

## BOOK REVIEWS

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HANDBOOK ON SPACE, PLACE, AND LAW, edited by Robyn Bartel and Jennifer Carter, Cheltenham UK, and Northampton MA: Edward Elgar, 2021.

The *Handbook on Space, Place, and Law* offers an innovative and rich analysis of the intersection between law and spatiality and constitutes a great contribution to scholarship concerning legal geography. This book reminds us why legal geography is so significant in exposing and challenging everyday social violence and injustices. The chapters are multidisciplinary in the deepest sense, touching upon a range of disciplines that includes law, anthropology, geography, archaeology, environment, settler-colonialism, sociology, planning, and so on. Penned by a diverse group of scholars and practitioners from different regions of the world, the contributions focus especially on gender and global representation from the south and north, as part of the editors' declared agenda. This rich engagement with other disciplines and practitioners expands the borders of discussion and knowledge, deepening our understanding of how power structures work to produce political spaces around the globe theoretically, empirically, and in practice.

The book consists of 32 chapters organized into eight sections (4 chapters in each). Part I "Way Finding"; Part II "Journeying"; Part III "Border Crossing"; Part IV "Different Directions"; Part V "Intersections"; Part VI "Fellow Travelers"; Part VII "New Horizons"; and Part VIII "Way Forward."

This impressive collection reflects the editor's ambitious goals: they endeavor to cover a wide range of areas and perspectives and give a voice to minority groups and topics that are usually denied scholarly attention, among them women, indigenous peoples, etc. The editors succeeded in accomplishing this novel goal, as the rich contributions demonstrate. Yet at the same time, as a reader, I was looking for more focused and nuanced observations. Indeed, I was left with questions concerning scholarly issues that must be addressed urgently in the coming years. For example, what are the most pressing themes for legal geography: settler colonialism, gender, or environment? While I recognize that this is a handbook, and as such its scope is limited, I believe, however, that it would have benefited from more focused, shorter sections containing longer chapters organized thematically around the most contemporary challenges that scholars of legal geography face.

In this short review, I will not be able to discuss in depth all these insightful chapters. Accordingly, I will focus on the chapters concerning gender, space, and law,

which I found the most significant for the scholarship of legal geography. One of this book's important contributions is its gendered dimension, both quantitatively (half of the authors are women) and substantively. It is sobering to see the intersection of gender, space, and law and its multilayered dimensions in the different chapters.

Delaney and Rannila's chapter regarding men stalking women exemplifies such a contribution. Their interesting observations *vis-à-vis* scopic relational spaces as legal spaces that are broader than what we commonly recognize as social spaces enhance our understanding of the intersection between space, power, and gender (David Delaney and Päivi Rannila, chapter 3).

Additional important contributions discuss the gender-based violence experienced by women (chapters 6+7). Brooks' text offers us an innovative way to observe the courtroom as a non-feminist space, a spatial body in need of reform. She argues that cases of sexual offenses should be treated using spatial terminology, to counter violence to which women are subjected in the courtroom in such instances (p. 61). Her work is significant for victims of sexual violence, for raising awareness of the embodied structures of powers in legal spaces and their implications for litigants, and for the opportunity to ensure that these victims see justice done (Victoria Brooks, chapter 6). Kokal and Menski's contribution concerning gender violence in India demonstrates how the law operates in different spaces and jurisdictions. This chapter reveals that state law is not uniform but rather depends on its operation in different spaces and scales, according to the legal orders that perceive rights differently according to gender, power, and scale (Kalindi Kokal and Werner Menski, chapter 7).

Three additional pieces on gender, space, and law are worth mentioning (Chapters 10, 13, 28). Neuwelt-Kearns et al. demonstrate how formal and informal practices are used to spatially manage marginalized groups, focusing on sex workers. Their chapter sheds light on the significance of informal spatial control and the ways that non-regulatory practices and mechanisms work to exclude marginalized groups (Caitlin Neuwelt-Kearns, Tom Baker, and Octavia Clder-Dawe, chapter 10). Sherval's chapter centers on women's environmental activism in Britain *vis-à-vis* shale gas extraction from agricultural land. This contribution enhances our understanding of the activists' spaces and the role that women play in promoting environmental and distributive justice (Meg Sherval, Chapter 13). Another important piece on gender and environment is Wright's contribution, which explores the gendered attachments to sea-place by looking at women sailors and the special attachments they form with the ocean. Here she expands the scope of our understanding beyond land-based attachments, shedding light on the special role of gender in women's sea-place attachment, which is characterized by human bonding and freedom (Shelly A. Wright, chapter 28).

