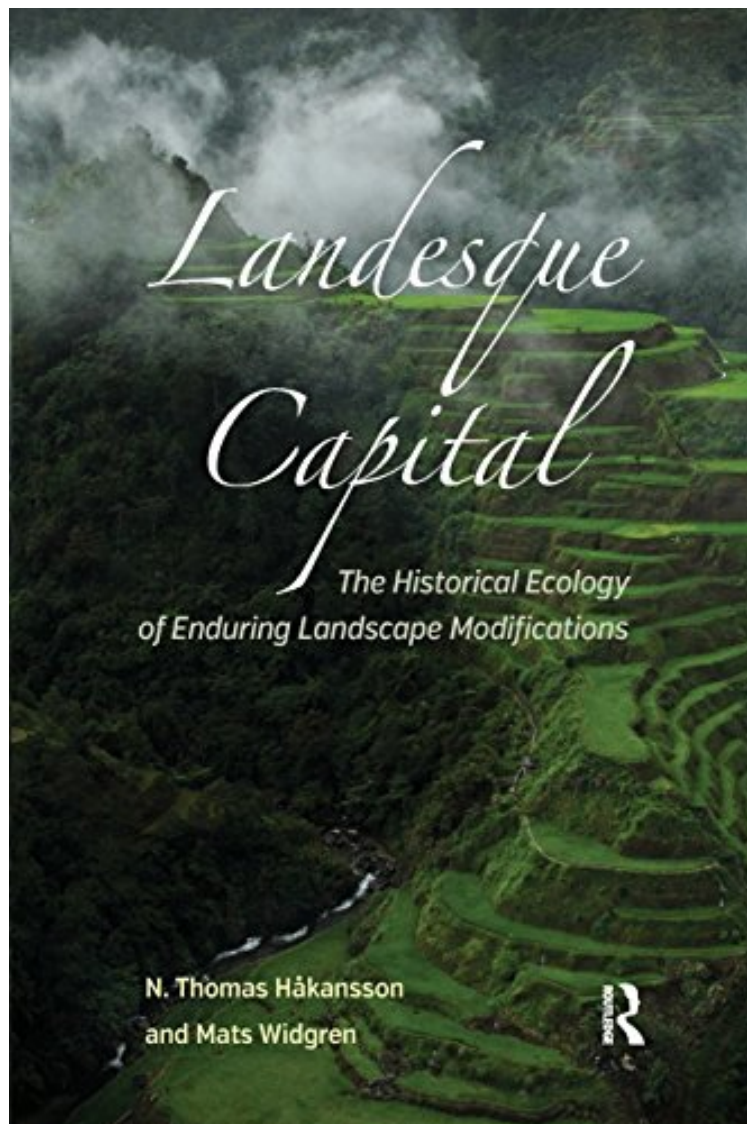


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Landesque Capital: The Historical Ecology of Enduring Landscape Modifications (New Frontiers in Historical Ecology)

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From Routledge : Landesque Capital: The Historical Ecology of Enduring Landscape Modifications (New Frontiers in Historical Ecology) before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised *Landesque Capital: The Historical Ecology of Enduring Landscape Modifications* (New Frontiers in Historical Ecology):

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Valuable resource on traditional landscape management
By E. N. Anderson
Landesque capital is a term coined by Amartya Sen, to refer to major modifications in the land (fixed capital in the form of land modification). This book deals with such modifications in traditional societies. Terracing as in Luzon and east Africa, irrigation systems and canals, and constructed wet-fields such as rice paddies and taro fields are the main forms discussed here. Kathleen Morrison notes that such large-scale, heavy-labor developments grade imperceptibly into ordinary field creation and ultimately into the alteration of the soil by farming. And of course the line between "land" and "capital" is deliberately blurred here, if not downright obliterated. So we are dealing with a fuzzy set--a concept with no firm boundary. It grades into more ordinary classifications of land. What are important in these studies are the attention to ethnographic context and to detailed histories. Landesque capital flourishes within historical ecology. All these major landscape modifications required a lot of time to build, and have to be maintained indefinitely. Some terracing systems are quite young (the Luzon ones did not take off till 400 years ago), but others are thousands of years old. Many, if not all, these systems were started and developed for ritual, ceremonial, or status reasons. Many produced commodities for trade. It is possible that some major, difficult landscape modifications were purely for subsistence, but apparently not common. People need a stronger set of motives. Having studied or observed systems like this in China, Indonesia and Peru, I find this book a very valuable resource. I would recommend that everyone read it with Google Maps or some comparable software loaded and at the ready. I sought out the sites (at least the ones I didn't know) on Google Maps to get a sense of what the terraces and canals looked like on the ground, and found this extremely helpful in understanding.
0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars
By AOC
Great book!

This book is the first comprehensive, global treatment of landesque capital, a widespread concept used to understand anthropogenic landscapes that serve important economic, social, and ritual purposes. Spanning the disciplines of anthropology, human ecology, geography, archaeology, and history, chapters combine theoretical rigor with in-depth empirical studies of major landscape modifications from ancient to contemporary times. They assess not only degradation but also the social, political, and economic institutions and contexts that make sustainability possible. Offering tightly edited, original contributions from leading scholars, this book will have a lasting influence on the study long-term human-environment relations in the human and natural sciences.

Hkansson and Widgren consider well landesque capital, an underused concept critical for scholars studying the political economy and ecology of traditional societies. They show how an approach deriving broadly from landesque capital is vital to issues of sustainability and control.
Dr. Timothy Earle, Northwestern University