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The Anthroposcenic: Landscape in the Anthroposcene

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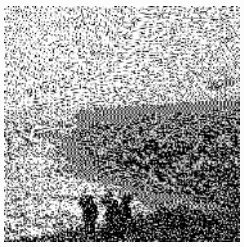

Abstract
Through the "Anthroposcenic", this article explores how landscape becomes emblematic of processes deemed to mark an Anthropocene epoch, beginning with a detailed discussion of Simon Roberts' photography of Somerset floods. The Anthropocene, whereby the human species is held to have made a distinctive mark on the geological record, has received extensive scientific and public commentary, and the Anthroposcenic indicates a potential point of correspondence with landscapes, both real and representational. The article discusses the temporality of the Anthropocene, and forms of image work carried out around it. The article then examines various forms of contemporary Anthroposcenic landscape imagery concerned with coastal erosion. Recent years have seen a proliferation of coastal art practice, with the meeting point of land and sea being an apt site for reflection on the Anthropocene and climate change. The article also discusses imagery evoking undersea lost lands, including the North Sea's former "Doggerland". The article sets current art practice alongside the imagery of scientific research, and within a genealogy of narratives of coastal change.

A New Deposition

The "now" in "Landscape Now", the title of this special issue of *British Art Studies*, deserves scrutiny. One emerging definition of "now" is the Anthropocene—a now whose beginning remains open to dispute, but which will linger, if the label takes hold. A geological epoch defined as beginning in the recent past that might even outlast the study of British art.
This article uses the term "Anthroposcenic" to explore how landscape art might depict a new epoch, beginning with an image of flood. In February 2014, Simon Roberts photographed a family looking from Burrow Mump over a deluged landscape: *Flooding of the Somerset Levels, Burrowbridge* (fig. 1).

Figure 1

Simon Roberts, *Flooding of the Somerset Levels, Burrowbridge*, 2014, photograph. Digital image courtesy of Simon Roberts.

The image appears in Roberts' 2017 collection *Merrie Albion*, a photographic exploration of landscape and identity over a decade, environmental tumult appearing alongside the political turmoil documented elsewhere in the book.[1] The flooded "Albion" shown here carries its share of national iconography, the Levels bearing historic associations with King Alfred at nearby Athelney, and mythic resonances via Avalon and Glastonbury. Roberts' viewpoint, Burrow Mump, is a smaller version of Glastonbury Tor, complete with St Michael's church ruin at its summit, whose tower stands behind the man behind the lens. Burrow Mump was donated to the National Trust in 1946 by Major Alexander Gould Barrett, a plaque on the tower recording it as a memorial: "that the men and women of Somerset who died serving their country in the Second World War may be remembered here in time to come."

Roberts' photograph lays a new landscape narrative over older iconography: new stories of anxiety and value, the temporal and precarious. In Britain, flood management had achieved newly political status in 2014 as a wet winter brought climate change and the future likelihood of extreme events to the fore. The government Environment Agency was accused of effectively abandoning Burrowbridge, and Royal Marines were brought in to reinforce defences; a line of white sandbags appears near the centre of Roberts' image. The embanked River Parrett flows in the middle distance beyond the A361, and has spilled into the fields to the west. The Quantock Hills are beyond, the river flowing to the right, north to Bridgwater and the sea.

Flood events can be both a disaster and a spectacle, and Roberts photographed the flood on 11 February, choosing the elevated prospect offered by the Mump, in part to register others looking. Roberts gains a perspective on a family's perspective on altered landscape, his own tripod-mounted large format camera capturing the adult family members moving phones to record events. Muddy foreground turf indicates that others too have been here for the view, though Roberts recalls that during his visit Burrowbridge was "eerily deserted", save for this one family.[2] As often in his images, Roberts, who would have been conspicuous on the day, appears to escape the attention of the observed, hiding in plain sight, though the small child peering over the adult's shoulder does seem to catch Roberts' camera eye. What is that man doing?

Roberts' landscape images are marked by careful social observation; we assume this is a family group, and from their dress, situation and lack of baggage, we might assume they are not tourists

and are in fact familiar with the place already. Here are working people viewing a working landscape whose normal patterns of labour have been suspended by the weather. Cars are parked behind the industrial buildings below, so indoors things seem to be proceeding, and roads are passable, but field working is out. The family may, like Roberts, have driven here for the view, or walked up from home. This inter-generational picture indicates not only spatial but temporal prospects, viewpoints forward in time as well as outward across the landscape. Will this happen more as the children grow, as the adults age? The flood waters are vividly brown with sediment, signalling erosive disruption, yet also deposition for future fertility. Floods have made this landscape in the past, but will their increased frequency and severity shift the present balance, becoming in human terms destructive rather than constructive, anthropogenic climate change disrupting human habitat? As the world enters a proposed new geological epoch, whereby humanity has marked the rock record, the flooded River Parrett lays down new deposits. Future geologists on the Levels may find these Anthropocene sediments; future art historians, viewing *Merrie Albion*, might find Roberts' photograph Anthroposcenic.