Three additional, important contributions that this book offers should be mentioned. These appear in the first part of the handbook. First, Bennet's chapter raises important questions regarding the role of the law in defining places, asking why the law is weaker in rural areas (Luke Bennett, chapter 1). Second, Benn uses spatial economic analysis of papaya production in Fiji to demonstrate what choices are

preferable for the traditional economy (Chethna Benn, chapter 2). Finally, Correia's contribution concentrates on Indigenous people's rights and settler colonialism. He links Indigenous land rights and settler colonialism, demonstrating how settler law plays a significant role in denying indigenous peoples rights and justice (Joel E. Correia, chapter 4).

This handbook's major contribution lies in its multidisciplinary approach and rich contributions to the intersection between space, place, and law in the broadest sense. It covers an impressive range of topics and areas that are relevant not only to the literature on legal geography but also have practical everyday implications. Scholars and practitioners of legal geography will benefit from this book and will enjoy reading it.

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RED HOT CITIES: HOUSING, RACE AND EXCLUSION IN TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY ATLANTA, by Dan Immergluck, Berkeley, CA, University of California Press, 2022.

Arriving in Atlanta in 2005, Dan Immergluck began to notice the fast-moving trends affecting the city including sharply rising prices and the relatively high scale of speculation and gentrification. He wondered whether policymakers had only two options available: neighborhood decline and rampant gentrification. "Wasn't it the job of policymakers and planners to promote a third way, responsible reinvestment resulting in improvements in residents' lives and housing options, instead of focusing on glitzy 'transformative' redevelopment projects that result in dramatic increases in rents?" (p. ix) *Red Hot City* goes a long way toward putting flesh on the "third way." Immergluck adroitly leads us through policy choices that have contributed to and shaped the racially and economically exclusionary patterns of development in the Atlanta region over the last twenty-five years and advocates for economic development projects that include more affordable housing. *Red Hot Cities* offers a rare combination of empirical research (e.g. the spillover effects of redevelopment projects) along with powerful housing advocacy.

Atlanta and its suburbs have undergone remarkable demographic and housing changes since the 1990s, a boom in multifamily apartments, a rise in the city's income level and in the proportion of college-educated households, and a shift from majority Black to majority non-Black. Meanwhile Atlanta's suburbs are becoming multi-ethnic, with increasing numbers of Latinos and Asians as well as Blacks. The suburban poverty rate is rising along with a decline in Black homeownership due to the impact of the foreclosure crisis.

Immergluck writes about four inflection points when policymakers missed opportunities to reduce racial and economic exclusion. The first occurred in the

1990s and early 2000s in connection with the 1996 Olympics. The Atlanta urban regime (a combination of white corporate leaders and Black politicians) used the Olympics as a way to reinvent the city to make it attractive to middle income families. City leaders used the federal government's HOPE VI public housing revitalization program to demolish the most stigmatized properties, clearing the way for new higher-end properties at these locations while at the same time paying inadequate attention to housing options for low-income households. It is important, however, to point out that Atlanta Housing (previously called the Atlanta Housing Authority) gave housing vouchers to those who were displaced and that these families generally were better off after their move than before. Immergluck criticizes Atlanta for not providing more affordable housing during this same time, but he does not indicate which agency or agencies should have taken the lead in meeting this need.

Atlanta's second missed opportunity occurred in the mid-2000s with the creation of the Atlanta Beltline—a 22 mile loop of trails and a proposed light rail system in a corridor around the city's core, funded by a Tax Allocation District (TAD) that allows new revenue generated by property value increases to be allocated for trails and parks. According to Immergluck, more of these funds should have been used for affordable housing than was the case.

A third decisive period occurred during the foreclosure crisis between 2008 and 2012 when property values fell, vacant housing pitted heavily black neighborhoods, and owned homes (especially in high minority suburbs) were purchased by Wall Street investors and turned into rental properties. Neither the federal government (through its Neighborhood Stabilization Program) nor the state and local governments developed effective programs to help low-income households acquire vacant properties. Such programs could have helped families take advantage of rising housing prices when the foreclosure crisis ended.

The fourth inflection point began in 2012 when city and suburban governments, acting through public and private partnerships, carried out redevelopment projects, demolishing older and affordable rental apartments and replacing them with mixed-use commercial/residential neighborhoods based on New Urbanism planning principles, thereby providing new middle-class residents with the opportunity to experience a more pedestrian oriented way-of-life. At the same time, planners and policymakers ignored the needs of long-term lower income renters, forcing them to look for affordable housing elsewhere. Immergluck believes that it would have been preferable to rehabilitate the older multi-family apartments than to demolish them, but unfortunately does not provide evidence that such a conservation strategy would have been economically feasible.

Politics helps us to understand why Atlanta and its suburbs missed these affordable housing opportunities and they are likely to continue to fail to do so. During the last quarter century, both the city and the suburbs, pressured by real estate interests, have used exclusionary zoning to maintain income/class segregation, but they have also, as indicated above, used public housing demolition and displace-and-replace redevelopment projects.

