

comparable to rockshelter and midden deposits, allows Martin to examine Aboriginal exploitation and management of wetland areas, and points to a highly rewarding study region, since there are all too few site types that offer both good preservation and wide regional distribution.

These eight papers are too few in number to adequately represent the current range and diversity in Australian zooarchaeology and palaeoecology, but they do showcase some of the exciting new research in this field, and provide a useful guide to the wider literature. Besides several new approaches to the traditional areas of diet and economy, this volume also shows that zooarchaeology and palaeoecology have great potential to contribute answers to major research questions for the region, from the first human occupation of the continent, to the nature of the deposits we study and the human influence on the Australian landscape.

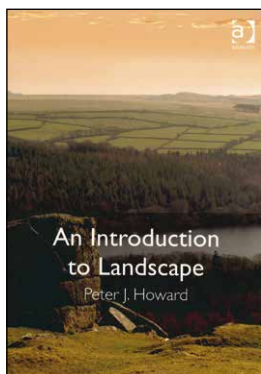
## AN INTRODUCTION TO LANDSCAPE

*Peter J. Howard*

Ashgate, Farnham, 2011, xii+322 pp, ISBN 9781409403852

Reviewed by Tom Kimber

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Peter Howard's *An Introduction to Landscape* offers a generalised discussion of landscape that can be broadly condensed into three main themes. Firstly, the book discusses how 'landscape' as a theoretical construct has been the subject of intensive debate and scrutiny across many academic disciplines. Secondly, how the general public, as 'insiders' largely unaware of the

mentioned debates, hold an intense, visceral and emotional connection to their landscapes, however defined. Thirdly, the book reviews how political structures charged with managing heritage and environment are faced with the task of balancing the rather wild array of approaches, agendas and definitions resulting from the previous two themes in order to manage and conserve the landscape effectively. An ambitious book, *An Introduction to Landscape* attempts to cover a vast interdisciplinary maze with erudition; and many readers, both students of landscape-related disciplines and the general reader who is seeking better to understand the physical world around them and how it has been represented, will find many thought-provoking and stimulating ideas here. This said, however, as a formal introductory textbook the book suffers from a somewhat unclear structure, sparse referencing and some misleading generalisations with which many disciplinary specialists will take issue. The cumulative result is that many readers will be as frustrated with the book as they are informed by the impressive breadth of content on display here.

Landscape is a concept which has been employed in a remarkably heterogeneous manner by a host of subject areas concerned with the interplay between the physical environment, nature, culture, time and cognition. For this reason, writing a generalised introduction summarising the combined approaches to landscape of all these disciplines is not a simple task. Many of the discussions arising from these subjects have revolved around the question of defining what landscape actually is and Howard, quite properly, takes this question as his point of departure. In doing so, he examines several strands of landscape characterisation. The first two chapters of the book attempt to outline the divergences between academic and popular uses of landscape. The latter gives a discussion of landscape as picture in an art-historical context, with landscape considered as an evolving aesthetic representation which mirrored intellectual movements in art, from the beautiful to the abstract. The former sees landscape as a *way of seeing*; a social and cultural product projected onto the land (Cosgrove 1984:1). The relationships between, and contradictions arising from, these themes are referenced repeatedly as Howard goes on to discuss other strands of landscape characterisation, for example, landscape as scale: the idea that a landscape, in order to properly be considered as such, must inherently feature an element of both distance and scale. Where a remote mountain range is landscape, the view from a suburban house is not.

Of these themes, the 'landscape as culture' principle is likely to be most familiar to archaeologists. Here Howard outlines the associated development of ideas of landscape from within cultural geography and landscape history and discusses how these ideas were subsequently appropriated into the archaeological discourse. Howard's discussion of the development of landscape archaeology appears largely situated within the empiricist English landscape history tradition pioneered in the UK by Hoskins (1955) and carried forward by Aston (1985), Muir (2000) and others. Of course, with an overview textbook of such a wide nature, the discussion is necessarily brief, but the study of cultural landscapes in an archaeological context has developed a complexity that I feel does not receive sufficient justice here. For example, where Howard sees a shift in chronological focus, when archaeology became 'less fixated on the prehistoric past and turned its attention to the medieval and much more modern periods', in actuality this is more reflective of a duality of approaches within landscape archaeology that have separated the largely atheoretical positions of the English landscape history tradition of Hoskins and Aston from the intensively theoretical landscape-based concepts of Ashmore and Knapp (1999), Ingold (1993) or Cosgrove and Daniels (2007). The emergence of landscape archaeology, at least in the UK, was characterised not by a shift away from prehistory but instead by a branching into two separate intellectual traditions (Johnson 2007:2). Certainly if one is looking exclusively for an introduction to the development of landscape in an archaeological context, this book compares poorly to existing literature (see Johnson 2007; David and Thomas 2010).