The Anthroposcenic Now

This article uses the term "Anthroposcenic" to explore landscape as emblematic of certain processes marking the Anthropocene. Though yet to be formally approved as a new geological epoch, the idea of the Earth entering a time where not only its land surfaces, sea waters, air qualities, and climatic systems, but also its rock records, are irredeemably stamped by human activity, has taken a cultural hold. The Anthropocene is a label that can suggest human culpability and guilt, as well as human capability and power. The very act of labelling the Earth in this way may be for some an indication of human hubris, for others a recognition of blame which might spur remedial action; not that such action could ever quite remove the label, everything becoming Holocene again. Even an Anthropocene made less destructive to humanity (whatever the consequences for other species) would remain an Anthropocene, the remedial action itself signifying the human capacity for Earth effects.

The term "Anthroposcenic" was first proposed in a scientific journal, *Nature Climate Change*, in an attempt to carry a style of reflection more common to arts and humanities research into scientific discourse.[3] Anthropocene debates have indeed been marked not only by cultural practitioners using the languages of science, but also by scientists being ready to engage with cultural discourse, to recognise their own narratives *as* narratives with cultural and political import. The Anthropocene is, like any other geological terminology, a piece of wordplay, and one that has stuck precisely for its provocative conjunction of the human and the geological. In the same vein, the Anthroposcenic is a term through which landscape, in all its cultural complexity—material and imaginary, emotional and financial, immediate and intergenerational—might help visualise and represent a coming epoch.

The "now" of the Anthropocene denotes a complex temporality, which studies of art or visual culture should acknowledge and reflect on, if meaningful engagement with scientific narrative is to proceed. Four key traits of the Anthropocene's treatment of time may be identified here. First, the designation is, unlike any other geological epoch, prospective as well as retrospective. The geological imagination, which in the nineteenth century became a significant cultural and aesthetic force for reflections on human and planetary pasts, evokes in the twenty-first century what might mark the future rock record. A visual culture of future as well as past and present geology therefore emerges. Second, while geologists are seeking a "golden spike" in the sediment record to mark the stratigraphic beginning of the epoch, with the current favoured

proposal being the post-1945 traces left globally by atmospheric nuclear weapons tests, the drive to a precise date sits alongside the fact that the processes initiating the Anthropocene evidently have a much longer history.[4] Third, scientists have argued for a range of start dates, and this is likely to remain a matter of contention, with arguments made variously for the Anthropocene beginning around 1800, or in the sixteenth century, or in prehistory. In terms of wider cultural debate, the events deemed to open the Anthropocene will shape its formulation: the beginnings of farming, the colonial exploitation of the Americas, the Industrial Revolution, the bomb. Different "Anthro" stories may proceed from different potential Anthropocene origins.
Fourth, one can trace a history of commentary on the human geological presence which prefigures and anticipates the current discussion, and which itself goes back well before the potential post-nuclear "golden spike". For example, Charles Lyell, whose *Principles of Geology* was first published in 1833, significantly shaped the nineteenth-century geological imagination. Lyell's discussion of coastal regions, areas which are also the subject of this article, anticipated the Anthropocene emphasis on the "geology of mankind" by stating: "The earth's crust must be remodelled more than once before all the memorials of man which are continually becoming entombed in the rocks now forming will be destroyed."[5] The Anthroposcenic, therefore, finds itself concerned with what Caitlin DeSilvey terms "anticipatory history", such that "landscape now" and landscapes past converse.[6] One prediction for the Anthropocene, should it be formally designated, might be that the scientific requirement for precise stratigraphic demarcation will jostle with narratives of the Anthropocene that migrate across such strict temporal lines, indeed artistic engagements, while noting the novelty of Anthropocene circumstance, need not necessarily present a world changed utterly. Should future arts and histories of the Anthropocene treat the epochal beginning as a checkpoint, beyond which lies only Holocene history? This would seem unduly restrictive, and this article therefore takes a permissive path from the present across the last two centuries, charting instances of Anthroposcenic reflection.