These [real estate] interests [have been] well served by the Atlanta “biracial” white-Black-corporatist regime, as part of what is now often called the ‘Atlanta Way,’ allowing the regime to retain political and economic power while Black Atlantans gained voting rights.” (p. 226)

Black mayors have gone along with this pro-real estate tilt in an effort to change Atlanta’s image and make Atlanta a world class city.

The minimal government/pro-real estate political culture has played an oversized role in the suburbs as well. As the Atlanta region has grown as a result of sprawl, the role of actors in the city regime have become less important while the state of Georgia and the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) have assumed greater importance. Georgia has failed to provide ARC strong regional planning powers that would enable it to compel more compact development and to set affordable goals for local government.

Demographic trends and the result of the 2020 elections (President Biden carried Georgia along with the state’s two senators) would seem to offer a dose of optimism to change Atlanta’s history of exclusion. However, the challenge for Democrats is steeper at the state than at the national level because Republicans “care little about exclusion, displacement and housing instability and who cater to the short-term interests of real estate investors...” (p. 230). Republican state legislators have gerrymandered both federal and state maps to ensure legislative superiority despite the electorate having an almost 50-50 division statewide. What is needed, according to the Immergluck, is more organizing among less-educated, minority voters, but these organizing efforts must contend with voter suppression efforts by the Republicans.

My main complaint with *Red Hot Cities* is the author’s over-reliance on the term “racialized gentrification.” His definition goes way beyond what gentrification usually means—the process whereby the character of a poor urban area is changed by immigration of the wealthy, improving housing, and attracting new businesses, typically displacing current inhabitants in the process. He uses the term to describe city-wide demographic and housing trends (e.g. the shift from a Black to a non-Black city), and in doing so, obscures what is happening at the block and neighborhood level. A close reading of the text shows that where revitalization is occurring, the process contradicts the stereotypes implied by the term “racialized gentrification. First, neighborhood revitalization is due more to new upmarket apartment construction than to middle-class move-ins. Second, neighborhood revitalization does not necessarily lead to the displacement (forced moves) of low-income renters; instead, change reflects black renters being priced out of certain neighborhoods. Finally, the term “racialized gentrification” implies that white gentrifiers want to push black residents out. Previous gentrification research has shown that, in reality, many white in-migrants seek older areas because they are ethnically diverse.

Despite this flaw, I strongly recommend this book. Immergluck successfully rebuts the notion held by many policymakers, and some academics, that housing

trends leading to segregation and economic inequality are the result of apolitical and impersonal market forces. While it is true that no single change in policy will reverse the demographic and housing trends occurring in places like Atlanta, planners and policymakers have a crucial role to play in promoting equity.

Changes to how major projects get done, how they are financed and whether planners and dealmakers are forced to consider the immediate and longer-term questions of who benefits and who is harmed from the next big “place-making” project can and do make a difference. (p. 233)

Immergluck’s clarion call for a more equitable approach to urban and regional planning deserves attention in the Rustbelt as well as the Sunbelt, as well as overseas.

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RETHINKING COMMUNICATION GEOGRAPHIES: GEOMEDIA,  
DIGITAL LOGISTICS AND THE HUMAN CONDITION, by André Jansson.  
Cheltenham, UK and Northampton, MA: Edward Elgar, 2022.

Communications geography emerged originally back in the 1970s, mainly through an IGU commission on the geography of telecommunications, initiated and led, at the time, by French geographers, given the leadership of France, by then, in the adoption of digitized telecommunications media. Some two decades later, mainly following the emergence and adoption of the Internet, led mainly by the US, telecommunications geography has split into two almost separate fields: the geography of information, and the geography of communications. Jansson’s volume relates to the latter, attempting to present the field, coupled with the exposition of new perspectives for it.

Soon after the beginning of the first chapter of the book, we learn that ‘a key purpose of this book is to explore the negotiations and struggles over logistics that follow in the wake of geomedial’ (p. 4). Geomedial constitutes, thus, the focus of this book, highlighting their integration into everyday life, the logistics involved in such an integration, and the human conditions affected by it. The book is further concerned with the two-way production relationships between communications and space. Thus, the rest of the first chapter of the book is dedicated to the understanding of geomedial, to geomedial itself, to the logistical struggles involved in it, as well as to the human conditions related to geomedial. It is not clear, however, which media, or in which way, media are considered to be geographical ones. The chapter concludes with an outlining of the research context for the book and its structure.

The second chapter is entitled ‘dwelling under geomedial’, notably following the COVID-19 pandemic and its enforcement of wide media usage. The objective of this chapter is: ‘to lay the ground for an exploration of the day-to-day labour

that we all pursue just to get by in a geomediatized society and how this labour, and our various feelings about it, articulate who we are and the forms of power we assert and to which we are subjected' (p. 35). Labour here refers to efforts for the making of daily needed products. Under this framework, the author relates in this chapter to the following dimensions: Reflections on media life; rethinking the earth dweller; geomedia as an environmental regime, and analyzing geomedia with Hannah Arendt.

