

**THE DIFFICULT PATH OF SUSTAINABILITY:  
CONFLICTING IDEOLOGIES ON THE PRODUCTION OF  
URBAN SPACE**

**LA DIFÍCIL TRAYECTORIA DE LA SOSTENIBILIDAD:  
IDEOLOGÍAS EN CONFLICTO EN LA PRODUCCIÓN DEL  
ESPACIO URBANO**

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**RESUMEN**

Ninguna cultura puede asumir y absorber el choque de la civilización moderna y la paradoja de cómo modernizarse y volver a las raíces. Este texto investiga las interpretaciones de los nuevos paisajes culturales, entre la inevitabilidad de perder el paisaje tradicional por efecto del cambio cultural, y las nuevas posibilidades de intervención. El autor trata dos cuestiones candentes: las investigaciones de los paisajes culturales como guía para nuevas intervenciones sostenibles; y el significado de la tensión entre el paisaje cultural ideal de la sociedad enfrentado con el paisaje real. Es necesario un nuevo sistema de valores e implicaciones, una ideología ligada a la práctica y basada en el saber ecológico, para evitar la creación de un paisaje cultural moderno excesivamente transitorio, y con objeto de guiar intervenciones regeneradoras y sostenibles en el territorio.

**Palabras clave:** paisaje cultural, paisaje vernáculo americano, ideología, sistema de valores, sostenibilidad, universalización.

**ABSTRACT**

Every culture cannot sustain and absorb the shock of modern civilization and the paradox of how to become modern and to return to sources. This text searches for the interpretations of new cultural landscapes, between the inevitability of losing vernacular landscape by cultural change and the new possibilities for urban intervention. The author deals with two burning questions: cultural landscape investigations as a guideline for sustainable interventions; and the significance of the tension between the society's cultural ideal of landscape faced up to the actual landscape. A new set of concerns and values, an ideology linked to praxis and based on the ecological knowledge, is required to avoid the creation of an over-transitory modern cultural landscape, and in order to guide regional sustainable and regenerative interventions.

**Key words:** cultural landscape, american vernacular landscape, ideology, system of values, sustainability, universalization.

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“What we enjoy about the early-nineteenth-century American landscape is the ease with which it can be read and interpreted. The farm stands in the midst of its fields and clearly reveals its degree of prosperity and contentment. Each church has a white steeple; each public square has a monument; each field its fence; each straight road its destination. It is a landscape of rectangular fields, green woodlands, white houses, and red brick towns. It is like a luminous painting: vivid, carefully composed, appealing to the emotions, and reassuringly stable. Yet it did not last for long.”<sup>1</sup>

“The phenomenon of universalization, while being an advancement of man-kind, at the same time constitutes a sort of subtle destruction, not only of traditional cultures, which might not be an irreparable wrong, but also of what I shall call for the time being the creative nucleus of great cultures, that nucleus on the basis of which we interpret life, what I shall call in advance the ethical and mythical nucleus of mankind. It is a fact: every culture cannot sustain and absorb the shock of modern civilization. There is the paradox, how to become modern and to return to sources; how to revive the old, dormant civilization and take part in universal civilization.”<sup>2</sup>

These two statements, originating from two scholars with uniquely different backgrounds, will serve as the core for this incursion into the uncertain territory concerning interpretations of new cultural landscapes and the role that these interpretations might have in framing a much larger dialogue which, I believe, is at the root of this symposium. To guide this discussion, a notable difference is made, at the outset, between the remarks of J.B. Jackson, a notable American cultural scholar and that of Paul Ricoeur, a prominent contemporary philosopher. In J. B. Jackson's statement, which is a reflection of much of his work, there is a disturbing, almost sentimental acceptance in the inevitability of losing his cherished American vernacular landscape to the forces of cultural change. He reiterated this position at a 1996 interview where he admitted:

" I find myself reconciled to a great deal of ugliness, a great deal of commonness...and I don't object to it at all." <sup>3</sup>

On the other hand, Ricoeur's statement, while understanding the modifying influence that modernization imposes on the cultural landscape, nevertheless, sets in motion a path of inquiry where we can find new possibilities for a constructive dialogue guiding the role of urban intervention, in the hope of maintaining what he calls the "creative nucleus" of culture.

With this in mind, I would like to address two speculative questions. What is the significance of cultural landscape investigations in guiding sustainable interventions; and, second, does a tension exist between a society's mental image of its ideal cultural landscape, that is the cultural landscape, that lies

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<sup>1</sup> JACKSON, John B.- *Discovering the Vernacular Landscape*, 1984.

