

their writing. Robert's chapter is especially interesting. In a concise and convincing way, its author introduces a brief history the 'sustainability movement' and provides a concise outline of the key concepts of sustainable regional planning and development. The sustainability aspects, covered by this chapter, range from the rational use of resources, and the promotion of social welfare, to territorial integration, and economic progress that respects the carrying capacity of the natural environment. An important differentiation suggested by the author relates to the definition of the region as a territorial entity. He sees the geographic region as both a 'valley section' which contains most of the elements necessary for urban living, and a 'natural region' which is formed around a river basin, and presents many sustainable development challenges.

Part IV of the volume contains four chapters dealing with the contemporary issues of regional development planning in the following four regions of the UK: East Midlands (T. Aitchison); West Midlands (J. Deegan); South West (D. Gobbett and M. Palmer), and South East England (C.M. Williams). It appears, however, that the development challenges faced by these regions exhibit considerable similarities. As a result, the chapters center on similar issues, contributing relatively little to each other. The chapter on regional planning guidance and regional governance (by J. Glasson) concludes the volume. However, somewhat surprisingly, it does not summarize the previous chapters. Instead it introduces a wealth of 'new' themes (local governance, cultural identity, the relevance of regional boundaries, etc.), none of which is discussed in this chapter in sufficient detail.

A characteristic attribute of the volume is the excessive use of abbreviations, which may confuse a reader who is not thoroughly familiar with the 'professional jargon' of the British planners. Let me give some examples: "relationship between NWRA and the GONW is explicitly recognized by NWRA in...the consultation document to emerge from the RPG process" (p. 79), or "Sos (GO), with support of RPB, to ensure development...consistent with RPG" (p. 77). I spent on futile attempts half of my time devoted to the reading of the volume in deciphering these linguistic puzzles.

Would I advise this book to my students? The answer to this question is rather negative.

Boris A. Portnov
Haifa University

INTERNATIONAL HANDBOOK ON GEOGRAPHICAL EDUCATION, edited by Rod Gerber. Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers 2003.

Teaching Geography is not enough to achieve Geography Education. As the edited book *International Handbook on Geographical Education* suggests, teaching geography is aimed at achieving much more than transmitting geographical information from teachers to students. The guiding line of this book is that geographical education

(GE) is for life. Our goal as educators is to turn learners into intelligent citizens who know their environment, can cope with complex issues and reach conversant and conscious decisions. Such citizens should be willing to be involved and take action when needed. In addition, the book enriches us with a historical overview on the geographic discipline and summarizes 20th century trends, accompanied with examples at the local and national levels. The book proposes old and new directions to GE for the twenty-first century. Lastly, the book describes how recent advancements in technology provide new tools and capabilities to GE, mostly in collaborative learning. Concepts like ‘all people’s education’ or ‘world citizenry’ (p. 17), ‘new citizenship’ (p. 24), ‘globalization education for life’ (p. 31) and ‘Environmentally literate and responsible citizens’ (p. 191) emphasize that the outcome of GE is not a ‘knowing student’ but a responsible citizens of the global community.

There are twenty-four chapters in the book, organized in seven sections, written by international expert authors. The chapters cover diverse aspects of GE: contents, values and skills worth teaching, theory and praxis in GE, formal and informal education, ways to stimulate teachers and students, geography prestige in society etc. The information is up to date and delivered in a concise and comprehensible manner. Therefore, the book may be useful for social science educators, school-system supervisors, geography and GE students and researchers, curriculum developers, and educational policy-makers.

In the Introduction, the editor presents the results of two recent independent international surveys about the actual practices in the formal education programs around the world. The results of comparing twenty-six countries participating in both surveys are fascinating, as they raise questions concerning the future trends of GE. For example, the book reports of an increase in ‘facts and geographical concepts and thinking skills’, while a decrease took place in ‘geographical values’—results that any teacher, policymaker or curriculum developer should be aware of. Presenting the information by country would have been very helpful in order to take some action.

In the second section called *International Trends*, Gerber expands the concept of ‘globalization’ to its political and cultural dimensions, in addition to its well-known economic one. The first chapter, The Global Scene for GE, may provide policymakers at any level with the reasoning for the need to retain geography in formal education programs.

