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Cities After Landscape: Post – Landscapes, Other Practices, and All Things

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- Chapter
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Abstract

The concept of the valley section, developed by the botanist and urban planner Patrick Geddes, was conceived as an ideal city type. Following the course of a river from the hills to the sea, the drawings of the valley section reveal relations between land or settlement types, the occupations associated with these places, and the tools employed in their work. Although representing historic relations with the land the valley section has been appropriated by designers and urban planners as a device to consider future architectural forms and potential processes of urbanization. This development of the valley section as a basis for speculation is the point of departure of this essay. Based on analysis of Geddes' drawings and writing and explored further through models and drawings, I situate the valley section geographically and temporally as a method of questioning the relational constructedness of landscapes. Through analysing, editing, adapting, and redrawing the valley section for future landscapes I argue that Geddes' conception is a landscape model that can reveal the complexity of relations of urbanization. I demonstrate the potential of interrogating landscapes, from past to future and from the everyday to the planetary, through the framework of the valley section. Through applying this relational frame to specific times and places we can recognise material,

ecological, and social relations of landscapes and we can endeavour to reveal less visible, often unbalanced, relations with land – such as ownership, policy, governance, and commerce – from which these landscapes are constructed.

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