Howard appears to share the inherent scepticism of the English landscape history tradition for quantitative methodologies. One result of this scepticism is that, in many ways, the text is highly personal, emotional and liberally annotated with anecdotes from the author's own experiences interacting with the landscape.

Howard states at the outset that he ‘cannot possibly hope to tell us about the landscape, but can only tell us about his landscape and leave us to deal with our own’ (p. 9). One might, then, have reasonably expected a discussion somewhere in the book about how emotive and experience-derived practices have been formalised as approaches in the archaeological literature, for example, but any phenomenological discussion is curiously absent. The reader is, however, encouraged to engage in the experiential process through a diverse series of practical exercises proposed at the end of each chapter, with the aim of reconciling the theoretical discussions outlined in the text with the local and personal context of the reader’s own landscapes. These exercises range from writing essays about designed landscapes in the reader’s local area, through to encouraging the reader to disengage with the visual by walking through the landscape blindfolded—experiencing the landscape through touch, smell and hearing alone.

In order to allow for discussion of themes arising from, but not fitting into, the main body of the book, Howard employs a series of ‘capsules’—essentially short essays or extracts from other works intended either to illuminate certain types of physical landscape, such as mountains, moorlands, rivers and coasts, elaborate on investigative methodologies, such as the critiquing of pictures or suggestions on how properly to interrogate a map for interpretative detail, or discuss international contexts not addressed in the text. These capsules, though a potentially innovative feature, seem to offer only limited value to the book. For example, despite the introduction declaring that the text is decidedly Anglo-centric, the book is in actuality pleasantly interspersed with contextual examples from both continental Europe and the wider world. Many of the conceptual definitions of landscape offered in the earlier part of the book rely heavily on an inherent Western, Cartesian divide between nature and culture that simply would not make sense when looking, for example, at anthropological questions of the connection between Indigenous peoples worldwide and their landscapes. The capsule entitled ‘abroad is different’, where these conceptual issues could have been formally introduced to the student, instead offers a rather brief and uninformative discussion on the changing tastes of British tourists. Similarly, despite the back cover of the book promising the reader a ‘capsuled’ insight into ‘mapping and GIS’, the corresponding section offers nothing of the sort, with no mention of either cartography or GIS-based approaches to landscape offered anywhere in the book.

One final point of dissatisfaction lies with the quality of pictorial reproduction. For a work whose subject matter is primarily visual, particularly in relation to the connections between landscape, aesthetics and art, the monochrome pictures at best significantly limit their impact, and at worst, make discerning any detail on some pictures rather difficult, to say the least. Such careless mistakes are a shame, as there is much here of value. The book benefits hugely from the author’s clear breadth of knowledge and experience, particularly in relation to the art-historical landscape perspective and the informative discussion of landscape governance and management in both European and global contexts. In summation then, for the aspiring landscape archaeologist, *An Introduction to Landscape* will likely not claim a place on any essential reading list, but it does offer an admirable attempt at integrating an incredibly disparate concept into a single volume.

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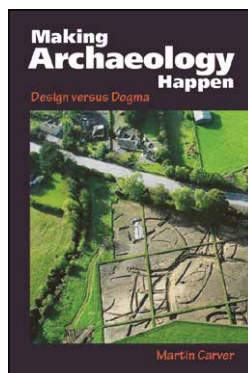
## MAKING ARCHAEOLOGY HAPPEN. DESIGN VERSUS DOGMA

*Martin Carver*

Left Coast Press, Walnut Creek, 2011, 184 pp, ISBN 9781611320251

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This is an engaging reflection on contemporary archaeology. Carver considers the conduct of archaeology in both academic and commercial spheres, doing so by raising the shade on the long dead, but certainly not forgotten, Mortimer Wheeler. For Carver, Wheeler had figured out what archaeology needed to do to prosper: to be engaged, creative and, above all, consequential for the people who practice it, and

for those who consume its products. In Carver’s view contemporary archaeology has forgotten Wheeler’s approach and suffered as a consequence. Never one to mince his words (for example, ‘unambitious’, ‘unquestioning’, ‘standardised’, ‘low quality’), Carver sets out to attack the dogmas of the present (both methodological and theoretical) and fire up a new generation of archaeologists about what Jim Deetz used to refer to as the ‘art and mystery’ of the discipline.

So this is a book about method, theory and the primary purpose of archaeology. For a book embarking on polemics and controversy Carver is pretty conventional in the development of his argument and the deployment of evidence. Spanning six chapters, Carver pursues his goal of reinstating archaeological fieldwork (or the process of archaeological investigation) at the core of the discipline. It is through fieldwork and the analysis of field findings that the true contribution of archaeology to humanity can be made to occur. Carver sees the design of field projects as being intellectually stimulating and creative—far