Anthropocene Image Work

Lauren Rickards has suggested that:

> *Intellectually as well as materially, the Anthropocene is a deeply cultural phenomenon … all aspects of the Anthropocene, including its underpinning science, reflect the broader, dynamic cultural imaginary that it is part of and that it is now helping to reshape.*[7]

For Rickards, the sense of "humans as a geological force" indicates the "novel geographical imaginaries" released by the Anthropocene.[8] Elisabeth Ellsworth and Jamie Kruse's 2012 collection *Making the Geologic Now*, which was produced as the term Anthropocene came to public prominence and was in part concerned with its cultural consequences, reflects on the upsurge of geological cultural debate:

> *Until recently, the word "geologic" conjured meanings and associations that referred simply and directly to the science of geology—the study of the origin, history, and structures of the earth. But that seems to be changing. Something is happening to the ways that people are now taking up "the geologic".*
>
> *Contemporary artists, popular culture producers, speculative architects, scientists and philosophers are adding new layers of cultural meaning and aesthetic sensation to the geologic. It is as if recent events and developments are making geologic realities sense-able with new physical intensity and from new angles of thought as a situation that we live within, not simply as something "out there" that we study.*[9]

That said, the Anthropocene intrigues in part as a term of cultural debate, which carries geological science with it, still tied to stratigraphic reasoning however widely it migrates over different fields. The Anthropocene's scientific particulars shape the cultural geologic now.

A variety of image work has come to inform debate about the Anthropocene, concerned with how a geological epoch and its related Earth system processes might be visualised and represented. In his study *Anthropocene Fictions*, Adam Trexler considers representations of climate change in the novel, looking at how events and processes such as sea-level rise and flooding are deemed to mark out new times.[10] Trexler emphasises Anthropocene novelty, positing that: "unprecedented things force unprecedented literary acts", although the complexities of Anthropocene temporality noted above may indicate more varied possibilities. Roberts' Burrow Mump image above may thus be starkly contemporary in its picturing of people picturing landscape via mobile devices, yet it is also conscious of long-standing conventions of prospect views, themselves made in dialogue with earlier mobile devices, back to the portable Claude glass. The Anthroposcenic might mix novel forms for novel times with older perspectives for sidelong insight.

The visualisation of climate change and the global environment combines old and new, connecting with, as Denis Cosgrove has shown, the long-standing tradition of imaging the whole earth from space.[11] Photographic images of Spaceship Earth became iconic for environmentalist critiques of modernity, although Thomas Lekan suggests that such whole earth imagery, itself a product of a Cold War world, becomes inadequate to convey "the vertiginous spatiality and inescapable viscosity of the hyperobjects we encounter in the Anthropocene".[12] Lekan alludes here to Timothy Morton's sense of hyperobjects as those human legacies which from their scale —climate change—or constitution—radioactive waste, Styrofoam—transcend or outlast the human, thereby challenging comprehension.[13] The visual cultures of climate change and the Anthropocene also encompass future projection, what Martin Mahony terms "picturing the future-conditional". Thus photomontages of future flood events, such as the "Postcards from the Future" series produced by Robert Graves and Didier Madoc-Jones for a 2010 Museum of London exhibition, present a London newly tropical.[14] Scientific iconographies stemming from data visualisations such as maps, graphs, and diagrams also concentrate such projections; Mahony discusses the complex "geographies of objectivity" generated around such forms of scientific communication as the International Panel on Climate Change's controversial 2001 "burning embers" diagram of risks from global temperature change.[15] Anthropocene visual culture thus moves explicitly across—and serves as the meeting point of—artistic and scientific practice.[16]

This article uses the term Anthroposcenic to indicate landscapes emblematic of the Anthropocene.[17] The geographer Stephen Tooth, in his online "glossary for the Anthropocene", defines the Anthroposcenic as referring to "landscapes that have come to be viewed as picturesque (i.e. 'scenic') but that actually are in a far-from-natural, highly-altered state (e.g. the reservoirs in the Elan valley of mid Wales)."[18] This sense of the Anthroposcenic has subsequently been extended by Tooth and colleagues including the geomorphologist and poet Hywel Griffiths in a collaborative discussion of upland mid-Wales, presenting responses to the Anthroposcenes of the Ystwyth and Elan valleys in poetry and prose: "our aims were to engage with the concept of the Anthropocene in a landscape that could be emblematic of the proposed new geological interval." This "group of poets, writers and geomorphologists" emphasise the ways in which the Anthroposcenic might connote not only associations of loss and erosion but a positive valuation, even social reverence, of landscape.[19] Such emotional and poitical

complexities echo the approach taken here, and the remainder of this article examines the English coast, where traumas of present loss mix with fascination for, and even inspiration from, that which has passed. Whether in despair or hope, regret or anticipation, Anthroposcenic landscape may capture an Anthropocene predicament.

