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Amanda Byer, *Heritage, Landscape and Spatial Justice: New Legal Perspectives on Heritage Protection in the Lesser Antilles*. Leiden, the Netherlands: Sidestone Press, 2022. 215 pp. (Paper US\$ 35.00)

Heritage, Landscape and Spatial Justice is the impressive result of a five-year Ph.D. research project, carried out by Amanda Byer, originally trained as an environmental lawyer, within the context of the ERC Synergy NEXUS1492 project, under responsibility of Leiden archaeologist Corinne Hofman. Published in an attractive monograph by Sidestone Press, it takes as a starting point the idea that heritage protection in the English-speaking Caribbean generally fails and that it is undermined rather than supported by existing regulations. Despite what the title suggests, the study focused on the English-speaking Caribbean, including the nations of St Kitts and Nevis, Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, St Lucia, Barbados, St Vincent and the Grenadines, Grenada, and Trinidad and Tobago. This focus provides a logical delimitation for the study, since these nations have a shared (legal) background as former British colonies.

Byer discusses relevant laws, regulations, conventions, and jurisdictions relating to heritage in these nations by using “legal geographical and legal anthropological methods to challenge the traditional and colonial-era legal framework for heritage protection in the Lesser Antilles” (p. 31). Special attention is given to the topics of (cultural) ownership, identity, and public space.

The book offers an overview of which regulations are in place and how spatial justice is locally organized, and critically analyzes and discusses how effective or ineffective the existing regulations are. Considering the challenges the Lesser Antilles are facing with regard to pressure on land and heritage, not only as a result of ongoing development relating to population increase, tourism and globalization, but also as a result of climate change, this publication is much needed indeed.

Byer starts by providing a solid background on the Caribbean as imperial landscape, landscape and spatial justice (Chapter 2), the protection of landscape in international law, and regional developments in landscape law (Chapter 3). The focus is then put on antiquities and heritage legislation (Chapter 4), planning legislation (Chapter 5), national parks and protected areas legislation (Chapter 6), and examples of conflicts over landscape as public space (Chapter 7).

Readers might end up feeling quite pessimistic, especially after going through the last four chapters. Indeed, Chapter 4 concludes that local heritage laws appear fragmented and “disembodied, without meaning for communities,” and that current legislation does not include the necessary landscape understanding, contributing to the lack of success of heritage institutions.

Chapter 5 calls attention to the frictions that exist between heritage and planning law, and the neglect of community valuation of heritage as needs and involvement of the local communities as well as local conditions are not being acknowledged. This neglect and exclusion is also visible in the existing parks laws in the Lesser Antilles (Chapter 6) and it is also strongly felt in the conflicts over landscape (Chapter 7). This chapter discusses a few concrete case-studies, focusing on conflicts over landscape as public space that occurred in Trinidad and Tobago, St Lucia, Grenada, and St Vincent and the Grenadines. The case-studies highlight how current legislation fails to take into account or support the needs of the local communities when it comes to sustainable heritage protection. In Chapter 8, Byer concludes that in order to achieve sustainable, supported, and effective heritage protection, past and current connections between land, law, and people are crucial, and these cannot exist without an understanding and implementation of the values, needs, memory, and identity of the local communities.

Heritage, Landscape and Spatial Justice is very accessible and well structured, allowing archaeologists and heritage specialists who might be less familiar with the juridical backgrounds of spatial justice to understand the information presented and to use it in their own work. Illustrated by only two color maps, it could have been made more accessible for visually oriented readers by tables or graphs summarizing the essentials of the information presented. The case-studies presented in Chapter 7 could also have been vitalized by adding relevant pictures.

Amanda Byer has provided an important and essential contribution to the field of heritage management and protection. For Caribbean scholars, heritage specialists, policy makers, and stakeholders dealing with heritage in the English-speaking Caribbean, this work will certainly serve as a valuable reference book.

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