

LANDSCAPE, IDENTITIES AND DEVELOPMENT, by Zoran Roca, Paul Claval and John Agnew, Farnham, England: Ashgate Publishing, 2011

Geographical analyses of landscape are among the oldest studies in earth sciences. Landscape studies can provide tools for holistic and synthetic examinations of the world, employing a wide range of perspectives and methodologies. The variety of contemporary used landscape definitions has been grouped into three synthetic categories, according to main feature of landscapes: Form - became a model for urbanism, supplants the architectural designs of building and spaces between them, while landscaping is a process of planning green establishments; Function - a physical geographical structure, applied in landscape ecology; Communication - a representation and symbol, product of human values, meanings, needs, aspirations, history (Czepczynski, 2007).

Roca and Oliveira-Roca (2007) define it clearly and comprehensively:

Landscapes treasure past, frame current and affect future environmental, economic and cultural change. As custodians of the time-space interface and of the sense of place, landscapes also encourage our spatially steered memories, emotions, perceptions and knowledge, as well as our interests, decisions and actions. By providing support to the spatial fixes and flows, landscapes are everlasting witnesses of the local/global (re)production and consumption of material and immaterial features of territorial identities.

From this definition of landscape comes out the principle of bounded worlds of memories, feelings and identity which has been created on the platform of the physical environment. They are supported by, and help to sustain, the interests of mere sections of any given society. But landscapes can also be seen as interconnected, as linked and in Mitchell's (2002, 381) word: "dialectical" - "Understanding landscapes in these terms has become a central aspect of landscape studies in geography over the past several years, with vital implications for understanding the geographies of power within which we live" (382).

Having said that, a central dimension to landscape representation is always already ideological, always already loaded with meaning. This hidden ideology demands the development of specific analyses of how does it work through representational practices. It should be decoded while aiming to expose the idea behind it and to trace the comprising of landscape into the social process as a complex web of dynamic and produced meanings through discourses of fluidity, globalization, and mobility (Mitchell, 2002).

Therefore, "environmental sustainability" and its tight link to the whole range of meanings of landscape-development couple, is employed and influenced by the ecological thought for a better understanding of the relationships which are based on otherness and diversity within a system (Shields, 2004; Stephenson, 2008).

The triadic nexus of landscape, identity and development came to the fore recently and as the cover of the book demonstrates: "Bringing together theoretical and empirical research from 22 countries in Europe, North America, Australia, South America and Japan, this book offers a state-of-the-art survey of conceptual

and methodological research and planning issues relating to landscape, heritage, and development."

This wide-ranging collection gives space to new meanings, new landscapes, new identities and new technologies in our ever changing world. It exposes the relationship between landscape, identity and development in the face of globalization; provides a collection of the most recent findings and interpretations; showing the importance of social, cultural and economic forces in shaping what are spatial [in] justice and [un]sustainability of landscapes; therefore, strengthening of the landscape perspective, as a constitutive element of developing policies for sustainable development.

Each chapter, and the volume as a whole, offers closer and richer consideration of the issues, practices and structures. It has 30 chapters grouped in four main thematic sections:

1. Landscapes as a constitutive dimension of territorial identities – this part challenges the limits of change in order to respect, preserve and transmit the unique character of places and people's identities; enlarging landscape perceptions with a poetic feeling; the role of landscape in national identity; the dual character of landscape, official and imagery; landscape as trans-cultural medium promotes multiethnic society; the new (trans)territorialities as constructing new hybrid and/or open identities; terraforming through construct megaprojects of artificial landscape.
2. The role of landscape history and heritage as platforms of landscape research and management in European contexts – this section deals with the complexity of continuities of the stable traditional vs. modern dynamic landscape; the competing significance of natural and cultural heritage, tourism and state affairs within historical landscape; Europeanization of agricultural landscape under colonial regime; uncovering the colonized landscape; contested ethnic values and ideas of urban landscape; mirroring landscape change towards EU agricultural policy; land use and amenity quality through changes in landscape over time.
3. Landscapes as development assets and resources – this section debates the relationship of Greece with its landscape as a result of the past and emerging current course; a call for radical thinking of the way landscapes are managed in order to improve nature and agriculture conservation; criticizing the traditional approach to nature conservation in the metropolitan area; the evolution of regional landscape as a favored location for settlement; managing agricultural landscape in the same way for centuries contributed to high level of biodiversity; proposition of sustainability indicators in agroforestry systems consists on determination of ecosystem services;
4. Landscape research and development planning – this last section explains the obstacles in science-policy interface and landscape as a political issue; landscape as a sign for an object and for an interpreter within methodological principles for

