

RAZLIKE MED PREDNOSTNIMI ŽELJAMI PRI PLANIRANJU DRUŽBENE ODGOVORNOSTI IN POROČANJU O NJEM

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Povzetek: Ta prispevek se odziva na bitko med tistimi, ki štejejo odzivanje na podnebne spremembe za pripomoček, da bi uveljavili bistvene družbene in gospodarske transformacije, in tistimi, ki se bolj previdno zavzemajo za to, da bi se lokalno naslonili na napore naravoslovcev, arhitektov, urbanistov, inženirjev in njihovih strank. Napredna novinarka v knjigi *This Changes Everything* (2014) zelo ostro zagovarja ogromne družbene naložbe v obnovljive vire energije in učinkovitost; le-ti naj bi nadomestili infrastrukturo, s katero črpamo podzemne fosilne energente, in tradicionalne družbene odnose, ki tako infrastrukturo podpirajo. Naravoslovska novinarka Elizabeth Kolbert pa vidi prednosti v trudu tehnologov in konstruktorjev, ki delujejo znotraj danih lokalnih sistemov, da bi prišli do otipljivih nizko-ogljanih rešitev.

Obravnavali bomo novo knjigo Kleinove in dve knjigi Mary Wood (2013) o pravi velikih podjetij, ki so na borzi, kot predstavnike prve smeri razmišljanja. Drugo smer bodo zastopale knjige arhitektov Petra Ozolinsa (2015) in 7 Group ter Billa Reeda (2009) o zelenem konstruiranju, trajnosti in pomanjkanju. Sklenili bomo, da sta oba strateška pristopa upravičena in družbeno odgovorna, če upoštevamo globalne imperitive in lokalne družbene in zemljepisne razlike. Etična volja je potrebna razen tega za uspeh vsakega pristopa, toda moramo bolje dojeti, kako naj gojimo družbeno odgovornost in dosežemo, da bo spremenila dano prakso, kot je nujno.

Ključne besede: makro strategije, neoliberalizem, ideologija, mikro strategije, etična volja

SCALE PREFERENCES IN PLANNING AND REPORTING ON SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Abstract: This paper responds to the tension between those who see responding to climate change as a catalyst for sweeping social and economic transformation, and those who argue more cautiously for reliance on localized concrete efforts by scientists, architects, city planners, engineers, and their client groups. Progressive journalist Naomi Klein, in *This Changes Everything* (2014), crusades for massive social investments in renewables and efficiency, with the aim of replacing the extractible fossil fuel infrastructure and the traditional social economy that supports it. Science journalist Elizabeth Kolbert, on the other hand, favors the perhaps more immediately tangible low-emission efforts of technologists and designers working within existing local systems. We will consider both Klein's new book and three books on public trust law by Mary Wood (2013) as exemplars of the first line of argument. For the second, we will consider books by architects Peter Ozolins (2015) and by 7 Group and Bill Reed (2009) about

green design, sustainability, and scarcity. We will conclude that both strategy approaches are necessary and socially responsible, given the global imperatives as well as local cultural and geographic differences. Ethical will is necessary, moreover, to the success of each approach, but we have to better understand how to nurture social responsibility and make it the game changer that is required.

Keywords: Macro Strategies, Neoliberal Economics, Ideology, Micro Strategies, and Ethical Will

1. Social and Economic Transformation. Naomi Klein states at the outset of her ambitious new book that she wrote it to focus on the opportunity to use climate change as a powerful catalyst to rebuild local economies, reclaim democracy from corporate influence, expand desperately needed public infrastructure, restructure agriculture, open borders to migrants whose displacement is linked to climate change, and respect indigenous land rights—all to reduce extreme inequalities in our nations and between them (7). Her point of departure is that neoliberal economics is the cause of both global warming and the inequalities that we face, and that they cannot be solved without changing the underlying economic system.

Of course, this perspective is not one espoused by most of our political and economic leaders, who prefer to claim that climate change can be achieved without major disruption of the status quo. Klein's book has received many positive reviews for its emphasis of the need to change macro-level global social and economic systems. One less enthusiastic exception is Elizabeth Kolbert's article in *The New York Review of Books* (2014), which calls, with some skepticism, for much more well-detailed plans for Klein's proposed "degrowth" and "regeneration," and expresses doubt that that well-off people are willing to make the necessary life-style sacrifices. In a subsequent exchange between these authors, in *The New York Review* (2015), it becomes apparent that their differences are informed significantly by whether the problem should be attacked at the macro economic policy level or the micro (individual and local) level, as well as by ideological differences with regard to the level of social and economic sacrifice necessary. The question for us to consider here is whether macro or micro economic and design approaches are more strategically important for addressing global warming.

One kind of endorsement for Klein's approach was provided by protesters at the annual meeting on January 2 of the American Economic Association in Boston, attended by many of the top economists in the United States. The group of protesters beamed its challenge to the profession in the following six foot high letters onto the side of the -conference site, Sheraton Boston Hotel: "BEFORE ECONOMICS CAN PROGRESS, IT MUST ABANDON ITS SUICIDAL FORMALISM" (Guo, 2015). The protesters argued that climate change cannot be addressed without addressing questions in economics like growth impacts and the need for limits to growth, which neoclassical economists have long ignored in their classrooms and policy prescriptions. The demonstrators' project is connected with the anti-consumerist magazine *Adbusters*, where the original idea for the Occupy Wall Street movement was initiated.

