

W. R. Jordan III, G. M. Lubick: MAKING NATURE WHOLE. A HISTORY OF ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION. – Island Press, Washington, Covelo, London, 2011, 256 p., ISBN-13: 978-1-59726-513-3.

We brought several book reviews from the field of ecological restoration in recent issues of our journal (Kovář 2010, 2011, 2013a, b). The named examples provide a serious insight into development of science-based restoration practices around the globe. The present reviewed book represents the first concise historic view on land management, through restoration of whole ecosystems for their own sake. While concern about human habitat was not new, the idea of re-creating landscapes or ecosystems, complete with determining processes, was a new concept. It was also an important direction of thinking, in the sense of distinguishing it from other forms of land management (i.e. utilitarian meliorations in landscapes = making environment „better“ – which could be called „human ego-centric restoration“, Kovář 1994). Restoration ecology means the contrasted caretaking – ecocentric restoration - which is management counting with a previously existing ecosystem, including all of its parts and spontaneous processes. In other words, ecological restoration goes beyond other conservational and restorative efforts, that tend to manipulate land in an anthropocentric way.

The book chapters are as follows: Introduction, 1. – Deep history, 2. – Run-Up, 3. – Preconditions, 4. – Invention, 5. – Neglect, 6. – Realisation I: Stepping stones, 7. – Realisation II: Taking hold, 8. – Realisation III: Finding a voice, 9. – Realisation IV: Getting real, 10. – Realisation V: The relationship, 11. – Current thinking. The text is the story primarily covering the last decades of the 19th century to the current time. The book focuses on six restoration projects, mainly in the United States, some of them in Australia. Data is drawn from both published and unpublished sources, including archival materials and oral histories from early practitioners (gardeners, orchardists, farmers, foresters, landscape architects...) to explore the development of the field and its importance to environmental care. Various items are taken into consideration, such as monastic gardens, the Scientific Revolution, and the emerging nature-awareness of nineteenth-century Romantics and Transcendentalists. The book ranges across many fields, not only the natural sciences but also literature, history, philosophy, and religion. Jordan and Lubick bring a comprehensive insight into the field's philosophical and theoretical foundations. They emphasise the more recent history with its first „discoveries“ of recreational values of natural ecosystems early in the 20th century, as well as the past few decades with the context of decision solving in ever-changing relationships between humans and the natural environment.

Ecological restoration also evokes critics, as there are people believing that restoration should not be undertaken unless it improves on the current conditions of the Earth surface. The book „Making nature whole“ represents a good source for discussions about restoration ecology as newly formalised and/or established field of ecology or for man's relationship with nature. It is a valuable contribution to the knowledge of the discipline development, and engaging reading of one historical period overview in science.

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