the study of landscapes; the European Landscape Convention recommendations for participative planning process fails to integrate the landscape political dimension; different planning strategies vis-à-vis the evolution of the approaches to energy landscapes; recent methodological technologies as tools for historical landscape interpretation and for peri-urban landscape change; a new method of holistic and parametric approaches for typology of trans-regional and trans-border landscapes.

The book concludes by framing principles which come out from the writing: the changing epistemology from landscapes as stable structures to landscapes as perceived dynamic realities; emerging new sensitivities to landscape; landscape consciousness and construction of identities in daily life environments, landscape iconography and scale and imagination hierarchies; a new context of landscape democratizing planning today; the increasing urbanized society, a new economic condition and the need for sustainability brought new needs, insights and epistemologies to the fore, as Johnston and Westcoat state (Quoted in Claval, 2011, 475):

...landscapes do not just happen – they are produced, consumed, tasted, conserved adapted and transformed. Landscapes are created to address problems of production, distribution, perceived security, lack of amenities, or maintenance of class or other distinctions.

With such broad inter-disciplinary relevance and a multiple perspectives, the book gives room to a plenty of voices and produce comprehensive insights. It seeks not only to draw attention to many new areas of research and investigation relating to the combination of landscape, identities and development, but also to point to new theories and methods by which such issues have to be researched and examined, and to the understanding that development and landscape research and planning policy are inseparable.

The weakness of the book is rooted in its richness. Multiplicity of subjects, approaches, methods, scales, academic levels and disciplines in so many papers, can be an overload, beyond the ability to digest and to receive a clear picture of the subject. Another note that should be surfaced is the book's European perspective. It mirrors the European thought, approaches, landscapes, identities and way of development. It skips the entire world where contemporary most fascinating processes and phenomena are taking pace and place, especially the construction and destruction of (neo)-colonial landscapes and identities.

It seems that the landscape is always on the move, sometimes toward extinction, but then it is renewed or reshaped.

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Batya Roded

Ben Gurion University of the Negev

KEY CONCEPTS IN PLANNING, by Gavin Parker and Joe Doak. London: Sage, 2012.

Planning is a process that is being contemplated in every sphere of human activity. There are many approaches to planning, and choosing one approach over another depends on one's field of interest or the specific issue. For instance, in the case of planning a financing of a mortgage, we will use a systematic economy-biased approach. But when it comes to cities and regions, the right approach may be obscured. There are so many variables that are involved in city life that make the choice, if there is such, almost impossible. This book may help students and interns that are studying or doing their first practical ventures in regional planning, as well as the experienced business entrepreneur. Reading the book may remind the professional readers that planning deals with the seemingly easy question "How should we live?" This is one of the definitions that I love to use whenever I speak of planning. It is apparently simple, but it unfolds the complexity of the sphere and it shows that planning has many linkages to our life.

This book is part of a series called Key Concepts in Human Geography. The organized logic of concepts rather than rules or guidelines, or even a title of 'The comprehensive manual of planning' is, as I find it, invigorating and enabling. It enables the reader to grasp and combine theory and practice. The boundaries between these two in the planning domain appear to have been widening over the past decades, with the domination of the modernist paradigm and its tools, whereas there are two prototypes of research and information in planning and research and theories of planning. Sorenson wrote in frankness "Most professions concerned with the administration of human affairs...are sustained by a conceptually powerful and widely accepted endogenous body of theory. Planning, it appears is not. Planning-related theories abound, but few originate within the profession...planning may have no systematic theoretical base at all by which its goals and methods can be justified" (Sorenson, 1982, 184). Therefore, by writing on concept, which is in my view half-