The second chapter sheds some interesting and rather diversified, light on contemporary society and individuals' experiences within it. However, the reader still needs to grasp the specifics and practicalities of dwelling under geomedia, whichever it is defined, and to have these assessed in light of the more general writings in the chapter on humans, dwelling, and the environment.

'The culture of streamability' is the title of the third chapter of the book, and 'this culture refers to the naturalization of streaming media as an integral part of our everyday life environments and activities', with 'streamability [is] basically understood as an industrial logic that extends connective media affordances' (p. 61). This conceptualization is developed in this chapter along several aspects: Conceptualizing streamability; stuck in the stream – captivation and entanglement; logistical labour, or the toil and trouble of music streaming, and the symbolic violence of ordinary logistical experts. Jansson notes that the concept of streamability has not been interpreted in the social sciences so far, and rarely so in media management studies. Jansson suggests that streaming relates to both data and contents, but this distinction becomes increasingly blurred in everyday life, thus turning streamability into something that is more than mere industrial logic.

In its fourth chapter, the book moves to the discussion of 'transmedia travel', referring to self-reserved touristic services, under conditions of enhanced fluidity and flexibility as featured by numerous media. Thus, 'the aim of this chapter is to explicate how the normalization of transmedia in society contributes to further de-differentiation along the lines of the post-tourism thesis' (p. 93). The discussions in this chapter are organized under the following section titles: Transmedia and the lure of tourism; variants of the virtual tourist; decapsulation through entanglement, and selfie logistics, or the performative labour of emplacement.

Tourists, as well as virtual 'armchair' tourists, being engaged in numerous geomedia, are considered labourers, and producers of labour for others, who are engaged in the tourism industry, including those in charge of the processing of vast data.

The fifth chapter of the book is entitled 'guidance landscapes', devoted to logistical affordances of media, and the aim of the chapter is declared 'to chart what this latest transformation of logistical media means to the human condition' (p. 116). Furthermore, the chapter reflects the author's interest in 'how geomedia as an environmental regime translates into a particular kind of urban landscape that functionally and discursively responds to the demands of the new platform

economy and logistical accumulation' (p. 117). Practical implications of guided landscapes relate to tourism and mobility. Thus, the sections of the chapter deal with the following topics: From orientation to orchestration; from lighthouses to locative guidance; logistical accumulation as landscaping and enter the guidance landscape.

The sixth and last chapter of the book is devoted to 'geomedia as the human condition', and it is based on the previous chapters of the book, which positioned 'people as logistical labourers, continuously preoccupied with keeping up (with) data streams and maintaining the infrastructures that carry the streams' (p. 151). In addition, however, Jansson notes that the previous chapters stressed 'the frictions involved in these processes, including the failures of technology and the everyday resistance people often exert – if capable – in order not to be stressed, or, at least, to maintain a sense of being in command of, and feeling secure in, the environments where they dwell' (p. 151).

The sections of the sixth chapter discuss the following ideas: From logistical labour to logistical action; a post-digital sense of place; and geomedia capital and the space of appearance.

As the author noted already at the beginning of this book, the book is devoted to new ideas and directions for the geography of communications, more than to reviewing the field in its contemporary status. As such, the author's efforts should be praised. The book cites a wide range of relevant sources, side by side with the introduction of plenty of neologisms. A concluding chapter for the book, summarizing its major ideas, would have been most helpful, notably given the new ideas introduced in it.

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POLITICAL GEOGRAPHY by Igor Okunev. Peter Lang, Bern, Switzerland, 2021.

The field of political geography discusses the relations between geography and the political world, more precisely, the impact of geographical (or spatial) realities on the political world at all levels – international, regional, national and local. As Igor Okunev states, "Political geography is a discipline concerned with the spatial dimensions of politics" (p. 19). He suggests that political geography draws from political science ("the study of political aspects of social activity") and geography ("the spatial dimension of both natural and societal processes on the Earth's surface") (p. 19). Thus, political geography "deals with the spatial dimension of political processes and phenomena" (p. 20).

Because of the dynamic nature of the field – particularly the political element, unlike the geographic/spatial element that rarely changes – teaching political geography requires up-to-date textbooks, which also means that textbooks tend



to run out of date quite rapidly. This makes Igor Okunev's textbook, *Political Geography*, a welcome addition to the body of literature in the field. Translated from Russian into English, Okunev's book provides a broad overview of key elements in political geography, starting from the international level and ending in the local one. Published in English in 2021, it is up-to-date. However, in 2022 Russia took the spotlight of global news and the fields of Political Science, International Relations, and related fields due to its war on Ukraine, and obviously this is not reflected in the book. While this is not a book on geopolitics but on political geography, it could lose some traction. Nonetheless, the elements of political geography that the book displays are not dependent on any one event.