Anthropocene Signatures on the English Coast

Sea-level rise associated with anthropogenic climate change has made coastal landscape emblematic of Anthropocene processes. The focus here is on English material, considering recent art practice and the wider visual cultures of coastal change, alongside the ways in which past landscape images, and images of past landscape, may speak to the Anthroposcenic present. Jan Zalasiewicz and others have recently explored the scientific "stratigraphical signature of the Anthropocene in England", tracing deposits that include pesticide residues, microplastics, and artificial radionuclides, in "an initial sketch of how the Anthropocene might be recognized in England".[20] This article considers complementary cultural-historical "signatures" of the Anthropocene with respect to the British coastal landscape, indicating a further potential seam of science–humanities exchange. With the stratigraphical signatures noted by Zalasiewicz et al. as a starting point, future cultural-historical studies might emerge of, say, seasides marked by microplastics, or coastal landfill sites where marine action may expose an archaeology of late twentieth-century consumption. Landfill erosion might give us the plastic human figure, from a precisely dateable Christmas toy craze, tumbling to the beach.

One instance of the English Anthroposcenic is evident from the soft cliffs at East Runton on the north Norfolk coast, just along from Cromer. Caravans look out from the Seaview Caravan Park, some only yards from the cliff edge, towards an unimpeded view (fig. 2).[21]

Figure 2

David Matless, *View from Seaview caravan park, East Runton, Norfolk*, 2015, photograph.

The attraction of the site is heightened, and shadowed, by its precarity. The beach shows clear evidence of cliff falls, and repeat visitors will bring memories of defences lost, former access steps fallen. If awareness of loss has long accompanied coastal visiting, the view from soft cliffs is now overlain by climate narratives, bringing new senses of change to the view. Out to sea near the north-west horizon is the large Sheringham Shoal wind farm, 88 turbines seeking to mitigate

climate change at the same time as storm tides eat into soft coastal sediment. The English seascape alters, carrying new freight.

Art and coastal change, in Norfolk and elsewhere, have met in Julian Perry's paintings. Perry's work addresses a range of environmental concerns, including the place of trees in the landscape, and how the arboreal intersects with changing coastal dynamics, as in his paintings of beached tree stumps in Suffolk.[22] In the 2018 piece *5 Meters a Year*, an installation made for the October 2018 charity exhibition *Cure*[3], Perry mounted, within a cube, a painting of an uprooted birch tree found on the beach at Benacre, with a painting of a seascape on the reverse of the tree (fig. 3). A mirror on the back of the cube reflects the seascape, enabling the conjoined images to be viewed simultaneously. The tree is painted against a blue background, in isolation from its beach context; the reflected seascape shows its future place, floating or sunk. The title gives the official rate of erosion and land loss at the site, the tree's future locked to the sea's presence.

Figure 3

Julian Perry, *5 Metres a Year*, 2018, perspex cube, oil on panel, mirror, 20 × 20 × 20 cm. Digital image courtesy of Julian Perry.

In 2010, Perry exhibited *An Extraordinary Prospect: The Coastal Erosion Paintings*, works in oil presenting Norfolk, Suffolk, and Yorkshire coastal scenes, including coastal tree works.[23] The catalogue cover showed *Fanfare 34* (2010), a caravan floating off into mid-air, as dust below indicates a cliff fall (fig. 4). Fanfare is the model of caravan shown, but also perhaps suggests a soundtrack for the humble caravan's dramatic entry into the frame of art. These paintings do not in any sense look down on their objects, which gain elevated status as the ground is pulled from under them; *Fanfare 34* echoes the composition of *Caravan Holiday* (2010), caravans taking a break of sorts (fig. 5).

Figure 4

Julian Perry, *Fanfare 34*, 2010, oil on panel, 103 × 122 cm. Digital image courtesy of Julian Perry.

Figure 5

Julian Perry, *Caravan Holiday*, 2010, oil on panel, 31 × 26 cm. Digital image courtesy of Julian Perry.

Perry pictures human dwellings, bungalows as well as caravans, hovering in mid-air, still grounded on grass and topsoil. Elsewhere objects in situ cling on: the breaking white railings in *End of the Road, Skipsea*, the wooden wall remains of a "Yorkshire Barn", still just part of the eroding region of Holderness. The medium of oil paint, rather than, say, watercolour, allows ordinary objects to retain their substance as they contemplate and make for an extraordinary prospect. Paintings such as *Skipsea Bungalow*, *Coastal House Suffolk*, *Fanfare 34* and *Caravan Holiday*, make for exemplary Anthroposcenes. Paul Gough notes that these floating forms, frozen in air, serve as a kind of "poetic redemption" for the humble structures depicted.[24] There is perhaps a parallel here with the close picturing of the ordinary by a painter such as George Shaw. The stilled life of these pictures may stand as a warning of what happens to things on unprotected soft cliffs, yet in their appreciation of structures they give caravans, chalets, and bungalows an attention and value beyond the dismissal they sometimes receive in landscape commentary. The Caravan Holiday was good, while it lasted.

