

**BOOK REVIEW:**  
**THE GEOGRAPHIES OF GARBAGE**  
**GOVERNANCE**  
**INTERVENTIONS, INTERACTIONS AND**  
**OUTCOMES**

**by ANNA R. DAVIES**

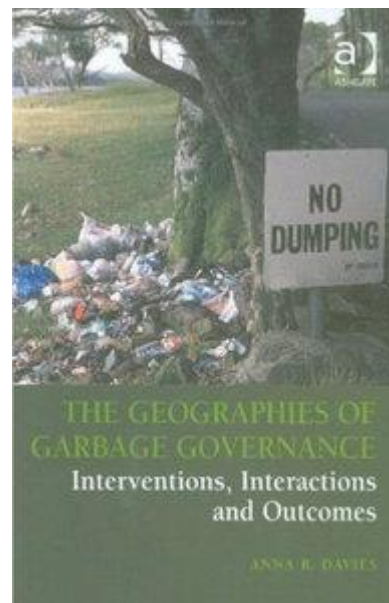
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**1. INTRODUCTION**

One of the most prodigious British publishing houses, Ashgate, released on 25th march 2008 the book "The Geographies of Garbage Governance" (ISBN 978-0-7546-4422-0), written by Anna R. Davies, university lecturer in the Department of Geography, Trinity College, University of Dublin, Ireland.

The 214 pages of the book represent an important contribution at the many and various literature debates within the specialists regarding waste issues and waste management. One of the most significant contributions of the author is represented by the introduction of a special approach, which brings together two distinct terms, governance and garbage. Anna Davies analyzes the political, social, cultural and mostly the territorial dimensions of the governance in waste domain, which previously had been presented by the specialty literature mainly from the technical and environmental perspective.



The theoretical – methodological (conceptual) perspective, emphasized by a detailed comparative study, makes the paper very accessible both for the students and teachers and suggests new paths for thinking and empirical approaches regarding the environmental policy, generally, and the waste management policy, especially.

The book is structured in three parts. In the foreword, the author is presenting and analyzing the two main concepts which are the book's main pillars: garbage and governance. Starting from the waste concept, from the waste definition and classification and the need to have a proper waste management, both theoretical and practical, the author takes the debate subject to the greater extent of the environmental policy, bringing into discussion the governance and its essential role within the correct implementation of this policy; through a logical and ingenious speech, the author demonstrates the close correlation between these two terms.

Starting from the explanation of the governance term and the analysis of its implications, the author brings the discussion in the area of the environmental policy, thus making the essential step towards introducing a new approaches, environmental governance and garbage governance.

The book's first part has two chapters and is meant to present and analyze in a personal form the main concepts and approaches regarding governance and garbage, the theoretical – methodological framework related to the waste matter and waste management. In the first place, the author is presenting some governance general theoretical aspects and some of its specific aspects within the environmental policy. On the other hand, the author focuses on detailing the waste governance concept and analyzing the institutional, political, social, environmental etc. implications.

The subject of the second chapter is represented by a concise analyze of the particularities within international context. There are emphasized the punctual differences between states at European and global scale, aspects which are showing the implication of the non-governmental sector within garbage management, promoting strategically partnerships designed to implement specific measures of waste management and, not in the least, within the imminent conflicts which may arise within waste management policy implementation.

The author is presenting in a structured and concise manner the most significant characteristics of the related policies, from the EU's unity in diversity and USA's encouraging delegation and volunteering, to Asia's restrictive character and Africa's privatization and partnership encouragement as key approaches regarding the garbage management policies.

Within the second part, the author is presenting relevant aspects within garbage governance sector from Ireland and New Zealand, as a detailed comparative analysis, full of relevant information regarding the state's administrative territorial structure, the way of establishing attributions regarding waste management at different levels of administrative system, aspects related to the culture and society within the two states, particularities of the environmental policy etc. The titles of the two chapters from the second part are extremely suggestive, capturing the nature and scale of the problems which the two states had or currently have regarding the garbage issue: "Garbage Governance in Ireland: Waste Wars in the Emerald Isle" and "Garbage Governance in New Zealand: Clean and Green?".

In the IIIrd and IVth chapters, the author is presenting the interventions which the two countries had regarding waste management, legal framework development and the main changes that occurred within their garbage management policy in the past decade. Here are commented and thoroughly presented the main implications and results that followed the changes over the years, according to each state's manner of addressing the waste management issues.

The third part of the book is containing the comparative study conclusions, the analysis of the multiple similarities and differences regarding the spatial approach of the waste management within the two countries and some comments regarding the advantages and disadvantages of each vision. Not only the characteristics of the management policy are analyzed and compared, but also the political and socio-cultural context in Ireland and New Zealand in which the first were developed and, most of all, their impact and the complexity of the empirical results.

The last chapter is describing some personal conclusions regarding the waste management development directions, in general, the author emphasizing the latest trends and understanding of the taken risks which may lead to the failure of good garbage governance. The speech within the section "Governance and governmentality" is very interesting, reiterating the role and major importance of the manager's mentality, approaches concepts regarding waste management policies.

The paper has the merit of thoroughly analyzing the phenomenon generally-called "garbage governance", the problems that follow the implementation of the waste management policies and, especially, the socio-political and administrative context in which such malfunctions occur and develop. By the spatial perspective of the governance measures within garbage management and by the keen accent on the social, cultural and political-administrative context, the paper proves both the novelty character and the originality note of the approached theme, being able to be considered a complex scientific analysis of the mechanisms, tools and governance structures within the waste sector.

The harmonization of the theoretical notions with the case studies, the embedding of the legislative speech with the empirical reality and combining the spatial perspective with the social-cultural context make this work a true practical and theoretical base in garbage management approach, thus being accessible both to students and researchers and also to the political decision factors.

During the past years, as a result of the insufficient resources needed for the proper management of the waste issue, the focus migrated from the technical and engineering solutions to the administrative factors, governed by the political decision factors at local, regional, national and international level. The analysis of the way in which the garbage issue should be governed will remain a challenge for the scientific community.