

it even more. The sequence of chapters is coherent and flowing. The book provides stimulating ideas about the use of GIS and mapping in governance and politics as well as references to previous works on the subject. In that sense, it lies well within the context of existing literature. It is especially interesting that the book covers an array of up-to-date technologies such as web-based mapping that affect geographic ideas and knowledge and yet it digs deep into the political and maybe even the psychological and social principles used by governments to govern through maps.

Mapping can be useful for geography students and scholars, as it summarizes today's insights on technologies that have had and will have a strong impact on geographical issues from the end of the Twentieth Century and onward. This book is also a valuable source for professional geographers who are interested in the potential use of technologies in geographical fields. *Mapping* shows the centers of power that use maps and encourages criticism and further questioning in such a world. As the author borrows from the Jewish Passover Seder towards the end of the book: you can ask wise questions or naïve or even disruptive ones, but the worst option of all is that son who does not know how to ask.

References

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UNLEARNING THE COLONIAL CULTURES OF PLANNING, by Libby Porter. Hampshire, UK: Ashgate, 2010.

In the last few decades, scholars from different disciplines such as political science, sociology, history and geography have produced a vast and rich body of knowledge that examines the production of colonial culture. Beyond the differences and often disagreements among the writers, they have all contributed to an understanding of colonial territories as products of power relations between core and periphery. However, beyond the socio-historical dimension of this discussion, it is also crucial to analyze the processes by which the very tangible space and built environment were physically produced (and re-produced) and socially constructed.

In the face of the above, critical planning literature represent a wide discussion concerning the epistemology and genealogy of this discipline. Libby Porter's fascinating book, "Unlearning the Colonial Cultures of Planning", joins this vein of critical writing by exploring the role of planning in settler states such as New Zealand

and Australia. In the core of her book, which is based on a variety of sources such as archival documents, in-depth interviews, planning policy documents and legal documents, Porter points to the active role of planning as an effective mechanism of colonization.

Although such an argument has already been presented by several scholars before, Porter takes this debate further, by pointing on the ways in which the colonial roots of planning still dominate planning discourse and practice in settler societies nowadays. Specifically she discusses the struggle of indigenous peoples against state's planning, highlighting the nexus between planning as an apparent pure professional field and the act of dispossession. Further, she re-reads historical planning and legal documents from different settler societies, pointing to their relevance for understanding planning today.

Theoretically speaking Porter's book engages with post-colonial and post-structural seminal texts of Bruno Latour, Edward Said, Henri Lefebvre, Ann Stoler, Bell Hooks – to mention but few, trying to frame planning in settler societies through these critical perspectives. As Porter rightly suggests, the discussion of planning as manifestations of the power of the settler state is central to this book which acknowledges that planning became an efficient tool of the new colonial order, one that established the settler state as an institute that enforces territorial, social, political and cognitive order, and moulds norms and rules through mechanisms of domination, exclusion and inclusion.

Throughout the chapters (especially chapter three and four) Porter illustrates both historically and discursively how the practice of planning in colonial contexts became an important agent of modernization that often masked other imperial interests. She describes in details how the scientific idiom of the 'science of planning' is employed in order to solve the Simmelian 'arithmetic problem' of space, and thus accumulating influence and control as a progressive tool of governmentality.

However, despite Porter's material analysis of what colonization is about, in the final chapter which aims to illustrate an alternative view towards the different communities that share their space in settler states, she turns surprisingly into the emotional geographies of politically contested situations:

"Domination, oppression and injustice are the products of hatred and violence, not only of maldistribution of rights and goods. This is often noticed in analyses that focus on oppression, domination and injustice. Yet equally often those analyses fail to connect with our most obvious and powerful spiritual wellspring of hope and transformation in the face of that hatred and violence: love" (p.157)

Although Porter presents love as a radical practice, which is "a critical stance of analysis that is so necessary to the work of decolonization of planning" (p.158), such conclusion is somehow unconvincing. Bridging the distances of class, racial and ethnic differences in colonial contexts, healing the geographies of exclusion which are the products of colonial domination or re-phrasing planning regulations towards spatial justice must be seen as the very basis of transformative politics since as noted

by Foucault - “the guarantee of freedom is freedom...”

References

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