East Anglian coasts have become prominent in cultural engagements with climate change and the Anthropocene, in part through local artistic and literary networks, but also from proximity to public and commercial institutions in London, and the not unrelated gentrification of coastal areas through second-home ownership, notably in Suffolk and north-west Norfolk. The interpretation of global processes is here, as elsewhere, inflected by local social geographies, which themselves shape geographies of creativity. Art works other than Perry's have tracked erosion, as in 2005 at Bawdsey, Suffolk, where the Dutch artist Bettina Furnee's *Lines of Defence* placed flags in lines stretching back from the cliff edge, spelling out "SUBMISSION IS ADVANCING AT A FRIGHTFUL SPEED". Their subsequent disappearance between installation on 15 January and the fall of the final flag on 16 September 2005 marked "the

invading force of the sea" (fig. 6 and fig. 7). A 30-minute time-lapse film records their toppling—the message is lost as it is confirmed (fig. 8).[25]

Figure 6

Bettina Furnee, *Lines of Defence*, January 2005, photograph of installation. Digital image courtesy of Bettina Furnee.

Figure 7

Bettina Furnee, *Lines of Defence*, September 2005, photograph of installation. Digital image courtesy of Bettina Furnee.

Figure 8

Bettina Furnee and Tim Siddel, Lines of Defence, 2008, time-lapse film, duration 30 minutes. Film courtesy of Bettina Furnee and Tim Siddel.

Perry's *Caravan Holiday* was inspired by clifftop caravans on the eroding coast at Happisburgh in Norfolk, a site which demonstrates how past, present, and future representations of landscape may become intertwined in the emerging epoch. Perry's *Happisburgh Defences* (2010) and *Cliffs at Happisburgh* (2010) show wartime pillboxes eroding into mid-air—a defence never used in wartime receiving no protection now.[26] *Happisburgh Scene* (2013) shows caravans still on site, yards from the eroding cliff edge, neatly curtained for the view, maintaining decorum in the face of nothingness (fig. 9).

Figure 9

Julian Perry, *Happisburgh Scene*, 2013, oil on panel, 46 × 34 cm. Digital image courtesy of Julian Perry.

Happisburgh has been important in arguments about coastal defence, with dispute over the degree to which existing coastal lines should be maintained, or be subject to a managed retreat.[27] Erosion following the destruction and non-replacement of defences resulted in the loss of houses on Beach Road, Happisburgh, in the early twenty-first century. As houses and bungalows fell over the cliffs, however, signs of older human life became apparent. East Anglia has been a key site for the Ancient Human Occupation of Britain (AHOB) project, with Happisburgh findings including 800,000-year-old footprints in forest bed deposits exposed by erosion in May 2013, pushing back the story of human life in England.[28] Scenes of the anthro past and present meet. The disappearance of Beach Road prompted the provision of a new visitor car park and beach access ramp (itself subsequently eroded), where a display board includes explanations of coastal process, the mobilisation of local response through the Happisburgh Coastal Concern Action Group, aerial photographs and old postcards, and landscape art. The board shows a photograph of *Cutting Edge* (2010), a work whereby a white outline of scissors and a cutting line representing erosion was marked on Happisburgh beach by the Splinter collective, along with a reproduction of *Black and Red Study II* (2010), a sparse charcoal and pastel drawing by Norwich artist Malca Schotten, which looks along the new embayment created by erosion to the last lingering houses of Beach Road in the distance.[29] "You Are Here", says the board location map, and looking from the displays to the eroding cliffs you wonder how long this will last; how long here will be here.

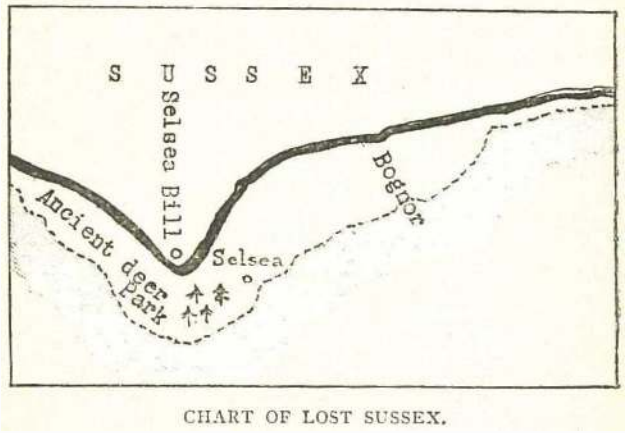

Figure 10

Chart of Lost Sussex, 1902, illustration in *The Story of Lost England* by Beckles Wilson (London: George Newnes, 1902).