<sup>2</sup> RICOEUR, Paul.- *History and Truth*, 1965.

<sup>3</sup> KUNSTLER, James H.- *The Geography of Nowhere: The Rise and Decline of America's Man-Made Landscapes*, New York, Simon and Schuster, 1993, p. 122.

in our minds, and the real landscape, that is, the actual landscape that is evolving as a byproduct of economic and political forces that shape the patterns of landscape transformations? The horizon brought by these two speculative inquiries suggest that, as individual members of a society, we inhabit, simultaneously, different cultural landscapes which, in times of self reflection, can produce a cultural crisis of identity and of dialogues.

The search for discovering in the landscape Ricoeur's "creative nucleus of culture" has a rich American legacy. During the 1920s, a new branch of geography headed by Carl O. Sauer, Fred Kniffen and J. B. Jackson, among others, began the study of human landscapes as repository of material culture. Among these scholars, there is a widely accepted view that the character of a landscape reflects a culture's values and ideals with respect to the natural world and, in some way, provides a view of the culture's aspirations in the process of becoming. As Pierce Lewis plainly argues:

"If we want to understand ourselves, we would do well to take a searching look at our landscapes." But he warns us that "Americans may notice cultural landscapes because they think it is pretty, or perhaps ugly; mostly they ignore the common vernacular scene. For most Americans, cultural landscape just is." <sup>4</sup>

Yet, investigations by cultural geographers on the character and meaning of the American landscape have brought some important distinctions. In his classic essay "The Beholding Eye: Ten Versions of the Same Scene" Donald Meining argues that there are many ways of perceiving the landscape by individual observers, but all of them are dependent on the mental ideas brought on by the viewers as the repository of previous experiences. Meining's ten categories include the following: landscape as nature, landscape as habitat, landscape as artifact, landscape as a system, landscape as a problem, landscape as wealth, landscape as ideology, landscape as history, landscape as place, and landscape as aesthetic<sup>5</sup>. Outside the field of cultural geography, members from the design disciplines studying the current changes taking place in the cultural landscape are often more compelled to offer their evaluative judgments. Jaquelin Robertson, the noted urban designer and former Dean of the School of Architecture at the University of Virginia, in her influential essay "The Current Crisis of Disorder" describes the modern cultural landscape quite bluntly:

"Every where new weekend Villas are rising, a good many of them, as the locals say, 'architect designed.' In fact architecture is everywhere. But as yet there is not a promise of an attractive community to come.

...Such is the residue of modern design in a culture that does not provide a larger and governing vision in which to fit all the objects it

<sup>4</sup> LEWIS, Peirce F.-"Axioms for Reading the Landscape: Some Guides to the American Scene" in MEINING, D.W.- *The Interpretation of Ordinary Landscapes: Geographical Essays*, Oxford University Press, 1979, p. 11.

<sup>5</sup> MEINING, D.W.- "The Beholding Eye: Ten Versions of the Same Scene", *Landscape Architecture*, January 1976, pp. 47-54. See also LOWENTHAL, David.- "The American Scene", *Geographic Review*, Vol 68, 1968, p. 72.

produces. We make very few successful places, only things." And again, "In looking back on everything that I have been trying to do professionally over the last 15 years...I find one central preoccupation: a concern that healthy cultures ought to produce a man-made world in which there is a practical, perceptible, and elegant order of things, different from, but complementary to, the larger order of the natural world. And that our culture does not have such an order." <sup>6</sup>

Robertson's statement is of interest here because, while critical of the conditions of our current American urban landscape, he challenges us to intervene in a manner of creating a man-made world with a system of order different but complementary to the natural world. While the discursive thread in Robertson's essay is quite provocative indeed, we are forced to ask: Is there such an order in the natural world, and if so, how does the man-made world produce a different but yet complementary order as cultural evolution shifts its values and preferences? Is this search for order new in modern society or is it just a sign of our present cultural insecurities? In reflecting upon this, it is instructive to mention that this "searching" look at the landscape in terms of assessing the values of a particular culture has been an issue of serious inquiry since antiquity. Clarence Glacken in his opus magnum work "Traces on the Rhodan Shore" make reference to the works of the Middle Eastern historians Kramer and Moscati pointing out to an early Sumerian belief, that the process of transforming the earth :

"is dominated by the specific conception of order, [which is] inseparably bound up with existence so that 'create' and 'set in order' is synonymous."<sup>7</sup>

