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Christopher Tilley, Kate Cameron-Daum, *An Anthropology of Landscape: The Extraordinary in the Ordinary*, UCL Press, London 2017.
Book review

Monika Stobiecka
(Faculty of "Artes Liberales", University of Warsaw)

Perception is action.

The above quote borrowed from Ludwik Fleck has been recently used by Polish literary theorist Ryszard Nycz (2017, 84) to ground the concept of "culture as a verb." Nycz notices that the expression "culture in action" is widely used in contemporary humanities and claims that all cultural, artistic, or humanistic initiatives supporting all sorts of movements, progress, actions and reactions lead to a number of "practical consequences, changes within world views, mentalities, sensibilities and experiences, as well as have an impact on communities that actively participate in projects" (2017, 63).

I am truly convinced that this approach to culture is shared by the authors of the book *An Anthropology of Landscape. The Extraordinary in the Ordinary,* byarchaeologist Christopher Tilley and anthropologist Kate Cameron-Daum. Their book meets the expectations of broadly understood cultural landscape studies and most current trends in new humanities, such as new materialism, sociology of space, but also theories rooted in fields such as cultural anthropology and phenomenology.

In their book, the British researchers undertook a successful attempt to deeply study a wisely chosen landscape—Pebblebed heath in south-western England. They carried out their field work and studies in 2008—2012. While using diverse methods

(e.g., auto-ethnography, participant observation, surveys, archaeological excavations), they highlighted the peculiarity of the studied landscape in a number ofways. Their exhaustive case study is holistic and far from theoretical speculation on material and sensorial, human and non-human engagement with landscape.

East Devon Pebblebed is a complex landscape being a nexus of numerous interests. The land is protected as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, inhabited by different species of plants and animals. It is also a historical and archaeological site with remains of a fortress dating back to the Iron Age. At the same time, the area, protected by several governmental and non-governmental institutions, serves as a Royal Marine proving groundsand in part as a natural resource where the Black Hill quarry operates. As a result, various stakeholders with divergent interests turn the Pebblebed landscape into a palimpsest and a site of inflamed conflicts.

Tilley and Cameron-Daum assume that this particular place must be studied through the lens of materialist, embodied, contested, and emotional perspectives. The materialist perspective is supposed to be a step towards new materialism, explained by authors as "a return to the real" that stands as "a way to reinvigorate and redirect the study of landscape" (2017, 5). By applying such an approach, they wish to move from cultural representations to the tangible and vivid material reality of the world. They intend to emphasize that physical experience is constitutive for landscape theories. Thus, the main research tool for Tilley and Cameron-Daum is the body itself—this methodology underlines the performative character of being-in-the-landscape (cf. Paterson 2009). The corporeal aspect also forms the core idea of the second perspective that they suggest, which is connected to embodiment. The idea to analyze the embodied experience of landscape is based on Tilley's previous studies presented in his *Materiality of Stone*: *Explorations in Landscape Phenomenology* (2004) which was based on the phenomenological theory offered by Maurice Merleau-Ponty. As in previous studies, in *An Anthropology of Landscape* Tilley and Cameron-Daum carefully apply the phenomenological method, allowing them to cross the binary opposition of body and mind and to consider the body-in-the-landscape as an object as well as a subject of study (2017, 6). Their third perspective is based on the observation that a landscape is a site of contestation. According to the authors, "[landscapes] are valued precisely because they are valuable, part of people's lives. They reflect the complexity of their lives. They are historically contingent and their mutability stems from the various ways in which people understand them and engage with the material world" (2017, 10). A contested landscape is thus messy, tensioned, and always in-progress. The last perspective they offer, an emotional one, is based on the assumption that a landscape is a site of emotions and feelings that stem from the "human capacity to experience landscapes as meaningful and a wish to prevent their destruction" (2017, 10).

In their research, Tilley and Cameron-Daum focus on problems grounded in the aspects of human presence in the landscape referred to by the abovementioned approaches. Firstly, they conduct research on the biographies of people residing in Pebblebed, wanting to determine how the landscape affects their lives. Secondly, by asking people questions about the landscape as a place, they want to determine the significance of places for people's consciousness, events, histories, and connections. Thirdly, Tilley and Cameron-Daum analyze the landscape as a space of various movements—they trace the paths taken by various groups of interest, seeking answers to the question of how people experience the landscape and how they feel about it. Fourthly, they also consider mediation understood as an indirect way of experiencing the landscape—for example, by riding a bike, fishing, or in the company of one's beloved pet. Fifthly, they are interested in agency, aesthetics, and well-being—more precisely, they want to find out how a materially experienced landscape sensually affects people. Sixthly, Tilley and Cameron-Daum want to determine what the landscape policy looked like in this particular case—that is, what sort of conflicts took place in Pebblebed and whether they led to its re-evaluation. Finally, following in the footsteps of Philipp Descola, they look into the relationship between nature and culture as well asthe meaning of these categories in the local context.