A genealogy of sea-level melancholy becomes part of the anticipatory history of the Anthropocene. Beckles Willson's 1902 study *The Story of Lost England* indicates how erosion then, as now, becomes caught in the nets of national narrative, in Willson's case that of a threatened imperial island. At Selsey, a "Chart of Lost Sussex" mapped lost prospects (fig. 10):

> *Perhaps no point off the coast of Sussex presents such interest to the student of Lost England as the waste of waters immediately fronting Selsey Bill.*
>
> *Standing on the verge of that promontory, the visitor to-day, directing his face seaward, may, if he chooses, and his imagination aiding him, conjecture that in the ruffled expanse of breakers, exactly one mile distant from where he stands, was founded the first monastery in Sussex …. Landward from the Saxon cathedral and the episcopal palace stretched a great wood, known as Selsey Park, containing many thousands of acres, and stocked with choice deer. Here, truly, is a choice and memorable fragment of Lost England.*[30]

Undersea worlds are described as if preserved in aspic, lending enchantment and value to the lost. Imagination here makes whole that which has been eroded, and the effect is at once cultural and political, lost island homes tapping into anxieties over English futures.

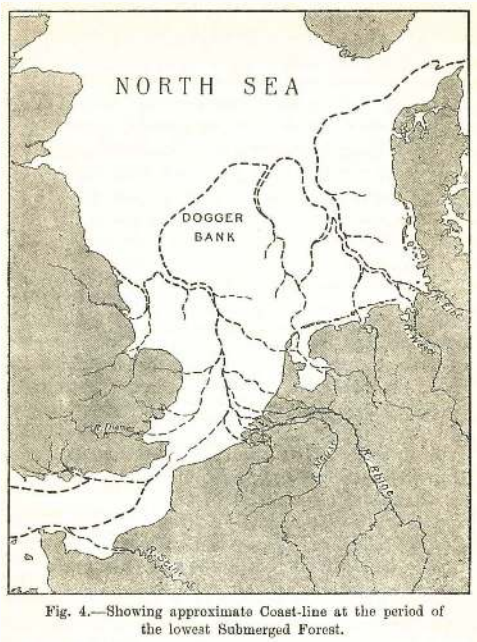

Fig. 4.—Showing approximate Coast-line at the period of the lowest Submerged Forest.

Figure 11

Map showing approximate coast-line at the period of the lowest Submerged Forest, 1913, map in *Submerged Forests* by Clement Reid (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1913).

Happisburgh, and Willson's Selsey, show landscape history and prehistory speaking to the present, whether in imperial 1902 or Anthropocene 2018. It is striking also how another region, previously unnamed, has arisen from prehistory to speak to today's England. Under the North Sea lies an area now labelled "Doggerland", on which the recent upsurge in commentary is notable.[31] In a period preoccupied with sea level, and with the British relationship to Europe, here is evidently a landscape for now: a landmass that extended continually from Britain to the north-western coast of Europe. This prehistory chimes variously as a sign of British connection or of insularity, as a warning of how lands have been lost before and might be again if extra care isn't taken, or as a naturalisation of change, confirming that seas have always risen and fallen and that maps will thereby shift. The name Doggerland was coined by the archaeologist Bryony Coles in 1998 in tribute to the geologist Clement Reid (1853–1916); Reid's 1913 book *Submerged Forests* included a chapter on the Dogger Bank, with a map "Showing approximate Coast-line at the period of the lowest Submerged Forest" (fig. 11).[32]
The North Sea becomes former land, and a quick shading in of Reid's outline reconfigures the geography of Britain and Europe. In 1906, Reid wrote:

> *If what I have said is correct, and since civilised man lived in Britain there has been a rapid change of sea-level, followed by a long rest, what are the prospects of a similar period of rapid change again setting in? …. It is a problem of great importance, for a new rise or fall of the sea-level to the extent of a few feet would have most disastrous effects on all our coasts and harbours, and would seriously interfere with our inland drainage until things were again adjusted. Are we now living in a period of exceptional stability, both of sea-level and climate; or is it, as geology suggests, a mere interlude which may at any time give place to rapid change?*[33]

Coles' paper, titled "Doggerland: A Speculative Survey", sought to shift the archaeological narrative from ideas emphasising a former land bridge between Britain and continental Europe to imagining Doggerland as itself "a place to be".[34] Maps trace submergence, sea rising as ice melts, and familiar shapes emerge (fig. 12).

