

Preface

'Knowledge transfer' is now a key phrase in academic circles in the UK. People have become aware, at long last, of the gap between the research carried out in universities – and even the teaching there – and the thinking of much of the people. Scientists have largely failed to convince people of the realities of climate change and this has been a wake-up call in many disciplines. In landscape there has long been effective transfer of knowledge between many university disciplines and the people who work in various government departments managing the landscape. But new undergraduates, and the millions of people concerned for their places, are often unaware of recent thinking. Most are probably unaware that there is now a European Landscape Convention enshrined in UK law. This textbook is for them.

It arose when I was asked if I would write a follow-up to a previous textbook concerned with heritage, but my primary concern had long been rather more specifically involved with landscape, and the publishers allowed me the privilege of writing to my obsession. My thanks to Val Rose for her support throughout.

Landscape became the central feature of my thinking when I became the first geographer to be employed in a school of art, but it had long had a hold on me. Travelling always meant looking out of the window, waiting for the change in the geology. Soon I discovered the Landscape Research Group, which has been my academic home for nearly 40 years, 10 of them spent editing their journal *Landscape Research*. My thanks to my many colleagues in the group, coming with a whole variety of perspectives – to Jay Appleton, David Lowenthal, David Coleman, Jacqueline Burgess, Kenneth Olwig and Ian Thompson, among many others. I have learned much from them and from my students and my wife and family, who would keep asking questions which made me think again. No doubt they would all take issue with some of the ideas in this book, but the blame is clearly down to me alone.

The group was also responsible for my closeness to the making and application of the European Landscape Convention. As the International Officer I was the one who was the 'observer' at so many meetings and workshops, and the development of my contacts all over Europe has stemmed

from that interest. For readers from other continents I must admit that the attitudes to landscape here expressed are very Eurocentric, and there are certainly major differences in other parts of the world. If the book makes you consider those differences, I rest content.

British readers will also notice that the examples cited here are very often from my own landscapes in the south-west of England, and especially Devon, where I have lived for 40 years, still with much of my family close by. If this remains as a constant reminder, perhaps even an irritant, that landscape as now defined is deeply personal, then that is also the intention. A visiting lecturer from the National Trust said of my students that they didn't know all the answers, but they certainly knew all the questions. I could ask no more. If, at the end, the reader knows the questions, then that will be quite sufficient.

Peter Howard
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