In order to conduct their research, the authors selected several social groups engaged in the Pebblebed landscape: land managers working for nature and heritage conservation institutions, soldiers training on the heathland, volunteers from ecological organizations, quarry workers, cyclists, horse riders, walkers, dog owners, tourists, artists, anglers, and enthusiasts of aircraft modelling. Each group was scrupulously examined, and the results of the survey served to give answers to the research questions outlined above. What is more, the representatives of the selected communities involved in the Pebblebed experience were asked to draw up personal maps of the area marking places of special, emotional, or other unique value for them.

I shall focus now on two exceptional merits of the book, and I will attempt to relate them to selected theoretical publications coming from the field of landscape studies and spatial turn. In my opinion, aparticularly noteworthy aspect of Tilley's and Cameron-Daum's book is the methodology, including the selection of the groups of interests, the manner of argumentation, and the idea of using subjective representations of the Pebblebed topography offered by the examined individuals. However, it is also possible to point out a few shortcomings which strike me as an archaeologist and an art historian.

While describing stakeholders closely related to Pebblebed, Tilley and Cameron-Daum show that the perception of the landscape is shaped by people's physical and emotional engagement in it resulting from the tasks they want or are supposed to carry out there. For example, in the analysis of the employees of the heathland

management institutions, Tilley and Cameron-Daum bring out a very significant problem related to heritage management. They outline the inconsistencies in thinking about natural and cultural heritage,[1] proving that even modern models of landscape management,[2] in which nature and culture are entangled, are in fact far from comprehensive and synergic solutions.[3] The discussed points, such as debates on the conservation of heaths (through chemical substances, mowing, firing, or grazing), indicate that the institutions responsible for landscape protection set priorities by selecting elements of landscapes that they deem to be worthy of protection. At the same time, their policy shows that landscape is understood by the administration as something that is a multi-layered structure which nature and culture constantly permeate. This may be taken to illustrate most clearly the problems that environmental aesthetics is struggling with when asking whether we perceive the landscape as a whole or as a set of elements that we somehow recognize.[4] Thanks to the study undertaken by Tilley and Cameron-Daum, the reader has a chance to understand and observe a practical approach to the abovementioned problems, and is not left with theoretical speculations bereft of the tangible and vibrant materiality of thelandscape. This aspect is—beyond any doubt—one of the greatest assets of the book andcertainly offers many fresh thoughts and inspirations for anthropologists studying landscapes.

Tilley and Cameron-Daum analyzethe landscape as a "taskscape" (Ingold 2000), while focusing on the second group of stakeholders—that is, the soldiers using Pebblebed as a proving grounds. In this case, the authors highlight the problem of the bodily experience of the landscapeby applying Merleau-Ponty's theories to soldiers' struggles in the landscape. The comparison with the preceding and the following chapters dealing with the landscape perceived by volunteers from ecological organizations is extremely interesting. While the institutions focus on the beauty and value of particular elements of the landscape through their members and volunteers take care of selected species of plants and animals, scrupulously studying protected sites, soldiers treat the heaths as a place to test their bodies or as a hated area of everyday, exhausting exercises. The comparison of these three groups of interest illustrates three different ways of perceiving the same landscape—institutions learn about it within a set of norms and rules, volunteers are guided by scientific cognition, and soldiers are taught it bodily. However, this does not diminish the last group'sknowledge of the site. As Tilley and Cameron-Daum prove, a recruit must carefully observe the area together with its vegetation, plants, sky, and animals. For a soldier, a landscape where volunteers happily count butterflies,

1 Landscape as a site of conflict may be an interesting field of study; in the context of Polish landscape studies, cf. (Kowalewska, forthcoming).

2 See Wijesuriya, Thompson, and Young (2013).

3 On synergy while planning strategies for cultural heritage protection, see Trzciński (2013).

4 See Berleant (1997).

becomes "a tough and unforgiving landscape in which to train, providing a unique combination of topographical obstacles and vegetational characteristics that make the going arduous, as does its geology" (2017, 105). The researchers, however, do not limit themselves to identifying differences in landscape perception, since they also want to prove how a landscape experience transforms people. Hence, they describe in detail the route that a recruit must take every day—running, swimming, diving, and crawling. Referring to Merleau-Ponty's remarks, they write that the soldier's body "must become a kind of machine in which ordinary sensory experience becomes dehumanized, and the experience of landscape becomes disembodied" (2017, 115). This paradox surrounding soldiers' bodily experience—becoming disembodied (they are supposed to cease feeling discomfort or pain)—is also associated with the equipment that the recruit wields during their tour, since the main rule obeyed by soldiers is not to hindertheir weapons. As a result, during the stay at the heath the weapon and the hardened body turn a recruit into a machine similar to the one described by Alfred Gell (1995).

