



space and time in ergodic geomorphology

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Epistemological perspectives rank among the main factors contributing to word coinage in scientific literature. New words come into existence as new epistemological fields evolve (Sack1992). Each field, however, tends to impose its own interpretation on the words associated with it. To illustrate the point, certain words retain formal structure and relate to the same subject area, but can nonetheless be employed in totally different epistemological fields. The semantic content undergoes a drastic change in each case.

Granted that numerous theoretical stances can be identified within the discipline of geomorphology, acquaintance with the semantic content of certain words should help toward a more realistic understanding of what the theorists and practitioners in this field have in mind.

This paper, which is based on an analysis of these three theoretical positions aims to highlight the importance of the semantic content of the term equilibrium as utilized in ergodic geomorphology, and the ways in which it is construed from different viewpoints. For this purpose, the authors have of necessity availed themselves of dated sources, rather than up-to-date ones. The paper also argues that familiarity with concepts such as these will ensure a better grasp of the paradigms in question.