



Cities and Cultures (Routledge Critical Introductions to Urbanism and the City)

Malcolm Miles

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Cities and Cultures is a critical account of the relations between contemporary cities and the cultures they produce and which in turn shape them. The book questions received ideas of what constitutes a city's culture through case studies in which different kinds of culture - the arts, cultural institutions and heritage, distinctive ways of life - are seen to be differently used in or affected by the development of particular cities. The book does not mask the complexity of this, but explains it in ways accessible for undergraduates.

The book begins with introductory chapters on the concepts of a city and a culture (the latter in the anthropological sense as well as denoting the arts), citing cases from modern literature. The book then moves from a critical account of cultural production in a metropolitan setting to the idea that a city, too, is produced through the characteristic ways of life of its inhabitants. The cultural industries are scrutinised for their relation to such cultures as well as to city marketing, and attention is given to the European Cities of Culture initiative, and to the hybridity of contemporary urban cultures in a period of globalisation and migration. In its penultimate chapter the book looks at incidental cultural forms and cultural means to identify formation; and in its final chapter, examines the permeability of urban cultures and cultural forms. Sources are introduced, positions clarified and contrasted, and notes given for selective further reading.

Playing on the two meanings of culture, Miles takes a unique approach by relating arguments around these meanings to specific cases of urban development today. The book includes both critical comment on a range of literatures - being a truly inter-disciplinary study - and the outcome of the author's field research into urban cultures.

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