Completely different bodily tensions were observed by the researchers in the case of one of the groups that go to the heaths for recreational reasons—namely, horse riders. The special kind of perception of the place that Tilley and Cameron-Daum analyze with the help of Martin Heidegger's category of "being-in-the-world" takes place within the relationship between people and horses. Here, the human bodily experience is connected to the animal experience andare bound together by their mutual concern for each other. Once again, the authors of the book successfully transpose theoretical speculations to a more practical level. While talking with women who regularly ride horses in Pebblebed, they arrive at the conclusion that the landscape seen from the perspective of human-animal relations can have a therapeutic effect. It is noteworthy that this kind of "mobile being-in-the-world" and the shared experience involved in it create emotions unknown tolonely walkers or volunteers.

Both soldiers and horse riders perceive the landscape as unstable and dynamic. Its transformation depends on the movements made by humans and non-humans—a fallen tree is an obstacle for a running soldier, and thick brush forces a rider to change her route. Meanwhile, as Tilley and Cameron-Daum prove, anactive and bodily experience of the landscape is not the only one people may have on the heaths. One of the last groups of interest described by the authors are the airplane modellingamateurs, for whom the landscape is, instead, a permanent and static place. It is perceived solely as terrain where only the flying plane model is in motion. They do not pay attention to changes in vegetation, animals, or archaeological remains since they are focused only on the weather conditions on which theirairplane models depend. As Tilley and Cameron-Daum write, aviation amateurs perceive their landscape as "fixed and almost unchanging, physically, in presence and in memory" (2017, 285).

A striking difference between the way the abovementioned groups (including anglers who also decide to stay in one known and unchanging place) perceive their landscapes may also be noticed in the maps prepared by them. Maps are another extremely important asset of Tilley's and Cameron-Daum's publication. As a part of their research project, they asked the representatives of the groups of interest to sketch their own, personalized Pebblebed maps. A quick look at a dozen or more maps clearly proves the adequacy of the theses set at the beginning. Each map is different, and it is often difficult to find any common points that appear on more than one map. Many of the prepared sketches have notes, some of which are very emotional, and the specific landmarks highlighted on them bear names related to the subjective experience of their authors' experience of "being in the landscape." The idea of "mapping" a landscape experience bears many similarities with the project of sensuous geographies proposed by Paul Rodaway (1994, 5) who defines geography "as earth (*geo*-) drawing (-*graphe*), that is, a description of the earth and human experience of it, considering issues of orientation, spatial relationship and the character of places. 'Sensuous geography' therefore refers to a study of the geographical understanding which arises out of the stimulation of, or apprehension by, the senses." Tilley's and Cameron-Daum's achievement consists in offering a material illustration of a theory that functioned mainly *in abstracto*. The maps prepared by the participants in the project are effectively descriptions of the landscape and the subjectivehuman experiences described by Rodaway.

Despite all its merits—which are far more numerous than just those mentioned above—the reviewed book has a few shortcomings. The first issue that I would like to focus on is the unresolved problem of the "landscape economy." The authors pay attention to, among others, an intriguing group of stakeholders, namely the employees of a quarry occupying the outskirts of the heathland. They point out that its presence was treated with reluctance by the local inhabitants and Pebblebed goers, who even sought to get rid of it, motivating their attitude with the fact that the quarry was a lousy addition to the landscape and that large trucks carrying stones posed a threat to the local residents. As an aside, it may be noted that it ultimatelyturned out that the quarry had in fact had a positive effect for the heathland as it helped soil remediation. The conflict may be seen as an example of a clash between global interests and local ones. As one of the quarry workers commented, "as soon as the extraction begins, nobody likes it, nobody wants to have a quarry under the door. Everyone wants to live in brick houses, ride on well-paved roads, but nobody wants to see a quarry" (Tilley and Cameron-Daum 2017, 156). Despite being mentioned in the book, the universal problem of perceiving the landscape as a resource has been somewhat neglected. The researchers cut off the discussion, indicating that it is a "meeting between industry, local government and environmentalists," whereas it involves a lot of very important issues oscillating around economics, aesthetics, commercialization, industrialization, and landscape resources (Berleant 1997,

9—24). Perhaps this issue, which may be associated with the Heideggerian concept of "Ge-stell," has been intentionally avoided due to the multitude of problems it generates. It is hard to believe that Tilley, who repeatedly referred to the German philosopher in his other publications, did not see this interpretative potential.

