patrik Olsson</b>	Lunds Universitet, Sweden
<b>Göran Ulväng</b>	Uppsala Universitet, Sweden
<b>Gustav Olsson</b>	Stiftelsen Nordiska Museet, Julita Gård, Sweden
<b>Liva Klabere</b>	Rundale Palace, Latvia
<b>Oliver Cox</b>	Oxford University, Great Britain
<b>Paul Zalewski</b>	Europa-Universität Viadrina, Germany
<b>Olga Zabalueva</b>	DEMHIST (ICOM)
<b>Hans von Gaffron und Oberstradam</b>	GGO Foundation, Sweden
<b>Pauline von Gaffron und Oberstradam</b>	Stiftelsen CLIE, Sweden
<b>Kirsten Lund Andersen</b>	Landskabsarkitekter Raadvad, Denmark
<b>Britta Andersen</b>	Gammel Estrup – Herregårdsmuseet, Denmark
<b>Signe Steen Boeskov</b>	Dansk Center for Herregårdsforskning, Gammel Estrup – Herregårdsmuseet, Denmark
<b>Mikael Frausing</b>	Dansk Center for Herregårdsforskning, Gammel Estrup – Herregårdsmuseet, Denmark
<b>Dorte Kook Lyngholm</b>	Dansk Center for Herregårdsforskning, Gammel Estrup – Herregårdsmuseet, Denmark
<b>Anders Sinding</b>	Dansk Center for Herregårdsforskning, Gammel Estrup – Herregårdsmuseet, Denmark

