

CfP: Cistercian nuns shaping landscape

In 2019 our network *Cisterscapes* published a conference volume on the Cistercians as shapers of their landscapes (Diversity in Unity - Cistercian Monastic Landscapes in Central Europe, German: *Vielfalt in der Einheit – Zisterziensische Klosterlandschaften in Mitteleuropa*, Kunstverlag Josef Fink 190pp). By means of inventories of specific landscape elements and structures in the sphere of influence of male Cistercians, we confirmed the concept of specifically Cistercian cultural landscapes. Through the Cistercian ideal of self-sufficiency and the regular transfer of knowledge within the order the monasteries became formative for their landscapes - so profoundly that their influence can still be experienced today. Through the network of filiations, the impact spread throughout Europe creating a unity in diversity. This concept of Cistercian cultural landscapes is the basis for our transnational application for the European Heritage Label (EHL) in the category of cultural landscape. Our network, *Cisterscapes*, is formed by 17 partner sites located in Austria, the Czech Republic, Germany, Poland and Slovenia. All the sites in our network go back to the filiation line of Morimond. They were all monks' monasteries. In order not to unduly transfer our findings to Cistercian nuns' convents, but to gain insights into their role in the shaping of cultural landscapes, we hold the following questions to be paramount:

1. What is the nuns' role in the shaping of cultural landscape? Is it not them with their social bonds who shape the landscape and not the monastery as an "institution"? What specificities emerge in the relations between Cistercian nuns and their monastic family in sources, research and public perception? What are the myths or stereotypes in the construction of these roles which need to be questioned?
2. In how far do nuns' and monks' communities differ in terms of their estates and economic activities? Were nuns' convents really in general smaller than monks' monasteries? How does the relation change in the early modern period, after many monasteries were abolished while numerous convents continued?
3. How do differences in estate and economic activity affect the character of the cultural landscape which is shaped? Did smaller monastic economies shape the cultural landscape qualitatively less or differently? What role did regional differences (e.g. old and newly settled land) play? Are there periods of time which are particularly favourable for landscape shaping processes? Is the influence on the landscapes still perceptible and why – or why not?
4. What, exactly, is the specifically Cistercian with regard to nuns' convents and are there European family likenesses in the sense of the unity in diversity postulated by *Cisterscapes*? What role does the affiliation to the Cistercian Order and the filiation lineage for the communities of both sexes play in comparison to other bonds, such as urban, regional or familial affiliations?

The interdisciplinary conference will enquire into the role of Cistercian women in the shaping of cultural landscapes, test the Cistercian landscape concept and attempt to sharpen the methodological tools of the field. Contributions on studies of individual examples are just as welcome as overarching methodological-theoretical contributions or direct comparisons between men's and women's communities.

Please send your proposals (abstracts of max. 3.000 signs including spaces) for 25-minute papers

to the organizers by **November 1st 2022**.

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The symposium will be held **5.-7. Mai 2023** in **Lehнин Abbey in Brandenburg** (ca. 50 Km from Berlin).