

## book reviews

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**Who am I? An autobiography of emotion, mind and spirit.** By Y.-F. Tuan. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press. 1999. 139 pp. US\$21.95 cloth. ISBN 0 299 16660 0.

There are only six chapters in this slim volume, covering Yi-Fu Tuan's life from childhood to university student to senior academic. As expected, he does not convey his life as a conventional narrative, although the book begins with an account of his family and life as a child in 1930s China and ends with his life as a retired professor at the University of Wisconsin. Nor is he necessarily averse to characterizing his life in terms of various progressions – from public to private, from world to self and from student to teacher. He draws on such progressions cautiously, however, noting that his life has lacked the traditional markers of progress such as 'courtship, marriage, birth of children, and so on' (p. 10). Each chapter of *Who am I?* traces a particular theme over a period in Tuan's life – cosmopolitanism, the personal, the intimate, the natural environment and academic geography – creating an overlapping, intertwined narrative that touches on some of the same events and people in different ways. Like Tuan's academic work, this witty, crisply written book eschews abstraction, preferring to use anecdotes and short vignettes to illustrate its broader points.

*Who am I?* is an inspiring autobiography, although not in the sense of uplifting, life-affirming or triumphal. Indeed, the overall tone of the work is surprisingly dark, or bittersweet at best, a story of isolation, outsideness and unfulfilled longing for intimacy and acceptance, punctuated only occasionally by moments of friendship, comfort and aesthetic pleasure. Rather, the book is inspiring in the sense that it is stimulating and thought provoking. In particular, it offers an honest and highly personal, if unfashionable, perspective on sexuality, race and identity. Tuan's opening discussion suggests just how difficult it was for him to write about these matters. He first works through the relevance of Socrates' dictum that an unexamined life is not worth living. Tuan then asks an even more difficult question – is an examined life worth reading? He is deeply concerned that he is exposing himself to reproach, loss of intimacy or, perhaps worse – indifference – by writing his biography. If it provides any comfort to Tuan and encouragement to the reader, *Who am I?* is undoubtedly worth reading, both for the inherently interesting tale it relates and for Tuan's willingness to risk self-exposure.

Tuan's sexuality is perhaps the most difficult subject for him in *Who am I?*. He 'outs' himself in the book, but this revelation is not in itself particularly unexpected. As Tuan himself notes, a middle-class, Chinese man who is a life-long bachelor does not fit conventional social (or sexual) roles. Yet his discussions of his own sexuality are notably

oblique. He addresses his homosexuality directly only near the end of the chapter on 'intimacy', writing that 'By late middle age, I had become (to my surprise) a Greek . . . like Socrates and Plato' with a passion for the beauty of young men (pp. 82–83). Tuan is more explicit and seems far more comfortable in contemplating the homosexual relationships of Alexander von Humboldt or John Cheever than in describing his own passion for any particular man. This indirectness is, however, an honest indirectness because it reflects his own discomfort with his sexual feelings, particularly the link in his mind between sex, decay and death. To expect a more detailed, explicit (or even celebratory) discussion would be to miss an important part of who he is.

Much like his reflections on sexuality, Tuan's discussions of racial relations and his own racial identity are sometimes at odds with contemporary identity politics. Although he begins his chapter on the intimate with the theme of 'justice', Tuan roots his sense of justice in his childhood family experiences, rather than in a dramatic incident in adulthood or adolescence as a more conventional treatment might. Although his outsider status in the United States in the 1950s allowed him to see ethnic, racial and class discrimination invisible to his colleagues, and he (good-naturedly) warns his friends that he is now on guard against racial slurs, his sense of justice is not closely tied to social inequality. Consequently, his understanding of justice is largely apolitical.

Yet Tuan's apolitical understanding only partially explains why he has refrained from joining movements for social justice, or making it an explicit theme in his academic work. First, he is pessimistic that the ultimate goal of social justice – equality of individuals – can ever be reached. His pessimism is rooted in his own profound sense of biological inadequacy, as he believes that he has never been the physical or mental equal of those people whom he most admires or from whom he has sought acceptance, love and intimacy. Second, his sense of insecurity and outsiderness also means that he feels inadequate in the face of such problems, and therefore that he cannot make a vital contribution towards solving them. Indeed, his lack of vitality (sometimes mental, but more often physical) is a recurring theme throughout *Who am I?*. As the trait he most admires and desires, but also fails to find in himself, he feels that his lack of vigor often creates a barrier to intimate relationships and friendships.