Curriculum is never neutral. The chapter Relevant Knowledge Skills and Values in GE, by Lidstone, attempts to consider the factors that may influence curricular decisions. Curriculum development based on ‘good causes’ often serves the interests of the dominant power groups (the church, elites, the state etc.) Therefore it is highly important to develop critical thinking (both by teachers and students) when dealing with real environmental issues: “analyze power relationships...engage students in cultural criticism and reconstruction...and open students’ minds to alternative world views...” (p.42).

Adopting new technologies in teaching geography requires mastering the new computerized media by teachers. In the fourth chapter Lea Houtsonen presents the Network-based Learning Environments as a new tool teachers should be prepared to use for good teaching. This is a most stimulating environment since it enables interactions among teachers, experts, students in other countries etc. Houtsonen presents the YoungNet European project, and the American GLOBE that is an international environmental education network connecting students, teachers and researchers in schools worldwide.

Ferriera, in the fifth chapter, shows how old and new cultures have influenced cultural geography and geographical education. The second section ends with Ostuni's chapter about the worrying fact that there is little or no prestige of geography in the wider public. Geography-departments in universities have to take action because they provide the grounds for the growth of the discipline.

Section 3, entitled *Refocussing Learning and Teaching*, is oriented mostly to teachers' teachers. Robertson reminds us that teaching has to include understanding of the diverse layers of meaning, beliefs and values of the different cultures and social systems of the world. Bednarz and Bednarz offer Alternative Geography, in which problem-based learning and participatory education, in addition to Geographical Information Systems and the Internet, are new methodologies constructed according to current learning theories.

The dominant trend during the 20th century in GE was the increased role of theory in research and practice. Stoltman and Chano found interesting trends in the connection between scientific (geography) theory and education theory. They demonstrate application of theories such as GIS and fieldwork that aim to develop geographical thinking and responsible citizens.

Section 4, *Improving curriculum planning and development*, includes four chapters describing different interesting aspects in curriculum. Marsden uses Germany, Holland, Australia and USA as examples of how curriculum reflects the contemporary political and cultural situation in each country. Lambert evaluates curriculum and curriculum planners in England and asks whether it is effective for the students. An unusual way of curriculum development, termed *bottom-up*, is presented by Okpala and Tabulawa. While most of curricula were developed by experts (*top-down*), they managed to get teachers involved in the process in spite of the difficulties. Their applications in the United Kingdom, Botswana and Nigeria can be an inspiration to us all. Kaivola closes this section with interesting projects ran in Finland, like GLOBE and ENO. In summary, all four chapters are relevant to geographers at all levels by addressing the question: what are the best ways to develop effective curriculums?

The fifth section *Innovation and change in GE* describes four topics that relate to technological progress. However most of them, such as for example New Media will Accelerate the Renewal of GE" by Van der Schee, may not be considered innovative anymore. Catling addresses the teachers and presents the importance of professional development. "The values of open-mindedness, responsibility and wholeheartedness which lie at the heart of reflective practice...are fundamental to

high quality geography teaching” (p. 233). Lanegran presents the importance and problems related to alliances, networks and partnerships in GE. Such cooperative projects can motivate teachers and students, and enhance geographic education. The debate about standards in GE is not new, however it is important that the critical opinion of Stimpson is included in this book

Section 6 deals with the ways research should be used to improve GE. Williams studies the impact of research, Butt sees action research as a vehicle for professional development of teachers, and Slater exposes the relationship between teaching and research in GE.

What about the future? Four different aspects of GE in the future are discussed in Section 7. GE should extend beyond formal education. If we want students to maintain interest in the geographical phenomena and obtain a public conviction that individuals can have an effective active impact on their own environments, it has to be ‘life-long GE’ (Cantell and Rikkinen). GE should be ‘self-directed’ (Kwan), ‘intercultural’ (Allahwerdi and Rikkinen) and use more information and communication technologies (Kent).

The importance of this book emerges from its international, state of the art, broad view, presenting a variety of perspectives on geographical education. It reflects mostly the Western values like cultural tolerance, advantages of globalization, world-citizenship-education etc. The attempt to cover every aspect of GE enhances the ability to find specific points of interest. Therefore, a detailed subject index could aid the reader considerably. Nevertheless, the book successfully conveys GE as a holistic discipline which includes humanistic values, interdisciplinary topics, dynamism, complexity and advanced technology and pedagogy.

Dalia Arad

Ben-Gurion University of the Negev