Figure 12

Left: Map of Doggerland at 10,000 BP, published 1998, in *Doggerland: a speculative survey* by Bryony Coles (Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society 64: 45-81. 1998), p. 68; Right: Map of Doggerland at 5000 BP, published 1998, in *Doggerland: a speculative survey* by Bryony Coles (Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society 64: 45-81. 1998), p. 64.

At 13000 years BP, the North Sea was merely an inlet between southern Norway and a northern European coast, but at 10000 BP something like Scotland is clear, and the North Sea extends south to the Dogger Hills; after 5000 BP, Britain and Denmark appear in a form recognisable from present-day maps, the East Anglian coast defined, with Dogger Island stranded. Coles' paper was the departure point for the artist Stephan Takkides's website "Reclaiming Doggerland", which he describes as "an attempt to remap Europe and claim back the lost territories of the North Sea". Blog posts report photographic excursions in Germany, Holland, and England, including Happisburgh, where "the effect of erosion looked almost violent", with abandoned defences wrecked by the sea, and concrete "gradually slipping down on to the beach" (figs. 13, 14, 15). The post "Adventures in Doggerland: Day Four" records:

> *On the edge by the car park stood a shack, or at least a sort of holiday chalet, in which people were living—apparently holding on until the ground literally disappeared beneath their feet. They were flying a cross of St George. This could have been for a number of reasons—football, patriotism, nationalism—but it occurred to me that the claiming of this land as England seemed so pointless. Presumably it would not be long before this would cease to be England, or in fact anywhere.*[35]

Figure 13

Stephan Takkides, *Coastal Erosion, Happisburgh, Norfolk*, from *Reclaiming Doggerland: Day Four, 30 May 2011*, 2011, photograph. Digital image courtesy of Stephan Takkides (CC BY-NC-SA 3.0)

Figure 14

Stephan Takkides, *Coastal Erosion, Happisburgh, Norfolk*, from *Reclaiming Doggerland: Day Four, 30 May 2011*, 2011, photograph. Digital image courtesy of Stephan Takkides (CC BY-NC-SA 3.0)

Figure 15

Stephan Takkides, *Coastal Erosion, Happisburgh, Norfolk*, from *Reclaiming Doggerland: Day Four, 30 May 2011*, 2011, photograph. Digital image courtesy of Stephan Takkides (CC BY-NC-SA 3.0)

As Takkides's commentary suggests, the prevailing tone of discussion about Doggerland, in England and elsewhere, is counter-nationalist, highlighting what archaeologists Vince Gaffney, Simon Fitch, and David Smith label "Europe's Lost World" off the English east coast. They write: "Doggerland may well have had a significantly different character, in cultural and environmental terms, in comparison with Britain and possibly all the surrounding countries."[36] There is an irony in finding lost Europe off an English coastal region frequently highlighted in recent political debate as favouring the UK's departure from the European Union. However, Doggerland might also mark remaining eastern areas as distinctive *within* England, part of a former lowland European territory now lost. Why look out to sea for European Doggerland? Look underfoot in eastern counties instead.

If older geological and archaeological researches appear newly resonant for the Anthropocene, earlier paintings might also turn anticipatory for the present. The edging of land and sea has long offered a territory for complex symbolic and emotional play, as in the work of John Nash, as well as his brother Paul Nash, whose Dymchurch paintings and depictions of coastal defence might

gain another complex resonance as Anthroposcenes in advance. Ian Collins' study of East Anglian art shows a John Nash painting, titled *Norfolk Coast (Waxham to Winterton)*, dated as 1932, a view looking south with Winterton church tower on the inland horizon (fig. 16).[37]

Figure 16

John Nash, *Norfolk Coast (Waxham to Winterton)*, 1932, oil on canvas, 51 × 76 cm. Private Collection.

This is a dune coast, a few miles south of Happisburgh and backed by the low-lying Norfolk Broadland, with no elevation to stop the sea for miles, should it break through. The sea indeed had broken through here on a number of occasions, most recently then in 1897, and it would do so again to catastrophic effect in 1938 at Horsey, half way between Waxham and Winterton, just along the beach in Nash's painting.[38] Just north of Waxham, at Sea Palling, seven would die in 1953 as the major North Sea floods broke the dunes. Nash pictures the levels of land and sea, the dunes a brief interruption on a single plane. The movement of sea, cloud, and marram grass evokes a breezy present balance, yet one vulnerable should states of sea and atmosphere combine to produce a North Sea storm surge.

Seaview Returns

Moving back north up the Norfolk coast, we return in conclusion to East Runton. Reflections on "landscape now" can emerge not only from academic reading and visual cultural analysis, but also from everyday fieldwork, and spending holidays in a caravan on the top of soft cliffs makes the Anthroposcenic vivid (fig. 17).