Even beyond these personal and intimate issues, Tuan's reflections on academic geography and his own intellectual trajectory make reading the book worthwhile. At once deeply personal and broadly intellectual, he frames his career both within his own psychology and within the discipline's evolution over the past 40 years. It may surprise those who have savored his books to learn that he feels that his early movement from geomorphology to humanistic geography placed him outside geography's core. Like his personal and intimate life, his intellectual path has contributed to a sense of professional isolation. Yet he may well be the most central of all outsiders! His discussions of the physical environment are wonderful examples of how even the 'scientific' study of landscapes can be fundamentally intertwined with aesthetic appreciation and a sense of self. For example, the desert and the rainforest form diametrically opposed environments for Tuan. But contrary to most contemporary accounts, he sees the dense and diverse ecosystems of the rainforest not as a teeming testament to life, but as an inevitable indication of death, decay and the loss of self. In contrast, the apparent lifelessness of

desert landscapes offers a deathless order without decay, or what Tuan describes as a 'crystalline' beauty.

Thus, Tuan ultimately turns to the external environment to reveal the most troubling insight from his self-examination in *Who am I?* He is 'afraid of life' (p. 119). The optimistic, gentle and even romantic nature of his scholarly work makes this conclusion that much more unexpected. As the final chapter suggests, he does have treasured moments, but they fall short of the full, rich life he craves but cannot achieve. It is perhaps inevitable that Tuan ends his book with a dark vignette, that of driving through Nebraska at night watching the only other car in sight turn off the road, leaving him to continue alone into 'a wall of darkness'. Although he leaves the reader with this bleakly alienating image, one cannot but hope that he will allow us to drive with him just a bit further.

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BENJAMIN FOREST

**Sense of history: the place of the past in American life.** By D. Glassberg. Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press. 2001. xvii + 269 pp. US\$50.00 cloth, US\$18.95 paper. ISBN 1558492801 cloth, 155849281X paper.

When I was a graduate student, it was commonplace in many seminars to direct our criticism at an author's insufficient attention to things geographical; books written by historians, sociologists, or anthropologists came under especially harsh fire. 'If only he had considered spatiality', we would argue, or 'if she had positioned her discussion with respect to uneven development', we agreed, the book would be much better. Worse yet, were books that made explicit, but lame, overtures to geography. It seemed to us that critical-thinking scholars who laid bare the constructed nature of race, class, and gender would go all mushy when they encountered 'place', 'space', or 'landscape', as if these concepts were somehow naively given and not socially produced. What we were encountering around our Madison, Wisconsin, seminar tables, of course, were the hazards of thinking beyond disciplinary boundaries.

David Glassberg's new book, *Sense of history: the place of the past in American life*, would have met our demanding standards. It is written by a scholar with a deep appreciation for the entwined connection between the past and place, a connection that is not unproblematic, but charged with political and economic voltage. Glassberg, who teaches public history at the University of Massachusetts, begins the book with his own recollections of sitting around a graduate seminar table and his own sense of disconnect between history and geography. Unlike our dissatisfaction, however, Glassberg's centered more on his chosen profession itself and specifically on 'the enormous distance between professional historians and the larger culture' (p. 5). He points to the controversial 1995 Smithsonian exhibit of the *Enola Gay* and the Congressional condemnation of national history standards that same year as evidence of this growing schism. Unlike some critics, such as Mike Wallace, who describe American culture as 'historicidal', Glassberg believes that popular interest in the past has never been greater. Consider, he suggests, the output

of historical films and novels, the many visitors to historic sites and museums, and the intense efforts to mark and preserve historic buildings. It's just that the 'public' and historians don't understand the past in the same way. An important reason for this difference, the author argues, is that, for most people, a sense of history and sense of place are inextricably linked – and this is precisely the connection that is missing for most professional historians.

This argument relies on distinguishing between what Glassberg calls performing an '*interpretation* of history' from having a '*sense* of history'. The former is what PhDs in history (and historical geography) do: examine the past in light of a vast array of evidence and with regard to successive theoretical frameworks for that interpretation. The latter is what the rest of us do: understand who we are as individuals and groups by reflecting on both personal experiences of the past and collective memories constructed by communities. Glassberg is not the first to make this distinction, of course. David Lowenthal describes the different goals of praxes of 'history' and 'heritage', and Pierre Nora differentiates between 'history' and 'memory'. Like these scholars and a growing number of others, then, David Glassberg is attempting to shed light on why and how Americans are 'possessed by the past'. His answer – that place matters – will sure to be of interest to geographers.

