BOOK REVIEWS

Argyro LOUKAKI, *Living Ruins Value Conflicts*, **Ashgate 2008, 384 pp.**

Loukaki's book is excellent. The book is written in a highly intelligent way and Loukaki presents us with both exceptional theoretical and empirical insights. In the main Loukaki's argument is that Greek classical monuments and specifically the Acropolis have been strongly framed by both Western and Greek agents. Loukaki is at pains to show countries such as Britain, France, Germany and the US have had a strong stake in the way that Greek classical monuments have been interpreted, preserved, conserved, maintained and understood within local, national and international contexts. In their translation through Western agents Loukaki wants to suggest that these monuments have played a major role in the production of US and European ideas of identity. As he explains the monuments have played a role in the way that Western countries have sought to construct 'roots', in terms of democratic ideals, high art and wider norms and values (see e.g. chapter 1, 2, p. 49).

But also and within this Western positioning Loukaki argues that Greek classical monuments have therefore been subject to a fair degree of policing, surveillance and even overt external social control that has manifested itself in terms of institutional policies and discourses. In this regard, Loukaki argues that these monuments have a certain *weight*, and/or *heaviness* which mean that their owners feel an overwhelming responsibility to these architectural spaces of sacredness (see chapter 1, pp. 41–43). As opposed to objects of Western, national and/or artistic splendour, Loukaki suggests that these architectural shrines have almost become suffocating burdens that stifle alternatives, other possibilities, becomings and spaces of difference.

Moreover, Loukaki also wants to contend that the direct involvement of Western institutions within the preservation and conservation of these monuments and spaces has meant that alternative and contemporary readings of these sites are often sidelined, ignored or erased. Indeed, rather than spaces of classical Greek history alone, as Loukaki usefully points out, often these monuments, ruins and classical spaces have always already been connected to a variety of alternative histories that do not always stand with conventional Western definitions. Thus, in relation to the Acropolis, for instance, rather than a site of classical history alone, Loukaki suggests that this historic space has been inter-fused with Hellenic, Byzantine and even Ottoman and/or Turkish histories. However, whilst these histories are often actually acknowledged by various Western agents, various institutions and bodies such as the American School of Classical Studies (ASCS) often want to encourage what they understand to be 'Greek' readings of these monuments – here 'Greek identity' or 'Greekness' is understood monolithically through the idea of classical Greece (see p. 264).

However, rather than focusing on Western networks alone Loukaki claims that Greek agents particularly within archaeological and architectural state structures have also had a very strong role

in maintaining and preserving wider essentialist and/or static conservative Western readings of these spaces and buildings (chapters 5 and 6 in particular explore these details). Principally, state agencies such as the Athens Archaeological Society and the Central Archaeological Council, (CAC) have all played a major part in a wider process of 'eternalisation'. Here as Loukaki makes clear, eternalisation refers to a transcendental narrative which projects the monuments as timeless and completely unanswerable to alternative readings and differing understandings of their conservation and maintenance.

This book then has many strong points. In the first and foremost, the most positive aspect of this text is the sheer depth and breadth of the study. Firstly rather than a 'local' and/or parochial study the Loukaki's interpretation of the Westernisation of Greece is certainly very welcoming (see chapters 1 and 2 in particular). In short, this work will certainly be of interest to those writers who are currently analysing Western and Occidental identities. This volume with its critical analysis of the way that Greek heritage has been critical to the notion of Western culture and Western identity will certainly be useful to those scholars who are currently unpacking what might be viewed as narrow or uncritical views of Western identity (e.g. see Bonnett, 2004).

Furthermore Loukaki's use of the work of both Pierre Bourdieu and Terry Eagleton is really interesting and brings a very welcome engagement with social class issues (see chapter 3). As well as providing us with an angle on Westernness, Loukaki's work opens up a wider understanding of the power and dominance of Northern European aristocratic subjects – and present class elites – and offers us an understanding of the role of classicism in the production of cultured, sophisticated, and/or refined identities. Through the writing of Bourdieu and Eagleton, Loukaki gives us the opportunity to understand the ways in which Greek classicism generally and Greek classical monuments have been (and are) a resource through which elite subjects can manufacture cultural and symbolic capital. In an era where cultural studies of social class are slowly being revisited once again, (e.g. see the work of Skeggs, 2004), the implications of this study will certainly be very useful to a range of scholars who are seeking to understanding the role that *cultural class identities* (as opposed to economic identities alone) have played in the production of classed selves.