In this book's favor, nevertheless, it places Russia and Russian examples and data at its center. It is not "Russian" in the sense of marketing a so-called Russian view of current international affairs or political geography. Being on the book market in the West, it stands out as unique and refreshing compared with the traditional US- or European-centric books. This western-centrism is apparent in the examples suggested to students that commonly are picked (not necessarily cherry-picked, although this could happen) from familiar settings to the presumed readers. This would be less obvious when it comes to the analysis, which should be globally accepted in order to establish a common terminology. Okunev's book stands out in the former aspect with non-Western examples, most of them being Russian, in fact. This provides an insight into the study of political geography in Russia, but also invites a comparative approach in the West and expands students' variety of examples in many classes in geography, political science, international relations and related fields. This makes this book a highly valued and useful instruction tool for the benefit of both students and their instructors.

In the recent several decades, political geography's textbooks written by Western scholars for Western students are less methodological in teaching the field and are more engaged with either the history of the field or newer theories and discourses, such as critical geopolitics, feminism, and so on.<sup>1</sup> These elements which are key in the western discourse are virtually absent in Okunev's book. In a way, his book can be considered "going back to basics" of the field, in a good sense. And the book is certainly a go-to source on the issues it deals with – regardless of the examples that might be harder to link to by western readers. However, the lack of connection to the current discourse in political geography, geopolitics, and international relations might make it less appealing to some instructors and students. Yet, Okunev's book can be complimented by other books, thus covering the essentials of the field and enriching the students.

The book has several additional flaws that should be noted. Perhaps the most important concerns climate change. The discourse in the West and in most of the world in recent years focuses on climate change and the dramatic effects it would carry for virtually the entire planet, with the direst and almost immediate results awaiting islands that would certainly sink as sea level rises, such as Tuvalu and the Maldives

(p. 239). Wildfires in California, Siberia and elsewhere, more powerful hurricanes, tornados, typhoons, tsunamis, flooding, ice melting, rising temperatures that are already making more and more parts of earth uninhabitable in an alarming rate – all events striking some countries harder than others, but no country is immune – are changing geographical realities and would certainly alter the political world. But this issue is scarcely present in Okunev's book. How does climate change alter all that we knew thus far? How would it transform politics and the understanding of geography and political geography? Climate change already has and will certainly have dire consequences for the economy and society of virtually all countries, but is mostly lacking in Okunev's discussion. Even if in Russia this is not a major issue in politics or academia, this would be a significant lacune for college-level students in the West.

I wish to focus briefly on several issues in chapter 2 that deals with geopolitics. Okunev states that geopolitics is parallel to the historical and theoretical approaches to the study of international relations, thus it “focuses on the spatial aspect (geography of international relations)” (p. 37). While it is true that geopolitics deals with the geographical aspect of the international system, it is associated with the theoretical study of international relations. Geopolitics (in its traditional sense) isn't realism or neorealism – as Okunev correctly states – but it is related to realism in the sense that it basically deals with materialism (compared with idealism), thus associated with classical realism. Geopolitics, in fact, is parallel to IR, and developed into classic theories that associate with realism and into more recent theories of critical geopolitics that relate to the constructivist paradigm of IR.<sup>2</sup>

On pp. 49-50 the discussion on polarity is somewhat odd for an international relations reader. In Okunev's account polarity is not about the number of poles but “reflects the ways of maintaining the balance of power in international relations to prevent global conflicts.” (p. 49) The poles are defined in IR by their relative power compared to other countries. A unipolar system is concerned with one power that is above all others, with no real competition. Bipolarity is two powers that stand above all others and are in relative parity with one another. However, multipolarity does not mean that there actually are no poles as Okunev writes (p. 50) but that there is a group of powers with relatively similar power, but significantly more power than any other power. The point in polarity is that the poles determine the international system's management and conduct. They define the rules of behavior in the system. No country that is at a lower level of power can set the tone in the system.<sup>3</sup> Perhaps – for the sake of theoretical and terminological clarity, it would be better to suggest a different term than polarity that captures the sense of the matter without suggesting an alternative definition to IR's polarity.

On p. 53, Okunev discusses the term Pax as world, but this is not accurate, again in IR eyes. Pax means peace, thus Pax Romana was not the Roman World but the Roman Peace, i.e., when Rome dominated the known world of its era so that there were no major wars. The same goes for Pax Americana as the era of “American peace”. Clearly, any great power that had or has “Pax” was or is the greatest power

of that time. But it's not "its world". The notion of "world" is incorrect here as it does not mean that there cannot be wars within the boundaries of the given world.