This early concept of "making" as a function of "setting in order" as the primary rule in transforming the earth, has a long historical continuum. Glacken's research indicates that these ideas -"of a designed earth"- are part of the myth of many cultures. It appears in the Timaeus of Plato as the "principle of plentitude" later expanded in the Aristotelian concept of the "fecundity of life" presupposing the recognition of the great variety of life. When the concept of "setting in order" is associated with the idea of "plentitude" and of the "fecundity of life" as characteristics of the visible order of nature, setting in order implies that the man-made world should resemble the attributes synonymous with the ideas of richness, balance, diversity, and fitness (an early view of sustainability?) which is credited to exist in nature. Many of these ideas were later adopted in building the foundations of natural history. It appears eloquently in the works of Count Buffon and is at the historical roots of our ecological theory. Therefore, Robertson's search for a man-made order complementary to the natural world has been a matter of lengthy preoccupation and, as such, has been with us since our origins of a civilized history.

<sup>6</sup> ROBERTSON, Jaquelin.- "The Current Crisis of Disorder" in PITTAS, Michael and FEREBEE, Ann.- *Education for Urban Design*, a selection of papers presented at the Urban Design Educator's Retreat, Puerto Rico, New York, The Institute for Urban Design, 1982, p. 35.

<sup>7</sup> GLACKEN, Clarence.- *Traces on the Rhodian Shore: Nature and Culture in the Western Thought from Ancient Times to the end of the Eighteen Century*, Los Angeles, University of California Press, 1990 (fifth printing), pp. 4-18.

Yet, while this constructive rule guiding the transformation of the cultural landscape might be at the roots of providing an ideal template for action, the pragmatic transformations of the earth have also been the subject of serious concerns and criticism since classical history. Plato in his *Critias* censures the cultural times of his society for having depleted the forest and soils of Attica -a reality from which, I may add, the landscape of Greece has not yet recovered. Plato's concerns in noting the changes occurring in the cultural landscape of Greece were echoed across recent history<sup>8</sup>. In America, it was the influential thinking of George Perkins Marsh which, in his monumental work "Man and Nature" pointed out that the 19th century American culture, for economic and political reasons, allowed the relentless exploitation of natural resources without considerations of natural, aesthetic and spiritual values. So the tension between the ideal concept of how to intervene in the earth and the pragmatic realities expressed by the real cultural landscape have been also a subject of much historical debate.

Currently, however, while the ecological concerns in transforming the landscape are today of equal importance, prominent scholars are voicing a new set of concerns, signaling a deep sentiment that our modern cultural landscapes are being created lacking a sense of meaning. Robert Riley, an accomplished reader of our modern American cultural landscape, points out:

"Mass use of the landscape might represent only a choice among inadequate alternatives, not the satisfaction of deep human need, but knowledge of our needs and satisfaction from the landscape is minimal". He concludes: The most troubling environmental problem of the years ahead may not be conserving energy or protecting natural systems, but emotionally coping with a landscape more transitory than we have ever experienced, or that Proust could have ever envisioned"<sup>9</sup>.

His colleague Robert Thayer, himself a keen observer of the modern transformation of the American cultural landscape, is more cynical in his outlook:

"Many of us would like to think that well intentioned government, religion, ethics and philosophy control our world, but evidence inherent in the landscape suggests that scientific-technologic-economic determinism is the key operator."<sup>10</sup>

These critical observations are only a fragment of a much wider discourse among scholars investigating our modern cultural landscapes. In a clear way, they capture a deep sense of dislocation between our current production of urban/suburban landscapes and the vision that Americans imagine is needed to create healthy and meaningful human environments.

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<sup>8</sup> GLACKEN, Clarence et al, "Changing Ideas of the Habitable World" in THOMAS, William Jr.- *Man's Role in Changing the Face of the Earth*, Chicago, The University of Chicago Press, 1965, p 70 and 76-77.

<sup>9</sup> RILEY, Robert B.- "Speculations on the New American Lanscapes", *Landscape*, Vol. 24, No.3, 1980, pp. 1-9.

<sup>10</sup> THAYER, Robert L. Jr.- "Pragmatism In Paradise: Technology and the American Lanscape", *Landscape*, Vol.30, No.3, 1990, pp.1-11.