However, whilst this text is full of interesting theoretical and empirical examples, there are certain problematic issues within this writing that are worthy of further discussion. Firstly whilst the work is certainly broad, this wide coverage can become slightly overbearing at times, and often we are left with the sense that rather than providing with every available reading more concentrating on fewer themes and therefore fewer processes and moments may have allowed for a stronger analysis.

But this is not the main weakness of the text. The problem with this text is theoretical and may be summed up by Loukaki's tentative relationship to essentialism. Indeed, throughout the text we are often treated to highly interesting readings of concepts such as *genius loci* and *genius mundi* (see e.g. chapter 4, pp. 128–132). Of course, Loukaki does not approach these concepts without a social reference and thus rather than a Heideggarian reading, the author posits that these concepts are socially constructed (p. 131). Yet at other times, Loukaki also suggests that there is indeed something *essential* to ideas such as the *genius loci*. Thus at one point in this writing, Loukaki suggests that one of the themes in his book has been to ask 'who has the talent to interpret and reveal the *essential* qualities of the *genius loci*' (p. 307).

Evidently Loukaki has a right to express an opinion and finding an essentialist narrative in this text might be viewed as very refreshing by those who feel tired of a contemporary academic

climate of cultural theory that often pays homage to anti-essentialist thinking. However, whilst the author has a right to support an essentialist idea, we are given very little analysis of the problems or contentious issues that surround this concept and as a result we are left with the feeling that as opposed to a thorough analysis, Loukaki has approached this concept fairly uncritically.

Furthermore, then, and in relation to this point, the way that Loukaki wishes to present other stories within this work become unhappily tied up with this essentialism in very problematic ways. Thus for instance, if we take the issue of landscaping in chapter 7 we are presented with one very obvious example of the way that Loukaki's essentialism may in fact lead to the production of monolithic ethnic narratives. Chiefly in talking about the landscaping initiatives of the American School of Classical Studies (ASCS) and a Greek architect Dimitri Pikionis (1887–1968) Loukaki discusses two gardens which have been recently constructed around the Acropolis. Evidently Loukaki's intention is to show us the very different ways in which the ASCS and Pikionis have produced two very different accounts in the same area. Thus, as Loukaki points out the ASCS has produced a very Westernised garden which, once again, draws upon a very classical Greek interpretation of the space; whereas as Loukaki suggests that Pikionis' garden can be understood (and is understood by Greek tourists/visitors) to be more 'Greek' by its associations with wider meanings and readings that move beyond strict classical interpretations.

However, whilst this analysis is certainly interesting, Loukaki also seems to be suggesting that there is an essential and/or an authentic Greek understanding of these spaces which is therefore monolithic, essential and transcendental. Indeed, on p. 275, in his comparison of the ASCS with Pikionis, Loukaki implies that his study of these two gardens is about understanding which of these gardens reveals the 'fullest *genius* of the place' (p. 275). Thus whilst it is clear that Loukaki is very aware of the pitfalls of nationalism, national identity and ethnocentric Heideggarian readings of place and space, one cannot help feeling that a privileging of Pikionis (and the Greek tourists and visitors) as authentic Greek ethnicity is being represented here. Indeed, although it is fair to say that Pikionis' garden at the Acropolis certainly tells us a more modern story, by Loukaki's reading of the *genius loci*, there is certainly an implied narrative here that only a Greek landscape gardener could accurately understand this place.

Nevertheless, despite these pitfalls, I believe that this text will be a highly excellent resource for a range of scholars in a wide selection of fields. And thus as I have already suggested I believe that this text will certainly be a magnificent aid to those wishing to embark on new research surrounding ideas of the West, Western identity, Occidentalism and even North European aristocratic and bourgeois class identities.

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Brian GRAHAM and Peter HOWARD (eds), *The Ashgate Research Companion to Heritage and Identity*, **Ashgate, Aldershot 2008, 461 pp.**

The field of Heritage Studies is coming of age. In the last few years two major international publishing houses, Ashgate and Routledge, have greatly expanded their portfolio of publications dedicated to all things heritage, with each publishing field defining 'Readers' or 'Research Companions'. In contrast to Smith's (2006) recent four volume cultural heritage reader from Routledge, the collection by Graham and Howard is both far more reasonably priced and focused in its aims, addressing specifically the inter-connections between heritage and identity.