The definitions of types of great powers on p. 54 are also odd and do not neatly match the definition in International Relations. IR and Geopolitics are closely connected, thus there should be more congruence in the definition of terms.<sup>4</sup>

The other chapters cover various aspects of political geography, detailing the many links between geography and politics – analyzing these links from the international level into the state and substate levels, and finally discussing the local level. Again, providing non-Western examples throughout the chapters is refreshing. At the minimum, it shows that the political world is complicated anywhere.

Being a textbook, each chapter closes with a summary of key terms to learn and a set of concluding questions to check the reader's understanding of the ideas and concepts in the chapter. This is useful for starting class discussions on the book's themes and helps the readers make sure they comprehend the different chapters.

Overall, this is a rich book that can and should be used by instructors and students of geography, international relations, political sciences, and regional studies.

## NOTES

- 1 For instance, see John Agnew, *Making Political Geography* (London: Arnold, 2002); Mark Blackwell, *Political Geography* (London: Routledge, 2006); John Agnew, Katharyne Mitchell, and Gerard Toal (eds.), *A Companion to Political Geography* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2008); Carolyn Gallaher, Carl T. Dahlman, Mary Gilmartin, and Alison Mountz, *Key Concepts in Political Geography* (London: Sage, 2009); Kevin R. Cox, Murray Low, and Jennifer Robinson (eds.), *The Sage Handbook of Political Geography* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2008); John Agnew, Virginie Mamadouh, Anna J. Secor and Joanne Sharp (eds.), *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Political Geography* (Chichester, UK: Wiley Blackwell, 2015); Colin Flint and Peter J. Taylor, *Political Geography: World-Economy, Nation-State and Locality*, Seventh Edition (New York: Routledge, 2018); Joe Painter and Alex Jeffrey, *Political Geography: An Introduction to Space and Power* (Los Angeles, CA: Sage, 2009).
- 2 On the links between geopolitics and international relations, see for instance David Criekemans (ed.), *Geopolitics and International Relations: Grounding World Politics Anew* (Leiden: Brill, 2022).
- 3 On polarity see Nina Græger, Bertel Heurlin, Ole Wæver and Anders Wivel (eds.), *Polarity in International Relations: Past, Present, and Future* (Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2022).
- 4 David Criekemans (eds.), *Geopolitics and International Relations*.

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BOUNDARIES AND RESTRICTED PLACES: THE IMMURED SPACE,  
Edited by Balkiz Yapicioglu and Konstantinos Lalenis, Cheltenham, UK: Edward  
Elgar Publishing, 2022.

The book deals with spaces 'beyond', beyond borders, beyond fences, beyond walls and gates, beyond boundaries of the social group, the sovereign unit, and even beyond the physical world. These are confining, even imprisoning, spaces, which, on the one hand, are produced when communities enclose themselves for a variety of reasons, such as security, quality of life, and ethnic or religious diversity; or communities that distance themselves from threatening spaces, such as cemeteries and crime-ridden neighborhoods. On the other hand, other communities are constrained in free movement in space due to the presence of border lines and fenced compounds, such as military bases and zones or disputed areas.

The book tends to rely on different theories such as the heterotopia space of Michel Foucault, as appears in chapter 11 by Lalenis, dealing with the prostitution and crime district in Piraeus, and in the unique dynamics created around cemeteries in different urban spaces (chapters 16 by Polymenidis, 17 by Karanouh and 19 by Belof). Other theories are economic ones such as neoliberalism (chapter 14 by Hedayatifard), and also ideas such as "the geography of fear" (chapter 3 by Mady), which could have received a wider consideration in the book, especially in light of its goals.

As the editors note in the opening chapter, the book is a product of the refugee crisis of 2016, when refugees' free movement was restricted by fences, walls and international agreements. The editors admit that it is based on an emotional drive stemming from desperation. The pursuit of freedom resulted, eventually, in confinement between fences. And again, the fear of the 'other', the different, led to the establishment of social defense mechanisms with a spatial expression, similar to the establishment of historical walls, such as the in Jerusalem, York and Jericho. These reflect defense from the 'evil spirits', from the upcoming war.

Today, however, these closed spaces have different rules, and the emotions of the public that is 'hiding' are based on historical events anchored in memories. The justification given for the spatial isolation is mainly based on fears and loss of the sovereign grip or loss of identity. This is reflected, for example, in chapter 7 on the Muslim minority 'Pomak' in northern Greece, which was separated by transit permits, a surveillance zone, a special identity card, work permits, immigration approval, certificate of loyalty and threat of deportation.