It is important to notice that conclusions reached by scholars trained as cultural geographers differ significantly from those trained with a design education. For cultural geographers, their aim seems to be primarily that of documenting empirical observations of landscape changes and preferences but falling short in suggesting appropriate forms of action for giving shape to our current cultural landscapes. As J. B. Jackson reiterates:

“There is really not such thing as a dull landscape... Wherever we go, whatever the nature of our work, we adorn the face of the earth with a living design which changes and is eventually replaced by that of future generation. How can one tire of looking at this variety, or of marveling at forces within man and nature that brought it about ?”<sup>11</sup>.

On the other hand, the Berkeley professor and architect Daniel Solomon after years of work indicates a different perspective indeed:

" ...The majority of the electorate in places like the new wiggly parts [the Town] of Livermore have suddenly realized that the world in which they live is profoundly screwed-up. They have come to see that it is the product of a set of dreams that are inherently self-nullifying; the more that is built according to these dreams, the less it is like what it was supposed to be." <sup>12</sup>

In the remaining pages, we will examine the second question of this essay, does a tension exist between a society's mental image of its ideal cultural landscape and the real cultural landscape that shapes the current patterns of landscape transformations? As we mentioned previously, in America, the work of George Perkins Marsh was a pivotal instrument to awaken our national need for reconsidering our human relationships with our environment. While Marsh's concerns were more of an ecological nature, it reflected also the sentiments of 19<sup>th</sup> century transcendental thinkers, and it is not a coincidence that the conservation of our nation's cultural landscapes has been selective of those landscapes which are culturally thought of being scenic, unique and forever natural.

This American preference for the natural landscapes as repository of American cultural values takes a dual spin in the Jeffersonian compromise embracing a preference for selecting a cultural production of space -the middle landscape- with an image that is suitable of an agrarian ideology of space. So in a decisive way, the American ideal of a cultural landscape is constructed from the values attributed to the natural order and, if modified, should embrace the pastoral ideology of space. Is this the delusion of suburbia? In brief yes, but it has more layers. The cultural historian Leo Marx, in his essay "The American Ideology of Space" points towards a more complex version describing our American ideologies with respect to the cultural landscape. The New World, he points out, offered, since its initial European migration, three shared collective templates framing our American ideology of space: The utilitarian, later known as

<sup>11</sup> JACKSON, J. B.- "The Need for Being Verse in Country Things" as quoted in LEWIS, Pierce.- *Learning From Looking: Geographic and other writing about the American Cultural Landscape*, American Quaterly, 1951.

<sup>12</sup> SOLOMON, Daniel.- "Fixing Suburbia" in *The Pedestrian Pocket: New Strategies*, San Francisco, California, 1987.

progressive; the primitivist; and the pastoral ideologies. And, in essence, each version competes for the central role in shaping the American regional ideology of space<sup>13</sup>.

Marx's utilitarian version favors a mental imprint of the original discovery: that is, a vast uncivilized, natural world whose manifest destiny is to be discovered, subdued, and settled and made useful by the arriving Europeans<sup>14</sup>. Unlike the opportunities offered by the Old World whose lands had long been owned or controlled by privileged minorities, the American landscape, once its wilderness had been domesticated, provided to the early settlers, the liberating opportunities of both, settlement and land ownership. Thus, this utilitarian construct of the landscape as a commodity-exchange is inherent in the American ideology of space which he argues, it cannot be exaggerated:

"It is particularly revealing when we consider the state of the American landscape today, in the afterglow of the Reagan era. This principle of 'letting the market decide' how we allocate and use the land was latent in the dominant American ideology of space from the beginning"<sup>15</sup>

While the utilitarian version embraced the triumph of civilization over nature as reformulated in the idea of progress, the second ideology of the American landscape, the primitivist, favors a view in direct opposition to the first. In this, the vast natural wonders of American soil provided for a true search and reconciliation between man and nature. As such, nature is set in direct contrast to civilization whereas, in the Old World's expression, civilization was often connoted with oppression, injustice and political tyranny<sup>16</sup>. So, unlike the European renaissance sentiment of embracing history, the earlier New World settlers came to America not to embrace history but to escape history. Thus, in America's, primitivist version, wild nature provided the rectifying opportunity which repeated itself westward through the expansion of the frontier. This thought is captured eloquently in the words of Frederick Jackson Turner:

"American development has exhibited not merely advance along a single line, but a return to the primitive conditions on a continually advancing frontier line, and a new development for that area. American social development has been continually beginning over again on the frontier. This perennial rebirth, this fluidity of American life, this expansion westward with its new opportunities, its

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<sup>13</sup> The extensive literature on this subject is eloquently treated in WEIMIER, David.- *City and Country in America*, New York, Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1962; MARX, Leo.- *The Machine in the Garden*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1964; and SANFORD, Charles.- *The Quest for Paradise: Europe and the American Moral Imagination*. Urbana, University of Illinois Press, 1961.