What makes *Sense of history* different from Lowenthal's work is Glassberg's method. Like most historians I know, he is much less comfortable with the multiplicity of examples, historical periods, and geographic contexts that characterize books such as *The past is a foreign country* and *Possessed by the past*. Glassberg has remarkable range, but he focuses it. Each of the book's five empirical chapters examines a different case study of public remembering from a different angle and with a different methodology. One chapter looks at the building of a pacifist war memorial in a small Massachusetts town, while another observes the heated politics behind the creation of a historical festival in San Francisco, while another examines the public response to Ken Burns's documentary on the Civil War. In other chapters, he conducts in-depth interviews to understand why black and white residents see the 'historic' features in an urban neighborhood differently, or he documents the efforts by Californians to identify places there as worthy of commemoration.

At the core of *Sense of history* is the recognition that 'the meaning of a historical book, film, or display is not intrinsic, determined solely by the intention of its creator, but changes as we actively reinterpret what we see and hear by placing it in alternative contexts derived from our diverse social backgrounds' (p.9). In a word, Glassberg is attuned to the challenges of postmodernism. 'There is no history', he writes, 'only histories, subject to endless, often intellectually fascinating, reinterpretation and debate' (p. 209). He is also well aware that, while such perspectives may characterize recent PhDs in history or geography, most people who visit historic sites or watch PBS documentaries are less willing to filter their understanding the past through Foucault or de Certeau. People care about the past because it helps shape personal and group identity – identities that are inevitably informed by where they grew up and where they currently live. What is needed, Glassberg believes, is empirical research documenting the creation and reception of popular historical imagery, and how that imagery relies on distinct, if socially

constructed, senses of place. His research suggests that historians have failed to dialogue with different publics largely because the professionals do not connect the histories they write to the places so important to so many people. Themselves the product of a 'placelessness' engendered by academic nomadism, historians rarely identify emotionally with the past of a place, community, or region.

While there may be some truth to this view, I doubt if the same could not also be said of geographers. Few pursuing academic careers will enjoy the freedom to live and practice geography where they want, but I am not certain that this alone explains the distance between professional and public interpretations of the past. Nonetheless, the issues raised by *Sense of history* have important implications for historical and cultural geographers who hope that their work reaches beyond the ivory tower. How do we reconcile a critical interpretation of different pasts with a desire to make them part of a collective identity? Are museum professionals and documentary filmmakers destined to pander to whims of the marketplace? Can there be a rapprochement between heritage and history? As more and more geographers turn their attention to public interpretations of the past, and to the places that embed the past, these questions will gain relevance. David Glassberg's important book will be a good place to begin thinking about them.

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STEVEN HOELSCHER

**Mapping cyberspace.** By M. Dodge and R. Kitchin. London: Routledge. 2001. 260 pp. £19.99 paper. ISBN 0 415 19884 4.

Using cartography as an organizing theme, *Mapping cyberspace* takes the reader on an eleven-chapter descriptive overview of cyberspace and its intersections with geographical space. Mapping, the authors argue, is crucial for cyberspace research because it 'reveal[s] insights into the power structures . . . of cyberspace in terms of who controls the systems, who has access to them, how the systems can be surveyed, and how and from where cyberspace is being used' (p. 81).

Chapters 1–3 define cyberspace as the 'conceptual space within ICTs (information and communication technologies), rather than the technology itself' (p. 1). The authors describe the transformative role cyberspace plays in geographical space. For example, the authors address the social history of the Internet, noting its origins in Cold War military research. In addition, the authors describe geographies of power and exclusion related to surveillance and 'digital divides' along axes of gender, ethnicity, and class. Each of these themes are taken up in greater detail in later chapters, here they persuasively illustrate for the reader some of the material interconnections between cyberspace and geographical space.

Chapters 4–8 disaggregate cyberspace into cartographies of its technical infrastructure (e.g., computer networks), demographics of access and use at national and international scales, and online information spaces. The authors convincingly demonstrate that mapping these spaces reveals complex geometries of power too often glossed over by pundits of new digital technologies. In addition, they demonstrate that mapping

cyberspace raises critical questions of representation, power, and ethics as well as a need for new cartographic techniques (e.g., dynamic, interactive, and animated maps). Issues of data availability and quality raise questions of cartographic accuracy and ecological fallacies related to mapping demographics of access and use at aggregated scales (e.g., nationally and internationally). Mapping online information spaces also raises ethical questions related to surveillance. For example, maps of online information spaces (e.g., chat rooms and multi-user domains) may impinge on the anonymity of users. The erasure of anonymity can have deleterious consequences, both online and offline, for marginalized groups who are otherwise able to use cyberspace as a 'safe space' of interaction, support, and political mobilization. By exploring these issues, the authors clearly demonstrate the relevance of geographical studies of cyberspace.

