



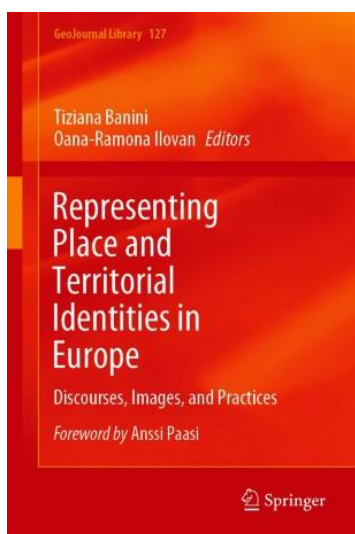
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## BOOK REVIEW

### REPRESENTING PLACE AND TERRITORIAL IDENTITIES IN EUROPE. DISCOURSES, IMAGES AND PRACTICES

Ioan Sebastian JUCU

West University of Timișoara, Department of Geography, Email: [ioan.jucu@e-uvt.ro](mailto:ioan.jucu@e-uvt.ro)



*Representing Place and Territorial Identities in Europe. Discourses, Images and Practices*, 2021, Tiziana Banini, Oana-Ramona Ilovan (Eds.), 17 chapters, 266 pages, Springer, Switzerland.

One of the most relevant latest publication in the field of place and territorial identities in Europe was released in 2021, bringing together the most important topics related to place/territory representation. As it is stated at the beginning of the first chapter „the study of the representations and symbolic aspects of places, landscapes and territories marked an important moment in the history of geography, which coincided with the cultural turn of the 80s of the last century and more generally with the post-structuralist turn (Banini and Ilovan, 2021, p.1). Nowadays, when the new various perspectives and avenues claim these turns and, more

or less approach the questions of place/territorial identities representations, these issues still triggered the attention of various scholars of different scientific backgrounds. The current scientific interest on the mentioned topic of place/territorial representation is highlighted in the introductory section of the book which deals with the territorial/place representation and identities, with the authors pointing out the main social and cultural relations between representations, identities and geographies, arguing that these relations are the main contributors of the local, regional and national identity.

Structurally, the book consists of four parts: the first focuses on the identities construction through re-building place-based relations; the second part refers on the

representations of nations and cities, illustrating in a comprehensive manner the question of ever-changing territorial identities considering that nations and cities with their cultural patterns, functionalities and landscapes as certain outcomes of cultural and identity representations; the third section of the book deals with the aspects of cultural negotiation of belonging and identities paying a particular attention on borders and internal migrations as important features in shaping the local and regional cultural identities; the final part of the volume unveils the main challenges and specific stereotypes in the rural areas cultural identity representations.

Against such a background, the studies included in the present book and designed as particular chapters cover topics ranging from nations and national places and territories to cities and the rural space. The main cultural traits covered in the book vary from nationalities and ethnicities, to migration, from living places to the imagined ones, from feelings and emotions to visual imageries, from the sense of belonging to the cultural landscapes and from the theoretical approaches to the specific practices meant to construct specific and particular identities in different places, spaces and territories. In this regard, the living space is approached with a case study on multi-ethnicities in Rome, the author - Tiziana Banini - providing a critical examination on the city representation, through the question of multi-ethnicity approached in the inner core of the city of Rome. Remaining in the same background of the urban space, Marco Picone approaches the issue of gentrification and the touristic images of Palermo.

Connecting the local identity in small and medium-sized towns through music and tourism, Ioan Sebastian Jucu provides a case study arguing that music, as a cultural trait of local identity, has the power to reinforce local development based on cultural representation of the local heritage of the towns. The question of place attachment, affection and the sense of belonging is pointed out in the 5<sup>th</sup> chapter by Valentina Albanese which discusses about the sentiment and visual analysis in territorial representation. The final section of the first part triangulates the methodological background on place/territorial representations through a case study focusing on landscapes as 'Working Field' for Territorial Identity in Friuli Venezia Giulia Ecomuseums Action (Andrea Guaran and Enrico Michelutti).

Sander van Lanen highlights the sense of place as spatial control with the questions of austerity and place processes among young people in Ballymun, Dublin, while Kinga Xénia Havadi-Nagy talks about the problems of place-identity discourses in the "Tunnel of Time with a case study on the ten decades of Romania in one hundred Images." The visual imageries in the national identity representation are successfully applied and transposed in visual discourses by Oana-Ramona Ilovan, the author illustrating the urban spatial identity in picture postcards during socialist Romania (1948–1989). Consequently, the state-socialist identity of this country is unveiled from different perspectives which frame a certain period of time, that largely marked and transformed the cultural landscapes of Romanian cities and towns.

In the same vein and in a similar context, Florentina-Cristina Merciu, Andreea-Loreta Cercleux, George-Laurențiu Merciu pay a specific attention to a small Romanian industrial town (Anina) through the processes of identification and interpretation of the territorial identity elements of a small industrial town using postcards. The everyday territorial identities in Romania and the Republic of Moldova with a comparative research on a case study on the impacts of territorial representations from above is investigated by Lisa Gohlke, while Zoltan Maroși pay attention to the past bordering practices modelling present representations in Transylvanian Saxons' administrative units and the chair of

Rupea/Repser Stuhl/Kőhalom Szék. The gender concern on identity and territorial representation is highlighted by Janet C. Bowstead, the author arguing in the chapter that “There Is Always a Way Out!” The author speaks about domestic violence issues through the images of place and identity for women escaping domestic violence.

Changing contexts, the rural places always represented a fertile background for analyzing the aspects of local cultural identities. In this regard, considering poverty as a cultural trait in rural habitats, Celia Innocenti investigates these aspects through the lens of the “Green Illusion” focusing on the rural representations and poverty in Ariège from France. The the Polish rural space is critically analyzed by Marcin Wójcik, Paulina Tobiasz-Lis and Pamela Jeziorska-Biel through the lens of local place representation. The case of Coastal Donegal is analyzed by Atalya Peritz and Liam M. Carr with emphasis on the relation between the local culture and the sea.

Summing it up, the diversity and the complexity of the approached topics on territorial identity representation are outstanding and highly relevant for geographers. The case-studies included in this book portray different issues investigated through a large variety of methods in various European places, both urban and rural. Without aiming to completely finalize the subject of place/territorial identity representation, the results included in the present research book claim for further ongoing research in the field and open new perspectives and avenues for further methodological approaches and different studies aiming to enrich the new agendas for place/territorial identity research. This concluding aspect is clearly expressed by the editors of this book in the final chapter since the present work could be a starting point for further in-depth research on place/territory identities’ representation.

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