A similarly transformative approach was unveiled recently on the PBS show, *Moyers & Company*, by the University of Oregon's Philip H. Knight Professor of Law, Mary Christina Wood. Wood is the founding director of the school's acclaimed Environmental and Natural Resources Law Program, where she teaches public trust law and related courses. Public trust doctrine is defined by Wikipedia "as the [principle](#) that certain [resources](#) are preserved for public use, and that the [government](#) is required to maintain them for the public's reasonable use." The law dates back to Roman times, and in England, to the *Magna Carta*. As argued by Wood, based on this principle, climate is not just an environmental issue, it is a *civilizational* issue. All our federal agencies are responsible, not just the Environmental Protection Agency, because they are all legally responsible for the use of our resources and the quality of our lives. However, Wood also says that the Feds have been "bought off" and are beyond help, and that the pressure for change must come from the local level and the moral authority of youth, as has been demonstrated in Eugene, Oregon. Her new book, *Nature's Trust*, was published by Cambridge University Press (2013). She is also co-author of a

leading textbook on natural resources law (West, 2006) and co-author of a textbook on public trust law (Carolina Press, 2013).

2. Green Design. There is plenty of room for improvement of green building design and construction in developing countries, as demonstrated in Peter Ozolins' new book, *Sustainability and Scarcity* (2015). Differing from the prevailing globalized approach resulting in standardized designs that do not fit localized situations, this book defines an approach for gathering and integrating necessary knowledge of the local culture, economy, and environment for sustainability. With understanding based on more than 20 years of experience in developing countries, in Africa, the Middle East, and Asia, Ozolins illustrates numerous case studies that use local building materials, adapt to local climatic conditions, minimize maintenance, and help with poverty eradication. Ozolins was one of my students, and this book is based on his dissertation at Virginia Tech in Environmental Design and Planning. Ozolins is a member of the American Institute of Architects and is a LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) accredited professional with the US Green Building Council.

Another book that I have found useful is *The Integrative Design Guide to Green Building*, published by John Wiley (2009). As pointed out in its Foreword, buildings are responsible for 39 percent of CO₂ emissions in the US each year. Buildings also account for 40 percent of primary energy use in the US, 72 percent of US electricity consumption, 13.6 percent use of our potable water, and 40 percent use of raw materials globally (xi). These figures show how critical good green building design is to energy and resources conservation.

The book describes how *integrative design*, based on systems thinking, can help make the world a better, healthier place. The US Building Council's LEED Green Building Rating System serves as an essential tool for enabling this transformation. It is also based on the principle of integrative (systems) design.

The book draws on the expertise of well-known systems designers such as Russell L. Ackoff, whose background is in architecture as well as operations research and business. An important quote from Ackoff is included in the book, as follows: *English does not contain a suitable word for "systems of problems"....I choose to call such a system a "mess." The solution to a mess can seldom be obtained by independently solving each of the problems of which it is composed* (15).

Buildings should be thought of as *life-sustaining organisms* with components that comprise systems of relationships. *Sustainability* is defined as what buildings must do to sustain life, so that "forests, neighborhoods, people, businesses, watersheds, mushrooms, microbes, and polar bears each contribute to the interrelationships that ensure the viability of each over the long haul" (42).

This idea leads in turn to the concept of *regenerative design*, a process that engages the whole system of which we are a part. All parts of the system must coevolve together to sustain life. Tapping into the consciousness and spirit of people engaged in a place is likely the only way to sustain sustainability. This process is dramatically different from simply "slowing down" the environmental damage created by a flawed design process (45).

Building systems are nested in larger systems through an exchange of resources and waste. The opportunity for true sustainability exists only when we can shift our focus from individual buildings to the nested systems beyond the building, including the site, watershed, community, and the larger region (54). These larger systems do not exist in isolation. When you build anything, you must also repair the world around it, and within it, so that the large world becomes more coherent and the thing that you make takes its place in the larger web of nature (from Christopher Alexander, *A Pattern Language* (58)).

This conceptualization of regenerative design in the context of nested systems provides another insight that is not an integral part of this book, since its focus is on building systems. The insight is that in the larger system of relationships, it is possible to engage in a design process at any level of the larger system. It also follows that such an intervention can be helpful to all parts of the larger integrated system, since all parts of the overall system must be in a state of continuing development.

Conclusions. The complex systems orientation of the green design movement reminds us of the many different aspects of planning and reporting, at all levels of scale, that are required for a socially responsible approach to global warming. Actors operating as change agents can enter the system at any point, depending on their special substantive knowledge and scale preferences. All positive interventions can contribute to regeneration of the life of the overall system.

We must also recognize, however, that certain interventions are more strategically important than others. Since our current global warming issue is largely the result of human social and economic systems at the macro scale, the transformation of those systems will be necessary to provide viable context for interventions based on green building design, for example, at the local scale. Putting it another way, local interventions through green building design are necessary but not sufficient in themselves to transform the global warming issue. It is also true, however, that social and economic transformation to ameliorate the global warming issue will not be sufficient without local interventions based on green building design.

As I pointed out in my paper for IRDO 2014, “The Role of Ethical Will in Personal and Social Responsibility for Health,” *ethical will* is the necessary basis for the health and welfare of the larger society. It is also necessary to the success of both macro and micro strategies for ameliorating global warming. It begins with the ethical responsibilities of the individual, summing at the societal scale to societal responsibility.

Societal ethical will is another necessary condition for a sustainable and resilient global climate system, just as it is for health systems. It will easily trump self-serving partisan political and neoliberal economic considerations. However, we have to better understand how to nurture social responsibility and make it into the game changer that is required.

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