Chapter 9 takes the theme of cartography into the realm of information visualization. Here the authors provide an overview of research from cognitive sciences such as psychology and geographical research into spatial learning. Dodge and Kitchin demonstrate that cognitive mapping studies offer a productive bridge between geographers, computer scientists, Web designers, and programmers concerned with information visualization and navigation. This is a strong chapter that puts geography in conversation with a range of other disciplines. It demonstrates the need for thinking through issues of power and inequality in the technical design of digital technologies and shows how geographers can productively contribute to these debates.

Chapter 10 turns to a consideration of science fiction literature exploring the potential social consequences of digital technologies. The authors argue for the importance of this literature as a 'space of contemplation' for thinking through darker implications of cyberspace (e.g., the rise of surveillance society). This idea would be more convincing had the authors moved beyond enumerating the themes present in literary depictions of cyberspace to consider how this fiction has been received in the technical and entrepreneurial communities responsible for designing and deploying digital technologies. However, this would constitute a major research task in its own right. Consequently, Dodge and Kitchin only hint at possible connections between imaginative geographies of literature and issues of technology design, marketing, and use.

In their final chapter, the authors outline a series of questions for future geographical research on cyberspace. These are organized around themes of theory and empirics, culture and society, politics and polity, economies and urban development, and online geographies. Anyone in search of a research or dissertation topic could turn to this last chapter and find a wealth of stimulating questions to underwrite their own project.

As a whole, *Mapping cyberspace* is strongest in two areas. First, the authors critically review a wide range of research on cyberspace outside the discipline of geography and are able to demonstrate the often implicit, yet unexamined, issue of spatiality in these literatures. Consequently, *Mapping cyberspace* opens a productive conversation between geography and a range of other disciplines including cultural studies, computer-mediated communications, information visualization, and spatial cognition. Secondly, the authors offer good social histories of the design, deployment, and use of digital technologies. These social histories do much to dispel the hyperbole associated with technologies such

as the Internet and virtual reality and opens them to deeper social, political, and economic consideration by geographers.

Where *Mapping cyberspace* is weakest is in its inconsistent use of the experiential continuum that the authors argue exists between cyberspace and geographical space. Despite their central thesis that these spaces are not separate but 'are interwoven' (p. 24), the authors continually slip into descriptions that suggest that cyberspace and geographical spaces exist as realms bounded from one another. To give only two examples, the authors state that 'ICTs and cyberspace are transformative technologies' (p. 13) which seems to collapse the distinction made between technologies of cyberspace and cyberspace itself in their definition on page 1. Later, the authors state that cyberspace and geographical space should not be bracketed into two separate realms because 'spill over is inevitable as both join to form a single experiential reality' (p. 54). Such 'spill over' suggests fluid yet containerized connections between geographical space and cyberspace. If the experiential continuum that links these spaces is a dialectical interweaving as the authors contend, their descriptive analyses tend to render this relationship as two clearly distinguishable black and white threads.

While readers hoping for a definitive rethinking of space may find the authors' rendering of their experiential continuum unsatisfying, overall *Mapping cyberspace* is a strong text. The book provides a clear and broad introduction to major theoretical, methodological, and empirical issues related to cyberspace research. *Mapping cyberspace* is a critical first stop for any researcher interested in contributing new knowledge in this exciting emerging field.

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JOSHUA LEPAWSKY

**Reimagining the American Pacific: from South Pacific to Bamboo Ridge and beyond.** By R. Wilson. Durham: Duke University Press. 2000. 295 pp. US\$18.95 paper. ISBN 0 8223 2523 3.

A Hawaiian shark god, crazed by pollutants, bursts up through the soil of a golf course, scattering frightened caddies and golf equipment in its wake. Rob Wilson uses this image from a poem by Michael McPherson to illustrate that local imaginings are rising up to challenge the globally produced constructions of the Pacific as a tourist paradise of pacified native people. To Wilson this scene is representative of a new cultural awakening in the Pacific, where local writers define their homelands on their own terms.

According to Wilson there are a number of tropes produced by outsiders about the Pacific, and several key themes are evident. The first of these is the Pacific as an 'American Lake' dominated by American nuclear testing, military bases and economic desires. The second is the Pacific as an empty space outside history, where rival global powers play out international contests between Asia and the 'Western World'. Lastly, Wilson spends a considerable amount of time on how the Pacific is imagined as tourist paradise.