As a sociologist of heritage I particularly welcomed the explicit recognition by the editors that any understanding of the links between these two core concepts demands a social constructionist approach, and a departure from the more scientistic, positivist paradigms which often dominate much of today's writing on heritage, particularly within policy circles. But as I read through the chapters I became increasingly unsure about the degree to which the volume successfully advances our critical awareness about such a relationship in what Urry (2003) refers to as the 'global complexities' of today.

The perennial problem with edited collections is creating an analysis that functions at the broader conceptual level. Invariably in such volumes, each chapter presents a case study or particular analytical slice. The editors do attempt to address this challenge by labelling part I 'The Context of Heritage and Identity'. However, the first three chapters inadequately frame the discussion and issues at stake. As an example, whilst the discussion of the English archaeological site of Avebury is interesting in itself, presenting it as 'The History of Heritage' (chapter 1) is somewhat baffling. In a field that needs to be highly sensitive to critiques of Eurocentrism, offering an account of one European country in such definitive, universalist terms is unacceptable. Indeed the over-emphasis on European and North American case studies over the course of the volume is one of its weaknesses. To be fair the editors do flag-up various reasons why there is a lack of contributions from Latin America and the Middle East, but, nonetheless, some readers might find the lack of geographical diversity somewhat disappointing.

Divided into four parts, the volume successfully covers a broad range of themes for its intended audience of advanced students and researchers. Among them, chapters by Paul Gough and Gregory J. Ashworth focus on the commemoration of war and trauma. The latter raises some very interesting and tantalising questions concerning ethics, motives and victimisation, but unfortunately falls short of adequately elaborating upon such issues. For those unfamiliar with the relationship between race, heritage and identity, Jo Littler's chapter offers a very nice overview. Keld Buciek and Kristine Juul correctly argue too much research on Diaspora heritage privileges static places and not the movement between places, an area they helpfully reflect upon here. Benjamin W. Porter gives an account of the relationship between heritage and tourism. And whilst this chapter is indeed helpful, I would liked to have seen more attention given to tourism across the volume as it has undoubtedly become a pivotal factor in the articulation between heritage and identity today. Perhaps the most stimulating chapters come in the final part, titled 'The Challenges of a Postmodern and Post-Colonial World'. A chapter by John E. Tunbridge explores how a number of different states have explicitly used heritage as a mechanism for carving out a multicultural social fabric. This is followed by Monika A. Murzyn's fascinating account of the different strategies adopted by governments and policy-makers across Eastern Europe for re-scripting heritage sites in a post-Soviet Union era. Finally the volume concludes with a brief, but detailed, account by William S. Logan of the importance of understanding how the concepts of

heritage and human rights have both evolved since the Second World War. As he indicates there has far less attention given to the interconnections between these two than one would expect.

Logan's chapter provides a reminder of what is missing in the volume. The vast majority of the volume's twenty five chapters set out with the idea of heritage as an *a priori* concept, thus privileging it within any subsequent discussion about identity formations. As such then there are no contributions that explore where the connections between these two break down, fragment or collapse. The relationship is all too readily seen as a given. The reason for this is because many of the authors come to the subject as specialists in heritage rather than in identity politics, globalisa-tion, gender, or consumption studies to cite a few examples. Strangely, there is no reference to globalisation in the Index for example. While a number of chapters explore the links between heritage and identity in interesting ways, the volume lacks the critical and subtle analysis of identity that has now become commonplace in other fields.

In essence, the *Research Companion* represents a valuable contribution to the field, in that it offers a sustained analysis of the ties between heritage and identity. It also nicely illustrates how a multi-disciplinary approach can bring to light a wide variety of issues pertinent to this subject. But as a text that incorporates some of the most recent ideas in the field it also illustrates why more attention needs to be given to non-Western environments, and the development of rigorous conceptual frameworks that can interpret the social, economic and political complexities which surround heritage and identity today.

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Malcolm MILES, *Cities and Cultures*, Routledge: Critical Introductions to Urbanism and the City, London 2007, 243 pp.