The book attaches a new concept, 'immured space', to a variety of spaces in which free movement to and from is limited, denied or supervised, for certain groups of people. In some cases there is a sense of 'invasion' by 'outsiders', which creates fear among those who live inside. The barriers that surround an immured space may be mental, psychological or cognitive, as well as physical usually erected in areas with socioeconomic gaps. This is illustrated in chapter 12 by Pilar-Rocha

& Smaniotto-Costa, which deals with closed communities in Brazil, chapter 13 by De La Sala & Augusto Cambler dealing with closed spaces in São Paulo, and chapter 14 which presents closed spaces along the Caspian Sea in Iran. There are also barriers such as ethnic and religious differences, as shown in Chapter 5 by Williams on Northern Ireland, and Chapter 3 on the division of Beirut into districts, or those established by a sovereign authority or even the community itself in response to invasion resulting from a catastrophe, such as war or a humanitarian crisis. This is reflected in chapters 2 by Yapicioglu & Güvenç and 18 by Adil, dealing with relations between Greeks and Turks in Cyprus.

In this context it is worth noting that although the book ascribes importance to the walls being erected today, such as, for example, between the Palestinian Authority and Israel, or between the US and Mexico, there is very little reference to the need by countries to protect their population from strategic threats such as terrorism, as well as curbing illegal immigration of workers, a phenomenon that is expanding in the global era and weakens the sovereign state

The new spatial definition that the book attempts to provide is not reflected in the cases presented in the chapters dealing with cemeteries (16, 17, 19), in chapter 4 dealing with the alleged formation of an artificial island in the Vistula Spit Lagoon, as part of a dispute over maritime passage between Poland and Russia, and in chapter 8 dealing with urban architecture in science fiction movies. Chapters 10 and chapter 18 by Mentés & Yardimci, which deal with giving meaning to space through artistic expression on the walls of abandoned buildings, are also not connected to the theoretical-conceptual framework that appears at the beginning of the book.

Referring to socio-spatial barriers, the editors specify four types of immured spaces: divided spaces, whether these are borders within cities (regulatory-administrative division) or borders between countries; segregated spaces: mainly in their socioeconomic aspect; protected spaces and spaces beyond. While the first three provide a wide variety of examples of the concept in their titles, the fourth one focuses, for example, on the location and role of cemeteries within a given urban space in three different articles, which could have been, in fact, united into one.

In general, the book does not offer much innovativeness to the geographical and mental spatial knowledge. It lacks reference to cases of Indigenous groups who may be regarded spatially confined due to the interactions between their internal social codes and external state policies. The new scientific definition it tries to suggest fails to connect between an abandoned Jewish cemetery in Beirut, the barracks that became a university in Verona, the Park in Sao Paulo, and an artificial island in Poland. In each of the cases it is a different story, and the attempt to generalize them under one title is lost in the sea of examples. Most of the cases reviewed in the book are historical ones, analyzed, admittedly, using different research approaches, but they are too concise, and are not based on empirical new data from the “field”, which leaves the reader mostly with anecdotes rather than substance. Even in those cases where evidence is collected, such as in the chapter dealing with graffiti, only one or

two interviews were conducted with the graffiti artists themselves. In conclusion, it appears that only those interested in a specific review of one of the stories presented in the book may benefit from it.

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FORM AND FLOW: THE SPATIAL POLITICS OF URBAN RESILIENCE  
AND CLIMATE JUSTICE, by Kian Goh, Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2021.

As Goh declares in her book, she explores “political ecology of design”. She examines environmental planning in New York, Jakarta, and Rotterdam through the lenses of urban design and socioecological spatial politics. She focuses on the emerging geographies of climate change response, studying the nature of flows of ideas, influence, and capital through new global and urban networks. From this complexity she goes on to the research questions: “In the face of climate change and uneven social and spatial urban development, how are contesting visions of urban futures produced and how do they attain power?” (p. 3).

This research topic is intensified and expanded in the last decade vis-à-vis the social consequences of the urban-global neo-liberalism and the rapid climate change threat. She traces the policies that produce marginality of urban residents historically and spatially in environmentally risky sites that are now both threatened by climate change and high-value urban development. She also explores how the new global and urban networks are reconstituting the ways in which large-scale urban environmental plans are conceived and implemented, and the multilayered ways in which the design of urban resilience is understood, invoked, and harnessed through formal and informal processes.

Through this crosscutting analysis, it is shown how combined global and local political-economic and climate-environmental changes produce struggles over urban futures. These changes have set up the conditions, together, for large-scale urban environmental plans, and resistance to those plans. Therefore, Goh investigates the spatial politics of urban responses to climate change. She argues that three central issues emerge in examining these aggregated themes. First, these are global-scale problems, with global and local impacts, involving a complex array of entities and interconnections. Second, initiatives in economic development and environment are now clearly interlinked. Third, the possibilities and scales of globalized urbanization entangle and complicate urban climate change responses. This might be called the “metropolitanization” of climate change.