Looking up from East Runton beach at low tide, the caravan fronts peep over, sea views looking down. Present and future again meet distant pasts, as fossils emerge from the eroding cliffs; indeed this is now promoted as the "Deep History Coast", its map logo merging the Norfolk coastline with the back of a fossil steppe mammoth, found in the cliff at adjacent West Runton.[39] The diurnal rhythms of a seaside holiday are supplemented by other temporalities, from fossil pasts to the prospective non-fossil future signalled by wind turbines at sea. Family and friends view the breakers from the van, and sea views become entangled with other prospects (fig. 18).

Figure 17

David Matless, *Seaview caravan park viewed from East Runton beach at low tide, Norfolk*, 2016, photograph.

Figure 18

David Matless, *View from interior of caravan, Seaview caravan park, East Runton, Norfolk*, 2015, photograph.

How long will this caravan be here? How far could you book ahead? Does that roaring breezy summer night sound of the sea signal danger? Not that questions about erosion weren't asked on holidays forty years ago, but the prevalent narrative of climate change and sea-level rise, and the designation of a new Anthropocene geological epoch, makes questions of "landscape now" somehow different. As Anthropocene signatures emerge on the shore, sea views turn Anthroposcenic.

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Footnotes

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2. Simon Roberts, personal communication, April 2018.
3. David Matless, "Climate Change Stories and the Anthroposcenic", *Nature Climate Change* 6, no. 2 (2016): 118–119; David Matless, "The Anthroposcenic", *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 42, no. 3 (2017): 363–376.
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15. Martin Mahony, "Climate Change and the Geographies of Objectivity: The Case of the IPCC's Burning Embers Diagram", *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 40, no. 2 (2015): 153–167.

16. Libby Robin, Dag Avango, Luke Keogh, Nina Mollers, Bernd Scherer, and Helmuth Trischler, "Three Galleries of the Anthropocene", *The Anthropocene Review* 1, no. 3 (2014): 207–224.
17. Online searches indicate that the word has developed independently in other contexts. In a November 2015 talk, "Into the Anthroposcenic", William L. Fox suggested that the Anthroposcenic might be a broad "cultural corollary" for the Anthropocene: William L. Fox, "Into the Anthroposcenic", National Gallery of Victoria, 15 November 2015, www.ngv.vic.gov.au/program/into-the-anthroposcenic/. Accessed 26 April 2018. A November 2015 talk in Munich by Bernhard Malkmus addressed "anthroposcenic fenlands" in the work of W.G. Sebald and Graham Swift: Bernhard Malkmus, "Diffuse Dwelling: The Anthroposcenic Fenlands in Sebald and Swift", 12 November 2015, Rachel Carson Center for Environment and Society, Munich, www.carsoncenter.uni-muenchen.de/events_conf_seminars/event_history/2015-event-history/2015_lc/lc_malkmus/index.html. Accessed 26 April 2018. In August 2015, short experimental films were screened under the "Anthroposcenic" heading by "Survivalist Cinema", a solar-powered micro-cinema in Vermont; see www.rachelstevens.net/project/survivalist-cinema/. Accessed 26 April 2018.
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22. Perry's tree paintings are considered in Paul Gough, "'Cultivating Dead Trees': The Legacy of Paul Nash as an Artist of Trauma, Wilderness and Recovery", *Journal of War and Culture Studies* 4, no. 3 (2011): 323–340.
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24. Paul Gough, "Painting on the Edge", in Julian Perry, *An Extraordinary Prospect: The Coastal Erosion Paintings* (London: Austin/Desmond Fine Art, 2010), 6.
25. The film, from a 2005 project called *If Ever You're in the Area*, is at http://www.ifever.org.uk/camera/, along with an archive of camera images from throughout the process. See also: http://bettinafurnee.co.uk/works/if-ever-youre-in-the-area-2005/. Accessed 26 April 2018.
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"Hominin Footprints from Early Pleistocene Deposits at Happisburgh, UK", *PLoS ONE* 9, no. 2 (2014): e88329.

29. Schotten's Happisburgh drawings can be viewed at: www.malcaschotten.net/Projects/landscapes.html. Accessed 26 April 2018.
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31. See, for example, the 2007 Channel 4 "Time Team" archaeological programme on Doggerland, "Britain's Drowned World", beginning with presenter Tony Robinson on the cliffs at Happisburgh, and "Discover Doggerland", a November 2015 event in Halesworth, Suffolk, exploring archaeology and "mythic geography"; details of the latter are given at The Cut, New Cut, Halesworth, Suffolk, at: http://newcut.org/events/entry/3189. See also extracts from the day, Waveney & Blyth Arts, Harleston, Norfolk, at: www.waveneyandblytharts.com/.
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