Miles' book fits exceptionally well in the Routledge series Critical Introductions to Urbanism and the City. The publication's aim is 'to clarify how different uses of such terms indicate different assumptions. The author hopes its juxtaposition of diverse sources, cases and ideas will enable new insights among readers, encourage reflexivity and contribute to discussion of urban conditions and future prospects' (p. 1). The book has a critical attitude towards different ideas of what constitutes a city's culture and questions them through the investigation of cases.

The book is divided into four main parts. The first part deals with the concepts of city and culture. The author plays with the dualities of meaning produced by their singular and plural forms while introducing a wide range of sources and intellectual frameworks relevant to the subject at

hand. These introductory chapters mainly discuss the concepts of a city and a culture, giving an excellent review of contemporary literature.

The second part reconsiders the role of cities as nodes of cultural innovation in the third and fourth chapter. It is argued that most cultural production and reception takes place in urban environments. Miles relates this very strongly to the issue of proximity – which also gets the necessary attention in the first chapter. He discusses analytically how cultural production in a metropolitan setting is shaped through the characteristic ways of life of its inhabitants and their (non-)interaction; 'cultural entrepreneurs do not require a pool of cultural producers. Cultural consumption seldom takes place in the same site as cultural production' (p. 80).

In the third part, chapters 5 and 6, cultural and creative industries appear in the footlights. Miles evaluates the different positions in the past 20 years between Europe on the one hand and North America on the other hand, in short how a city's image trades on selective cultural histories. The cultural industries are carefully examined in their relation to 'culture'. Miles argues – rightfully – that the 'most dangerous facet of culture industry is [...] not that it introduces the dreams of the suppliers to the market [...] but that it re-presents society as a unified, coherent entity' (p. 120). Furthermore, it is investigated how much was contributed to cultural industries by city marketing and how useful the concepts of 'European Cities of Culture' have been in creating such industries. Miles wraps up by paying attention to the duality of present-day concepts of urban culture in this era of endless mobility and communication.

The last part investigates, in chapters 7 and 8, day-to-day creativity and identity formation in local and global contexts. How can cultural forms and cultural means procure – if any – identity? This discussion is followed by the examination of the permeability of urban cultures and cultural forms, exploring the 'urban grid to find diverse and conflicting meanings in its specific appearances' (p. 193).

Since the book is supposed to be an introduction it must be praised for its wide multiformity of case examples. The cases introduce the city as 'a location of daily life influenced by economic, political, social and cultural conditions' (p. 3) and this large variety of case-studies provides a very useful tool to introduce readers to this (interdisciplinary) field. Furthermore, the learning objectives at the beginning of each chapter and the extensive notes for further reading at the end of each chapter really give handles for those new in the field. In this way, the book serves as an excellent guide into the complex world of 'cities' and 'cultures', both being complex entities encompassing many concepts. The sometimes bombastic use of academic jargon and swollen English, however, might make this book less comprehensible for those who are not so very fluent in English. Miles overplays his hand there, he claims to also aim the student population in this field – which are not all native speakers – and might be overwhelmed by the language used in this volume. The best and at the same time most disappointing part of the book are the non-conclusions in the final chapter. The best, since the field introduced is so wide it would be impossible and presumptuous to give one final and definite answer, it truly fits in the humanistic tradition of this dialectic discipline. At the same time it is disappointing, since not even the slightest attempt is made to give some comprehensive concluding remarks. Miles is clearly an expert in this field, so we can forgive him if he took some moral high ground on these issues.

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Weert CANZLER, Vincent KAUFMANN and Sven KESSELRING (eds),
Tracing Mobilities: Towards a Cosmopolitan Perspective, Ashgate, Aldershot
2008, 208 pp.

This collection is part of Ashgate's impressive series on *Transport and Society*. Its editors present both theoretically and empirically focused pieces and their aim is to develop an intellectual agenda uniting transportation research with social theory. Accordingly, John Urry and Ulrich Beck discuss the New Mobilities and Cosmopolitan paradigms, which provide distinctive ways to theorise contemporary changes in mobility and movement. Urry challenges the claim that the New Mobilities paradigm either celebrates or overstates mobility, while Beck argues for the need to focus on how places, far from becoming less important, are being redesigned and reconceptualised.