<sup>14</sup> MARX, Leo.- "The American Ideology of Space" in WREDE, Steward and HOWARD, William Adams.- *Denatured Visions: Landscape and Culture in the Twentieth Century*, MOMA, New York, 1991, p. 63.

<sup>15</sup> *ibid.* p. 65.

<sup>16</sup> *ibid.* p. 66.

continuous touch with the simplicity of primitive society furnish the forces dominating the American character" <sup>17</sup>.

As is well documented, the primitivist ideology of space gave birth to a myriad of artistic and literary expressions, and was greatly instrumental in motivating the conservation and preservation movements. But it played one more decisive role: that is in formulating the third American ideology of cultural space, the pastoral view, often described as the Jeffersonian "middle landscape". In this, the destructive forces associated with progressive utilitarianism are reshaped and balanced with the primitivistic view giving birth to a pastoral, agrarian compromise with its luring seduction of providing, in the Jeffersonian sense, the purity of country life. Therefore, the search for a single ideology of American landscape is truly problematic. To get out of this paradox, Leo Marx suggests a critical alliance, that is, of presenting technology as an added value of innovation. In theory and in principle Marx points out, the [American ideologies of space] are irreconcilable, but in practice that logical contradiction has been relatively easy to disguise and ignore. Thus, a stock rhetorical strategy of the Jacksonian era was to valorize a technological innovation, like the building of the railroad to the West, as an example of improvement or progress and, at the same time, as a means of "carrying Americans closer to the heart of unspoiled nature"<sup>18</sup>.

Therefore, it was the technology of mobility as represented first, by the railroad, and later by the automobile, that has been presented not only as liberating and of being capable of achieving a closer linkage to nature. Yet, in either case, the cultural landscape expression of this search has not been kind to the Jeffersonian middle-landscape nor to nature itself. The tension between the ideal cultural landscape and the real pragmatic landscape as consequences of a technological production of space has been with us, in America, for the past hundred years. What is interesting here is to see the dual role that technology has played as both an ideologically convergent force, i.e. freeing the individual and bringing them closest to nature and as a disassociative force between both spheres. One can only conclude that the tension between the ideal and the real American cultural landscape is most acute in times (as it is in today's suburbia) when one of them is dominant and the other silent. But it also can manifest itself, when technology loses its relevant position as an integrative discourse. Robert Thayer, in his essay: "Pragmatism in Paradise: Technology and the American Landscape" points out that currently:

"The dramatic influence of our inventions on the American Landscape has become increasingly repugnant to us. We now suffer from what could be described as the Technological Landscape Guilt -the TLG syndrome. ...(Today) technology not only falls squarely in the domain of the real image, but it is often the engine propelling the real image.

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<sup>17</sup> TURNER, Frederick Jackson.- "The Significance of the Frontier in American History", 1893, in WEIMIER, David.- *City and Country in America*: New York, Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1962, p. 70.

<sup>18</sup> MARX, Leo.- "The American Ideology of Space" in WREDE, Steward and HOWARD, William Adams.- *Denatured Visions: Landscape and Culture in the Twentieth Century*, MOMA, New York, 1991, p. 71.

Hence, the mental constructs (between) 'landscapes ' and 'technology 'are often combatants on the battlefield for cognitive supremacy" <sup>19</sup>.

But blaming technology alone for the alienating and characterless landscapes provided by the mega-suburbs may be part of the issue, but what about human greed for land speculation? So if our diverse ideologies of space are in part responsible for our present social and ecological dilemma, how could ideology (cultural values) play a more positive role in guiding "sustainable" interventions? Can there be a constructive connection between the ideal and the real cultural landscape? And, more inquisitive, what then should be the new relationships between ideology and technology? At first, when confronted with these questions, the possibilities of finding a more constructive relationship between the ideal and the real cultural landscapes might be seen, at best, as deeply problematic or worst, as a sign of mental infirmity. Today, there is an overwhelming tendency to discredit any influential role that ideology might have with respect to our present human condition. That ideology is a myth of many cultures and has no role in establishing any constructive expression in today's scientific culture. Therefore, the solution is often to cast aside any vestiges of pernicious ideology. However, a careful analysis on the role of ideology might conclusively suggest, that this will be both an error and a serious misinterpretation of the role that ideology has, and has had, in the evolution of cultures.