Wilson balances his discussion of these globally produced tropes of the Pacific with examples of recent literature produced by Native Hawaiian writers. Specifically, he focuses on poetry published by Hawaii's Bamboo Ridge Press. Wilson argues that the writing produces a place-based vision of Hawaii tied to local desires and uses. Through these writings Hawaii comes to be seen by Hawaiians not as the United States' periphery, but as its own core. Wilson quotes a Hawaiian creole poem by Joseph Puna Balaz where he espouses the belief that 'Hawaii is da mainland to me' (p. 130).

Wilson uses perspectives from geography to theorize how the space of the Pacific has been, and continues to be, constructed. For instance, to explain how economic processes have affected the Pacific he makes use of David Harvey's concept of time-space compression and Edward Soja's ideas on the peripheralization of places. He uses Arjun Appadurai's work to demonstrate that there are emerging transnational and hybridized processes complicating the distinctions between global and local, although Wilson still employs this dichotomy not only to explain the economic process of the Pacific but also to analyse the way that the Pacific has been imagined from global and local sites. The local is privileged as a site of resistance, although the book does not fully engage with just what 'local' means in the Pacific, and specifically Hawaiian, context. There is no consensus on how 'local' is defined in the Pacific, an idea further explored, for example, in Hanlon and White, eds, *Voyagers through the contemporary Pacific*.

Lacking from Wilson's analysis is how (or whether) the globally produced tropes are connected to each other in any way aside from the fact that they are produced from outside the region and projected onto it. The one possible unifying perspective of these tropes is the feminization of the places in the Pacific. Wilson touches on this view of the Pacific as an exotic/erotic space waiting for conquest by male adventurers, but this idea could be elaborated to show its connections to the other ways the Pacific has been imagined and used.

A more serious shortcoming of the book is Wilson's neglect of local *practices* in the Pacific. He demonstrates that global imaginings of the Pacific are entwined with global practices such as economic flows, exploding nuclear weapons and the construction of tourist resorts. Yet he fails to do the same at the local level: he does not explore what sorts of local *practices* are entwined with resistive local writings. Locally oriented writing certainly enables locals to reimagine the places they live in, but is discussing literary resistance enough by itself? It is one thing to write of a shark god devouring the global tourist to undermine non-local imaginings of a place, but Wilson does not ask how those imaginings articulate with resistive *actions* under way in the region, such as squatting on beaches, or demanding access to traditional food-gathering areas on military bases. By focusing more on how material-discursive practices operate and articulate at global levels than on local arenas of resistance, Wilson gives an incomplete analysis of how 'the Pacific' is constructed, and, ironically, reinforces the privileging of the global he seeks to critique.

Given the book's thesis that the Pacific region is increasingly becoming defined by internal actors, it seems odd to label the places Wilson refers to in the book as the *American* Pacific. The title appears to undermine his premise that islands in the Pacific are defining themselves on their own terms rather than in relation to past colonial

powers. While one reason for the title may be that the book is part of a series called *New Americanists*, Wilson himself gives two other conflicting explanations for the title. At one point he claims that the 'American Pacific' refers to those areas of the Pacific, like Micronesia, Hawaii and American Samoa, which most recently were directly dominated by the colonial power of the United States (p. 105). In another part of the book he claims that the term stands for '*the entire Pacific* as a region that, since the end of World War II when supremacy passed to the United States, has been dominated by this military superpower and its neoliberal ideology of installing democracy and free-market regimes' (p. 68, emphasis original). This latter definition of the 'American Pacific' is the one that Wilson uses for most of his analysis, and the book focuses primarily on Hawaii, an American state within the Pacific, with little attention to the experiences of the rest of Polynesia, Micronesia and Melanesia. It would be interesting to extend Wilson's analysis to comparison between how people in other parts of the Pacific have asserted the legitimacy of their views of homeland and how the Native Hawaiians have done it.

Despite these criticisms the book is a fascinating read, and it does what Wilson sets out to do: demonstrate how the Pacific is being reimagined from the perspective of local people. The book contains valuable insights not only into the Pacific experience but also into how researchers can critically evaluate the way all regions have been, and continue to be, constructed by the dynamic interplay of local and global imaginings.

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JEFFREY SASHA DAVIS

**Sex tourism: marginal people and liminalities.** By C. Ryan and C.M. Hall. London and New York: Routledge. 2001. xviii + 172 pp. £17.99/US\$29.95 paper. ISBN 0 415 19510 1.