The collection raises fundamental issues for the study of transportation and mobility. For example, what is the connection between spatial and social movement? Vincent Kaufmann and Bertrand Montulet argue that (p. 49) 'to travel fast and far does not necessarily mean that one is "freer" in one's movements in space and time'. Instead, such frequent travelling may be a sign of precarious employment. Kaufmann and Montulet argue that while critical sociologists have tended to valorise social fluidity, we should not conflate this with greater spatial mobility, which can deepen inequalities and reinforce neo-liberal ideologies about freedom and free choice.

The book attempts to connect the concept of mobility to different sociological fields. Two of the more empirically focused chapters do this with respect to sociologies of work and the family, foregrounding how the imperative to be mobile creates both burdens and opportunities for households. Norbert F. Schneider and Ruth Limmer stress the former, and the strain placed upon families (including health risks) when businesses demand that individuals act as if they had no personal connections impeding movement. Estelle Bonnet, Beate Collet and Béatrice Maurines focus on families where one member works away from home. They suggest that this choice appears as an egalitarian family strategy but is nevertheless gendered; usually the woman is the 'sedentary partner' and (p. 159) 'It is as if the man's geographic mobility reinforced the more traditional conception of the couple, making the domestic arena mainly the women's responsibility'.

Definitional challenges still trouble the rapidly growing field. The editorial introduction mentions the tension between thinking about *mobilities*, and thinking about *transport* or *travel*. It defines mobility as change in an individual's social state, rather than geographical movement. This definition differs from that used in many of the chapters, and raises the issue of how mobility is defined, and whether it refers to individuals and/or to social groups.

Weert Canzler, Vincent Kaufmann and Sven Kesselring state that a businessperson travelling to a conference is not mobile, because 'the movement in space does not change the state of the actor [...]. The universe of their activities does not offer an association with other environments, usually making him or her socially immobile' (p. 4). However, arguably global movements of businesspeople have contributed to the rise of a coherent 'transnational capitalist class' (Sklair, 2000), which presumably would amount to social change, albeit not reducible to the effect of one flight on one business person. Is mobility only an individual property, or also a property of social groups?

Moreover, challenges arise when defining movement itself. Canzler, Kaufmann and Kesselring define movement as (p. 3) 'a geographic dimension [...] between an origin and one or several dimensions [...] identifiable on a map'. This seems to exclude, for example, defining as movement

the act of travelling between web pages or between virtual places online, and negotiating the virtual border police who control access to different types of 'internal' and 'external' places. The point is that the distinction between social movement and spatial movement is not always an easy one to make.

However, these conceptual issues arise because the book covers important ground. I felt that the collection successfully shows that theoretically foregrounding mobilities can mean enrichment rather than abandonment of critical perspectives. The main omission in this collection, I felt, was the failure to integrate a climate change perspective into the contributions. Given the substantial and growing contribution of transport to climate change, this should be central to the field.

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Greg YOUNG, *Reshaping Planning with Culture*, Ashgate, Aldershot 2008, 215 pp.

In the book *Reshaping Planning with Culture*, Greg Young is aiming at a coherent and systematic approach to reshape planning by introducing the concept of culture. From his point of view, the ongoing economic globalisation process together with the 'network society' has led to a reduced role for planning, which is focusing mainly on projects and marginalises 'more coherent and traditional ways of planning' (p. 4). Nevertheless, planning still refers to specific local or regional contexts which are based on particular conditions, traditions, values, and habits. Young argues that 'within this [...] context, culture has the opportunity to be an important organising idea and framework' for planning (p. 34). Hence, it is his objective to 'indicate how culture resides in each and every place and how the research of culture across all of its forms and dimensions can be used to create a more robust planning at every level' (p. 2). This he describes as a Culturised System.

