

TITLE

Moving Ground

From infrastructural construction sites to landscape

NAME

Chiara Pradel

AFFILIATION

Politecnico di Milano

EMAIL ADDRESS

chiara.pradel@polimi.it

KEYWORDS

Moving ground, Landscape architecture, Earthworks, Infrastructural monument, Construction sites, Topographical drawings

ABSTRACT

The research main question comes from the observation of the construction phase of landscape architecture interventions, from private gardens to public parks planned and realized in the south part of Switzerland, as an opportunity to think about ground movements connected to the realization of projects that deal with changes of the site's surface and *ground transformations inside landscape*.

The first step of the investigation is indeed a *critical recognition*, through photographs and topographical drawings, that interprets both the physical and the inspirational aspects of a number of earthworks, resulting from the excavations for buildings foundations, from land leveling processes and embankments or, most of all, from the inert waste relocation inside depots. In particular the investigation scrutinize their *effects* inside everyday perceived and familiar landscape, to finally question how today, beyond economic concerns, earth management practices and soil resources assessments, environmental and sustainability programs on a global and on a local scale, this earthworks could enter the design process.

The critical observation proceeds together with the construction of a *theoretical framework*, from the founding meaning of re-shaping the land with earth, moving through Dinocrate, Vitruvio and Leon Battista Alberti, Gottfried Semper, Robert Smithson or John Latham and the shifting of the significance of ground inside ecological urbanism and environmental landscape design, up to examine more technical literature that underlines the fundamental role of advanced technological approaches and normative aspects about moving earth inside construction sites. The overview of on-going *infrastructural projects*, like the *AlpTransit* railway, that deeply affect landscape and imply complex building sites, allows the observation of great earth's volumes often not acknowledged and not easy to recognize, spread as spoils inside the nearest territories. The research, through *maps, sections and topographical drawings*, finally becomes a chance to sight, inside broad and heterogeneous environments, how it is possible to relocate, reuse and recycle earth.