Chris Ryan and C. Michael Hall have for a number of years been writing about the intersection between commercial sex work and tourism. They have dealt with, either individually or as a team, a myriad of topics, including methodological and ethical dilemmas in sex tourism research, the construction of gendered and sexualized identities within the sex tourism industry and the theatrical and performative 'nature' of sex tourism. This volume brings together much of their published work and also offers a review of the sex tourism literature more generally. More than simply reprinting their previous work, however, Ryan and Hall offer some theoretical coherence to the study of sex tourism in both its local and global contexts. They survey a number of interrelated and complex topics, moving from the historical formations of the sex tourism industry to the representational practices that constitute the industry to the role of the state in promoting and stemming the development of the industry. They also touch on topics that often remain outside the purview of sex tourism research, including the sex tourism markets for gay men and lesbians. In addition, they provide a critical appraisal of the work of other sex tourism researchers, from those working as prostitution advocates to those who see sex tourism as a purely exploitative set of practices. In so

doing, Ryan and Hall move the debate out of the often dualistic and normative realm of 'prostitution as a self right' versus 'prostitution as a societal evil' and push the ways in which we think about and analyse sex tourism.

The preface forms an important part of the book, since it is in the preface that the authors outline the history of their own work as well as the reasons they chose to move from a positivist analysis to a post-positivist analysis of sex tourism, a theme they return to again in the main body of the text. Working within a post-positivist frame, Ryan and Hall construct a theoretical argument centring on the notion that tourism and commercial sex work are both constituted through the practices of two sets of marginal peoples, tourists and commercial sex workers. They argue: 'As marginal people, both tourists and prostitutes have had, at least in Western societies, their roles defined by hegemonies of power, and unless regard is paid to those structures, then at best any description of sex tourism remains but that – a description' (p. 1). They develop their theories of marginality through a review of the work of Turner and MacCannell, arguing that in order to understand sex tourism one must investigate the symbols of tourism practice, i.e. the symbols deployed by both tourists and sex tourism workers. As marginal actors, they argue, tourists and sex tourism workers operate in a liminal space somewhere 'betwixt and between' (p. 3) the everyday and the extraordinary. Thus, traditional theories of 'deviancy' cannot be readily applied to the practices of sex tourists or sex tourism workers. Over the course of seven empirical chapters and an afterword, Ryan and Hall investigate the ways in which symbols are mapped onto the spaces and bodies of tourism, both the spaces and bodies of the tourists and the spaces and bodies of the sex tourism workers. Working through the complex representational practices that constitute the sex tourism industry, we begin to get a sense of how sex tourism develops in both the geographical imagination and in the everyday practices of individual social actors.

While a valuable contribution to the literature because it brings together a disparate body of research into one volume under a single theoretical context, the text also has several limitations. The first limitation is theoretical. The authors rely too heavily on the theories of Turner and MacCannell in the development of their framework. This leads them to maintain the boundary between the conceptual spaces of 'margin' and 'centre', and to place too much emphasis on the concept of liminality. Tourism, as a set of consumer practices, is an excellent representative of the centralizing tendencies of capitalism, which places the consumer in the middle of social relations, even while he or she is sitting 'on the margins'. We are all thus in various states of liminality as we negotiate the centre and the margin in relation to our everyday spaces, such as the household and the spaces of work and leisure. I wonder to what extent tourists and sex tourism workers are any more liminal, therefore, than the Ford auto worker who is hoping to hold onto his or her job in the wake of massive layoffs. If the authors had engaged more thoroughly feminist theories of positionality and performativity by authors such as Butler or Grosz, they would have developed an even stronger critique of the sex tourism literature and probably also offered a compelling critique of Turner's 'liminality'.

Second, the authors tend to conflate very different geographies into their broad analyses – a danger of any volume that wishes to be global in scope. Thailand, because

it has been so extensively studied as a site of sex tourism, becomes the key referent for their discussion of south-east Asia. Although other examples from the region are discussed, the overall complexity of the region is muddled by the conflation of distinct gendered and sexualized systems from across the region. In a similar way, the chapter on gay tourism does not really address lesbian identities or their concurrent social geographies. The introductory set of definitions relies instead on those developed from the studies of gay men, thus submerging the complexity of lesbian experience. What this means is that lesbians, while they are paid lip service in this volume, remain marginal to the overall analysis.

