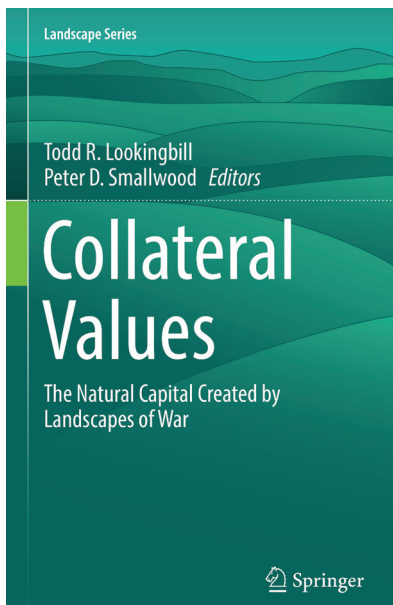


Collateral Values

The Natural Capital Created by Landscapes of War

Editors: Todd R. Lookingbill, Peter D. Smallwood

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Military movements are horrible for innocent victims and negative for both natural capital and ecosystem services. But in some cases, it is beneficial for battlefields to get rid of excessive exploitation and regenerate natural resources. The editors Todd R. Lookingbill and Peter D. Smallwood, professors at Richmond University in USA, and 14 authors who are researchers at various western universities, conducted a wide range of historic and ecological studies on how former battlefields were transformed into present habitats and how stakeholders cooperate in conservation and preservation.

The editors and authors propose a concept “collateral value” to describe the unexpected natural resources brought by the protection of such sites. These ecosystem values are secondary to the values of establishing peace and security. This publication describes in the first half five post-war battlefields in Europe and USA, ranging from Middle Ages to WWI. Primarily recognized as historical sites, they demonstrate how different military activities affect nature and landscape, and how this leads to ecological benefits. The second half discusses the landscapes of five international borderlands in a more recent view. It discusses the habitats and ecosystem services that are impacted by barriers and borderlands as well as the ecological prospects for these areas.

The prominent contribution of this book is that it emphasizes ecosystem services that are very different from other areas, other than their historical, cultural values for recreation and tourism. It is rich in documentary references to reveal practical facts, including the historical background of the battlefields, how they became protected areas in the debate of different interests, as well as how they are currently managed and operated. It also lists a number of research findings on animals and the habitat characteristics now providing surprising ecological services. However, the book also has obvious shortcomings. Firstly, the proportion of the introduction is too large, conversely the analysis part for ecological and collateral value of nature is rather shallow and monotonous. The second flaw is its structure. The authors of twelve chapters major in diverse disciplines, varying from biology to political science, and their parts are divided by location rather than research field. This causes overlaps of different chapters on topics and contents and lack of logical order. Thirdly, there is a lack of research data and an absence of analysis of the process and the amount of collateral value created by act of war.

This is more of a sociology and history book than an ecology book. It is recommended for people interested in international politics due to its rich details. Landscape architects may be confused and disappointed by the lack of identified problems and proposed improvements. After all, it is questionable if the collateral value can compensate for the damage caused by military activities.