Neil Brenner and Christian Schmid (2015) presented a new epistemology of the urban. They present an encompassing rubric of ‘cityness’. That is, the urban has become more differentiated, polymorphic, variegated, and multi-scalar than

in previous cycles of capitalist urbanization. Today, urban agglomerations can no longer be understood simply as nodal concentrations organized around and oriented towards a single urban core. The non-urban realm (the hinterland) has now been thoroughly engulfed within the patterns of a planetary formation of urbanization.

The processes are also deeply dependent on time and place. Ananya Roy (2016) and Oren Yiftachel (2020), for example, have explained how historical differences of place and power, such as colonial and postcolonial relationships in cities of the Global South, demand different understandings and concepts of the urban. This is particularly important given the ways in which unequal relationships of the past contribute to unjust environmental conditions of the present.

Not just histories of marginalization and organizing against marginalization have been central to the potential for social and environmental resilience; space matters no less. Especially the local within the multiscaled connections. Place-based nature of the organization's community building that matters along with the creating and building local knowledge is significant and powerful.

This discussion raises the question of environmental and climate justices, which are a cornerstone of the book. Activists worldwide have united around the notion of climate justice, asserting that already marginalized and vulnerable populations are most at risk from climate change impacts, and that climate change responses threaten to reinforce or, have the potential to alleviate such injustice.

Lately, COP27, the 27th United Nations Climate Change conference was held in November 2022 in Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt. The decisions were weak and disappointing vis-à-vis the steps that should have been taken. But one of the main issues that came to the fore was the demand of the poor countries (the global south) to be compensated on loss and damage that already caused by the rich countries.

The content of the book opens with a thorough and comprehensive introduction. The first chapter: "Disparate yet interconnected cities", analyzes New York, Jakarta and Rotterdam, which seem like radically different sociopolitical, economic, and spatial contexts. The challenges of climate change each city faces, the plans posed in response, and the conflicts over the future vision of the city appear as well to be distinct: place-based, and historically specific. But they take place amid a set of universal processes of global change. They are interrelated, offering new and pivotal understandings of the others.

The second chapter is "Nature of Contestation". Impacts of climate change and the imperative to respond created the opportunity to learn about spaces and actions of contestation. The three common points—the shared struggle, local knowledge, and coalition building, illustrate complex domains of contestation in response to the new conditions caused by urban climate change impacts and planning actions. The disparate urban sites, together, offer a more generalized notion of collectivity, knowledge, and movement building.

"Nature of Flows", the third chapter, explores why, how, and under what conditions do interconnections among sites and cities form. Under what ways

large-scale adaptation plans are conceptualized? Who is behind them, and who will benefit? It focuses primarily on the actors, entities, and networks involved in the production of these plans. It offers theories of “relational geographies” to investigate the conceptual and material landscapes of global and urban interconnectivities in the context of climate change and globalized urban development.

Chapter 4, “Plans and Counterplans”, explores the design of the plans and projects. It focuses on the questions: How does design relate to responses to urban climate change and how do we assess it? What are the motivations behind specific designs for urban climate change responses? Goh concludes that: “Design is political and intertwined with foundational ideas about society, concerning symbol, image, identity, power, and legitimacy. Design opens terrains of contestation. When invoked, understood, and practiced as part of building a movement for political change, it can take its place in visualizing and countering the structures, both physical and systemic, that bind people and places in precarious social and environmental conditions. Design can be a part of resistance, a mode of political organizing” (p. 148).

In the fifth chapter, “A Political Ecology of Design”, Goh goes back to the main question: “In the face of climate change and uneven social and spatial urban development, how are contesting visions of the future produced and how do they attain power?” Then, she summarizes the theories, findings, and implications of each chapter.

The last paragraph is a message to the designers, based on the conclusion from her research: “designers should take seriously political education, including theories of social change, critical world histories, and critical pedagogies, learning how to learn from diverse, global sites. Beyond aspects of participation and engagement, more concerted attention to the places of design within broader and longer-term organizing movements for social change would open opportunities for new practices, where the specific iterative and projective processes and protocols of design might well be part of emerging political movements. It would also help designers to understand better when to step back, listen, and be part of. Second, designers should create new forms of collaborative, networked practices that are globally informed, but situated in (or among particular places). Designers will not be experts everywhere. And yet, as shown across this book, ideas do not always emerge from one specific place. And power—in relationships and movements, but also in ideas and visions—is constituted across space and is dependent on time” (pp. 180-181).

The book exposes the tremendous complexity of the spatio-social processes, combined by nature and human actions together, from the past to the future. It is quite difficult to trace this complexity, but it clarifies the contemporary results, sum multi-scales networks, flows of ideas, environment and climate change grassroots movements and global organizations, specialists, and state institutions. All together are intertwined place-based knowledge with the global one along time in urban regions and show how climate justice and just sustainability are difficult to fix. This book opens new directions toward a critical theory of designing urban climate



change resilience, one that prioritizes issues of justice, centered on the production of alternative visions.

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