Finally, the volume is erratic, in part not only because the authors draw from so much of their previously published work but also because the individual chapters were written either by one author or the other (perhaps a weakness and a strength, since the chapters can stand on their own). We are thus stuck in moments where the author is using 'I' when writing from his particular experience, which means we have to flip back to the preface to find out who wrote what. This detracts, I would argue, from the argument's overall consistency and punch.

Despite my reservations about the theoretical tone and organization of the volume, I think it is a positive step toward the development of a more critical perspective on the constitution of sex tourism. It takes several encouraging steps toward a more theoretically rigorous engagement with the complex symbolologies and practices of sex tourism, and thus offers its reader a point from which to challenge the hegemonic constructs of sex tourism as simply a matter of social deviance.

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VINCENT J. DEL CASINO JR

**Remnants of conquest: the Island Caribs and their visitors, 1877–1998.** By P. Hulme. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 2000. 371 pp. \$55 cloth. ISBN 0 19 811215 7.

Peter Hulme can be considered one of the founders of a field of literary study that investigates the encounter between Europeans and the indigenous inhabitants of the Caribbean. From his groundbreaking *Colonial encounters: Europe and the native Caribbean, 1492–1797* (1986) to his 1992 edited volume with Neil Whitehead, *Wild majesty: encounters with Caribs from Columbus to the present day*, his carefully researched and sensitively written work has often brought new insights to readings of early colonial texts, informed by an awareness of the postcolonial situation of the Caribbean today. *Remnants of conquest* is a fascinating elaboration of some of this earlier work, taking it forward into the modern period. Though starting from a seemingly narrow compass – the writings of a series of visitors to the 'Carib Reserve' on the island of Dominica – the book addresses a compelling range of questions about travel, indigenous identity and postcoloniality.

As the Afterword indicates, the book aims to 'take travel writing seriously as an object of scholarly attention'; to contribute to the richness of Caribbean historiography; to widen the parameters of postcolonial scholarship and criticism; and to demonstrate the

ways in which indigeneity is a contested terrain (pp. 309–11). The author achieves all of these aims and more, opening up new vistas for an interdisciplinary and politically engaged cultural geography.

Although it includes a useful overview of historical writing on the Caribs, the book concentrates on the modern period because ‘Too often the Caribs have been consigned to the past as a picturesque ornament to the story of the Caribbean’ (p. 5). The focus is on a set of texts by five key writers (along with some of their followers) who visited Dominica and wrote about the Caribs. The visitors under consideration include the US ornithologist Frederick Ober in 1877–1907; the British colonial administrator Henry Hesketh Bell in 1900–1921; the linguist and anthropologist Douglas Taylor in 1930–40; the novelist Jean Rhys, who returned to her native island in 1936; and the travel writer Patrick Leigh Fermor and his followers from 1945 to 1998.

Each chapter not only takes us through a literary analysis of each writers’ account of ‘visiting the Caribs’, but also provides something of a chronological history of colonial policy and postcolonial dilemmas regarding the Caribs, as well as crucial moments of conflict between Caribs and those who share their island. It both offers an interesting local perspective on some key public events in recent Dominican political history and explores the more personal lives of each writer, including the undercurrents of racial and sexual attraction that often informed their relationship to the Caribs. Throughout the book we are also introduced to some of the individuals who inhabit the Carib Reserve, in particular several of the ‘chiefs’ who played significant parts in historical events narrated by some of the visitors.

Taking a critical stance toward Western observation of indigenous peoples, Hulme shows how an idea of ‘the Carib’ has been ‘one of the staple stereotypes of Western colonial discourse’ (p. 6), whether in official, fictional or scholarly writing. Although the Caribs had been portrayed since the time of Columbus as fierce cannibals who terrorized more settled indigenous peoples, Western visitors were often quite disappointed by the ‘reality’ of meeting the present-day Carib. The book analyses how the Caribs have been persistently described as a kind of doomed remnant of colonial conquest by each generation of visitors, and it explores the ways in which physical signs of racial purity (or its lack) are read onto the bodies of the modern Carib descendants.

A key contribution of this book is its exploration of complex questions of race and ethnicity. The Caribs continue to be framed as racially problematic, even in more recent anthropological paradigms, which emphasize adaptive or instrumental notions of ethnic invention and reinvention. Are the boundaries of the Carib Reserve the only marker of their ‘difference’? Is their claim to indigeneity simply a useful political strategy? Is the self-commodification and cultural packaging of Carib ethnicity for touristic consumption a betrayal of what dignity remains to them, or is the idea of protecting an underlying ethnic essence patronizing? Hulme concludes that cultural tourism should be seen as a necessary strategy of economic survival that we are not in a position to dismiss, especially given the curious history of the Carib’s positioning as a ‘dying race’ in the Western imagination.