Ricoeur's, analytical study "Ideology and Utopia" insists that the claims against ideology come from:

"a kind of realism of life, a realism of practical life for which praxis is the alternate concept of ideology" <sup>20</sup>

But it is possible to present a view in which ideology represents the imaginative construct of the cumulative sheared ideas, beliefs, ethics and values of a culture? As such, it will be critically necessary to separate ideology from its historical connections brought about by both French political ideology and German ideology which, in the latter case, presents ideology as the views of the economically dominant class and, as such, ideas only represent the values of people who control society. However, viewing ideology as part of an anthropological framework is more uplifting. In here, ideology is part of a larger cultural system of a society. Moreover, it is quite unlikely to have culture without a role played by ideology. As anthropologist Clifford Geertz points out, ideology is a system of culture and culture acts ideals in symbolic actions <sup>21</sup>. Jacob Bronowski maintains this is the case:

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<sup>19</sup> THAYER, Robert.- "Pragmatism in Paradise: Technology and the American Landscape", *Landscape*, Vol. 30, No. 3, 1990, p. 4.

<sup>20</sup> RICOEUR, Paul.- *Lectures on Ideology and Eutopia*, George H. Taylornew York, New York, Columbia University, 1986, p. 5.

<sup>21</sup> GEEERTZ, Clifford .-"Ideology as a Cultural System" in GEERTZ, Clifford.- *The Interpretation of Culture*, New York, Basic Books, 1973.

"There cannot be a science without humanity...The understanding of nature has as its goal the understanding of human nature, and of the human condition within nature"<sup>22</sup>.

For Bronowski, scientific knowledge cannot exist rationally separate from its ontological manifestations, for indeed knowledge does not exist outside our human minds.

But this, of course, does not mean that we should return to the old pastoral view of space. After all, the original Platonic ideas of plenitude and America's primitivistic versions of ideology have given birth, after multiple transformations, to ecological knowledge. In fact, all ideologies reemerge out of specific historical context, and they change according to specific circumstances of history.

So in essence, for ideology to take a new positive role guiding regional interventions, we need to portray ideology (idea) and reality (praxis), not as fundamental opposites, but as a new link in the discourse between them. In this way, ideology can act as an integrative and symbolic system linking cultural values to the production of space. And, in a critical way, the function of ideology becomes that of an imaginative act of putting praxis into question. As such, the role of intervention is not, therefore, so much paradoxical, but regenerative.

The reason for connoting a motivational view of ideology is to suggest that the current real expression of our cultural landscape is in serious crisis because it is devoid of signaling a clear symbolic reference to our culturally held images and perceptions of space in both its ethical and psychological dimensions. Today, the production of the cultural space exists inverted in its own discourse of self economic justification and outside the guiding dialogue of culture. Unless some new regenerative interventions take place between ideal and real space, we might be condemned to inhabit Foucault's dictum; that of living in a heterotopic space of multiple conflicting sites: that is, the perpetuation of living in a crisis of space, inhabited simultaneously by multiple incompatible discourses.

What is disturbing about the post 1950s production of the American landscape is the fragmentation of human activities, the homogenization of space that blurs the distinctions between countryside towns and cities, and the lack of public space from which to learn and observe culture in the making. But there is another and perhaps more troubling aspect. Most of the current production of suburban space is, by intent, transitory and disposable. That is, if the functional requirements of a particular suburban building change its purpose, it may not be possible to reintegrate its physical construct to accept its new functional requirements. Therefore, it will be abandoned or be prematurely destroyed and remade. Thus we are investing significant efforts in producing a cultural space destined to have no historical memory. A new path of action will necessitate a new evolutionary development on the concept of ideology, a new relationship between ideology and constructed space, between ideology and technology and between ideology and ethics. This could foster new multiple opportunities for intervention. In the words of Peirce Lewis:

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<sup>22</sup> BRONOWSKI, Jacob.- *The Ascend of Man*, London, British Broadcasting Corporation, 1977, p. 15.

"The man-made landscape--the ordinary run-of-the-mill things that humans have created and put upon the earth--provides strong evidence of the kind of people we are, and were, and are in process of becoming

... We must conclude that if there is really major change in the look of the cultural landscape, then there is very likely a major change occurring in our national culture at the same time"<sup>23</sup>.

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<sup>23</sup> PEIRCE, Lewis.- "Axioms for Reading the Landscape: Some Guides to the American Scene" in MEINING, Donald W.- *The Interpretations of Ordinary Landscapes: Geographical Essays*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1979, p. 15.

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