A similar problem is posed by the analyses of conflicts offered by the authors, who only signal them but do not try to indicate potential solutions. A trivial problem—dog excrement in the heaths—is quite symptomatic in this respect. Almost everyone who visits Pebblebed complains about this animal generated pollution. Soldiers describe with disgust how they crawl over dog feces during exercises; environmentalists contend that they have a terrible effect on the heathland soil; strollers—especially retirees—go even further in their criticisms, adding dramatic stories about dogs let off their leash. In fact, the disapproving attitude towards dog owners turns out to be one of the few issues that unites all the groups. Tilley and Cameron-Daum, however, downplay the behavior of dog owners and do not explain why they ignore the rules set for heathlands and what it says about their landscape experience.

According to the authors, these and other conflicts result directly from people's ignorance about the landscape they are in. They illustrate this lack of knowledge with the results of a survey conducted in Pebblebed. Visitors at Pebblebed are not able to indicate the nature of the landscape (natural or anthropogenic), do not know the history of the place (although many respondents are aware of the presence of archaeological remains), do not know what species of plants and animals are under special protection, etc. It is therefore rather difficult to blame dog owners for not removing their pets' waste, since the institutions responsible for the heathlands do not explain to them why the excrement is not only inconvenient for other people but also very harmful to the ecosystem. Ignorance and insufficient involvement in spreading awareness of the character of the place proves, in fact, that the landscape belongs to nobody (Tilley and Cameron-Daum 2017, 1), and hence no one really wants to assume responsibility for it. At the same time, however, after reading the worrying results of the survey, one can ask provocative questions—what exactly makes people go to Pebblebed? To what extent do people's answers reflect their real motivations? Unfortunately, the researchers leave these questions partially unresolved. In some cases, they point out very specific reasons why people visit Pebblebed—for example, they mention the therapeutic values of the landscape motivating women that go to Pebblebed for a horse ride. They also point out the co-maintenance of the landscape by cyclists, for whom it becomes a place of embodied social practices.

What is also surprising in this comprehensive study, especially considering Tilley's academic background, is the lack of interest in archaeological and historical sites-and only very short mentions of archaeological research conducted there. If one thinks about the holistic perspective presented by Tilley and Cameron-Daum, then

the marginalization of the perception of the archaeological landscape and, in a wider perspective, the issue of its future management is quite astonishing. In Pebblebed, Tilley, who in the 90s was known as a fierce critic of institutions popularizing archeology (Tilley and Shanks 1992), had a great opportunity to propose a model that would incorporate the archaeological heritage into a material landscape experienced by public visitors. This lacuna is likely to be strongly felt by, above all, archaeologists for whom the publication may seem distant from Tilley's previous research. Additionally, the value of archaeological and historical remains is completely pushed aside in the reflection on the landscape experience. Such an approach also surprises with regard to the declared concentration on the material aspect of the landscape, which in Tilley'sother publications (e.g., Tilley 2004) was co-constituted by material remains from the past.

In *An Anthropology of Landscape: The Extraordinary in the Ordinary* Christopher Tilley and Kate Cameron-Daum decide to undertake holistic studies of the Pebblebed landscape, moving theoretical inquiries to a practical level. In reality, they illustrate what Tim Ingold (2011, 47) wrote about defining the landscape as a palimpsest—that is, as a form that arises from the crystallization of situated experiences. They do not focus on issues that have already been discussed by numerous authors—definitions, aesthetics, memory, or history—but they bring out the active, causative, material aspects of the landscape in motion, animated by the human and non-human beings that participate in it. Thus, they follow the strategy of researching the cultural landscape proposed by Nycz (2017, 89) that "consists … in transforming the relationship between the subject and the world (its landscape aspect) from an observational one to a participatory one; from static to dynamic (interactive); in general, from a relationship based on the opposition of 'ready-made' individuals external to each other to an internal differentiation of the mutually interacting elements of the cultural landscape to which the acting subject belongs." According to Nycz, this transition requires "support …offered by theories of perception and action that are based on this holistic-relational approach" (2017, 90).

In spite of the abovementioned noticeable but minor lacunas, Tilley's and Cameron-Daum's multi-level and in-depth analyses allowone to conceptualize better one's relationships with places, spaces, and landscapes where one does not function as an egocentric user, but as an actor (among many others) who co-creates them and co-lives with them. I am convinced that their holistic studies can significantly contribute to an increase in people's sensitivity towards landscapes, help develop shared responsibility for the experienced landscape, and inaugurate a new, interdisciplinary path in landscape studies.

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