From these nearly forgotten and peripheral ‘remnants’ Hulme has wrested a fascinating account of colonial and postcolonial ‘visitations’. This will be a useful text for courses in

postcolonial literature, especially those that have an emphasis on travel and inter-cultural encounter. However, it also may have a broader appeal for graduate courses and research concerned with the cultural geography of race, ethnicity and indigeneity.

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**Moral geographies: ethics in a world of difference.** By D.M. Smith. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press. 2000. xi + 244 pp. £45.00 cloth; £16.99 paper. ISBN 0 7486 1278 5 cloth; 0 7486 1279 3 paper.

Geographers today frequently refer to morals, and this book gives a sense of why this is so. It also raises doubts whether we should altogether welcome this development. The attraction of morality is that it is imperious. When recognized, a moral claim trumps the law, custom, public opinion and individual preference. Morality is additionally imperious because it disregards privacy. One may honour custom in public and do as one pleases at home. One may honour the law in actions and think what one likes. But morality enters the home and the mind because, when it comes to moral infractions, every person is his or her own policeman.

This promise of power to shape human behaviour is, no doubt, one appeal moral talk has for some geographers. But this is not all. Morality purports to trump the law, but it also purports to check contradictory moral claims. Moral systems are often supposed equal, no one standing in judgement of the others. This moral relativism was developed to counter racist denigration of primitive peoples by social Darwinists, and is continued in defence of minority lifestyles. Moral discourse can, therefore, be used offensively to change behaviour or defensively to shield behaviour from criticism.

Like many on the Left, Smith would like to use it both ways: to shame the rich and powerful into taking more responsibility for the wretched, and to shield marginal groups from the moral censure of hegemonic culture. Part of his book, consequently, attempts to reconcile universal and particularistic conceptions of morality. There is much talk of 'moving back and forth', whatever that may mean, but there is also valuable discussion about the arguments between liberalism and communitarianism.

Smith is obliged to attempt this reconciliation because the academic Left has changed, moving from the concern with human welfare with which Smith began in the 1970s to a concern with difference and identity politics today. Smith's real concern remains geographical differences in human welfare, the ways geography makes and maintains these differences, and the ways these differences might be reduced by impartial benevolence and a universal moral community of all humans. He is not interested in moral geographies, as the title suggests, but in the immoral geography of inequality that presently exists and the moral geography of equality that might someday be. In addition to these theoretical discussions, there are case studies from Poland, Israel and South Africa that touch on landscape symbolism, territory and identity, and redistributive justice.

A basic problem with impartial benevolence is that it creates not a moral world, but rather a demoralized world. This is because, in supposing every person equally deserving,

impartial benevolence makes everything a person does or fails to do morally meaningless. Praiseworthy and blameworthy behaviours take their meanings from the fact that they lead to different ends, respectively perceived as good and bad. A shiftless drunk is condemned because his behaviour leads to the bad end of destitution; the assiduous teetotaler is praised because his behaviour at the very least seeks to avoid this end. Once equal outcomes are assured, however, drunkenness and sobriety, indolence and work, become morally meaningless, for one cannot praise or blame behaviour that has no consequences. This is not an argument against retribution, but against the demoralized redistribution of impartial benevolence. It is not based on the increase in bad behaviour that follows the lifting of penalties, though this is certain enough, but on the fact that human life is drained of meaning when actions are demoralized. And this leads to demoralization in the sense of lost spirit, for who can sustain spirit when every aspiration ends in the same place?

The basic problem with the universal moral community is the practical one of how these affective bonds and inclusive identities are to be forged. Viewed historically, moral communities appear to emerge from common experience of struggle to resist or overcome external threats or obstacles. So it is with the nation-state, where war has been as much cause as consequence of national solidarity. The same is true of class consciousness and solidarity. Members of religious communities grow more self-sacrificing when the community is persecuted, threatened or in tension with other communities. It is disagreeable to think, but history suggests that the goods of loyalty, self-sacrifice and solidarity are seldom achieved without some real or imagined Other, and commonly feelings of hatred for this Other, as the Party in George Orwell's *1984* understood. Practical methods to overcome this fact of social psychology are desirable, which is not to say that they exist. Rather than review authors who, for the most part, explain why it would be good if we could achieve universal moral community, Smith should have explained how it is to be achieved.

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