Following Young's argumentation, the European Union and the United Nations (e.g. by emphasising the value of cross-border and intercultural cooperation in policy documents), as well as the World Bank (the grant of loans for development projects is related to local cultural contexts) have already introduced strong rationales for planning perspectives and opportunities that are based on culture. In his opinion, these developments create a frame for planning to consider culture and possible impacts of culture on planning (culture as a rationale for planning). Concerning the relation between culture and planning Young argues that 'any planning positionality

focused on solutions, is most likely to be grounded in culture' (p. 29). To reshape planning he introduces an ontology of culture (based on the theoretical approaches of Raymond Willams and Henri Lefèbvre) which consists of the three categories (1) geography and environment, (2) history and intangible heritage, and (3) society and ways of life (p. 39). Each category can be used to 'facilitate the intellectual incorporation of each element in planning' (p. 41). Further Young argues that planning theory has to develop a systematic theoretical model to increase the authentic integration of culture in planning to be able to produce beneficial outcomes regardless of the value conflicts and cultural diversity of a postmodern world. But from his point of view planning theory does not seem to 'response' to the cultural turn, there is no serious approach to engage the concept of culture in any of its manifestations for planning: 'Neo-modern and collaborative planning approaches still mainly eschew the insights of postmodern theory, while for their part postmodern planning approaches continue to undervalue the importance of basic quantitative cultural research and the social legitimacy and culturally grounded qualities associated with inputs arising from community' (p. 188).

In chapters 5–8 Young develops his ideas of a culturised planning system. The first step is the framing of a Culturised System with the principles of culture to raise the awareness of culture for planning. The Culturised System is based on a synthesis of (1) planning theory and cultural theory, (2) prescriptive writings on planning reform, urbanism and creativity, (3) governance and development policies, and (4) global planning practices. From these synthesises he distils seven principles of culture which are plentitude, connectivity, diversity, reflexivity, creativity, critical thinking, and sustainability. These principles are understood as catalysts to develop a Culturised System and to support and provide a context for the research method (p. 77). The content of the Culturised System is, in a second step, outlined by designing planning literacies, i.e. cultural, strategic and ethical literacies. These literacies describe practically valuable principles of culture and are relevant to assist 'the planner to know which planning principle, approach or technique is appropriate to utilise' (p. 89).

The integrated research method is the final element in the Culturised System and 'is designed as a functional tool for planning culturisation' (p. 91). It consists of two approaches to culture, the perspective of coherent culture and of the integrated research method. The perspective of coherent culture refers to the already introduced ontology of culture which can 'facilitate the clear recognition of the depth, breadth and diversity of culture to promote its articulation in planning' (p. 92). The integrated research method consists of the cultural data research (quantitative research, background information etc.), cultural collaboration (e.g. action research, in-depth interviews, cultural mapping etc.), and cultural interpretation (cultural theory, postmodern social theory, discourse analysis etc.). Following Young's argumentation, 'each research mode privileges different kinds of data, knowledge, epistemologies, processes, and theories in relation to culture but when considered together they provide an overall view of culture and its planning potentialities' (p. 95).

To illustrate the use of the Culturised System the urban and regional planning in Sydney and the strategic planning for protected areas at Port Arthur Historic Site, Tasmania, are presented as case studies. Referring to these case studies Young concludes that we have already started living in a kind of culturised future and that 'culture is perceived as the thematic tissue connecting planning at every spatial scale and as an integrative resource capable of aligning and strengthening the connections between planning types' (p. 187). From his point of view, the Culturised System delivers 'a potential benefit to planning that stands in contrast to the characteristics of non-culturised planning as it is practiced in urban, and regional and strategic forms' (p. 188).

Greg Young develops a systematic theoretical model to integrate culture into planning. The deduction of the Culturised System offers a holistic and coherent approach to planning by introducing the concept of culture. But the 'new paradigm' or model partly faces the problem to remain quite abstract. In particular it remains unsolved how the principles of culture, the planners' literacies and the research method can be used in planning practice. This might be due to the broad use of the term 'culture' which refers to the way of life, culture as an organising factor, as intangible and tangible heritage and to cultural landscapes, as well as to cultural economy, cultural diversity and the social and economic value of culture. Another reason for the ambiguity of the model might be the normative approach to culture Young pursues: 'As an organising category, culture has the power to promote the consideration of cultural values and relationships and issues such as cultural diversity and hybridity in all of their manifestations' (p. 41).

Nevertheless, it can be summarised that Young has developed a very promising approach to consider the societal complexity planning is embedded in by using the concept of culture as an organising principle. Thus Young's book offers an excellent contribution to the discussion about and further development of planning and planning theory and can well be recommended to all those who are working in the planning field and/or are reflecting about it.

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