

## BOOK REVIEWS

**Jeffrey Sasha Davis (2015).** *The empire's edge: Militarization, resistance and transcending hegemony in the Pacific*. Athens GA: University of Georgia Press. ISBN: 978-0-8203-4456-0. US\$59.95.

Geographer Sasha Davis takes a broad regional view of the US military's past and future in the Pacific Islands and of islanders' histories of response to militarization and dispossession. He does so using insights from both spatial and postcolonial theory, insurgent political reformulations, and ethnographic experience on each of the islands whose fate has been intertwined with that of the US military.

Writing on a topic of great international concern with the recent US "pivot to Asia," Davis writes with originality and insight into the problem of militarization. He focuses on those islands that have been especially damaged, environmentally and politically, by US military activities over the course of the last century, including Bikini Atoll, Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands, Okinawa, and Hawai'i. Based on his fieldwork in those and other places in the region over the course of a decade, Davis can argue against the standard view of US military power in the region. That view focuses on US strategy and its efficacies and effects on the international balance of power; or, more precisely, on the relations among political elites in the US and the Asia-Pacific region. Years of critique of the assumption that the Pacific is an "American Lake" have not succeeded in upending such strategic narratives. The flaws of those narratives are many, but most important is that they have the effect of disappearing the many millions of people who live there. While Davis draws attention to how US actors have thought and behaved, he focuses more on the damage their presence has wrought and the countervailing forms of thinking that Pacific people have developed in response to their marginalization and in imagining possible futures that include less militarized homelands.

Davis' opening move is to contrast the hegemony-seeking moves of militarists in the US, China, Japan, and elsewhere (but mainly the US) with the affinity-seeking moves of anti-militarist activists. He attempts to denaturalize the idea that international politics will always be about who will dominate whom. He looks, by contrast, at the strategies, successes, and challenges of those who act on the basis of solidarity, respect, and networking for purposes of mutual aid. He sees the militarization of the region as a consequence of the ideological assumption that hegemony is nature's way of organizing itself, rather than as a consequence of the inevitable competition for power among international actors, as the realists would have it. He draws on recent attempts by geographers and theorists of the state to deconstruct the securitization of trade (along with virtually everything else). This is a necessary analytic move towards both understanding and undermining the US Navy's claim that disruption of trade routes is an existential threat to the US, and that it serves the Pacific and the entire global community by militarily protecting this "vital system."

He argues that the military colonialism that has afflicted the Pacific has been justified by this argument as well as by a number of other myths about the Pacific that he details. They include the idea, common to military base official pronouncements, that anything standing in the way of their operations on and from those bases represents *encroachment*, reversing the historical sequence of who encroached on whom. Other myths include the formulation of the islands as alternately wastelands or Edens. His analysis here is particularly incisive given his research exposure to scientists and other internationals working on the ecology and possible

repopulation of Bikini Atoll who unselfconsciously reformulate that atoll's nuclear radiation-deserted beaches and fish-teeming reef as the "silver lining" to the atomic bombing. Bikini's "pristine nature" is said by those scientists to require protection from the Marshall Islanders who might return there and despoil it. Some of his most effective writing describes the environmental devastation on Bikini and elsewhere and the distorting myths that prevent many from seeing that devastation for the product of militarization that it is. He also draws parallels between the colonial politics of space shared by ecological parks and other tourist destinations and such military areas.

*The Empire's Edge* ends with a reflexive and ethnographic account of the author's visit to the island of Tinian. He gives a poignant account of his encounter with Atomic Bomb Pits #1 and #2 and, later, with the Hiroshima Peace Museum, to bring us to one of his final points on the always too-hidden connection between bases and battlefield carnage. Even here, he suggests the possibilities for reformulated political life that are possible if the Pacific is presented "as a place of life, not just a militarized logistics space of global trade or the site of someone else's profit-seeking 'vital system'" (p. 132). Along with social movement organizing, this is a key route, he argues, to affinity politics and demilitarization.

A short review cannot do justice to Davis' rich set of observations and reformulations of standard thinking on issues of militarization, the state, and Pacific islander experiences of mythic and physical violence. It will be a book many islanders will want to read, and which many college instructors will want to consider for their undergraduate or graduate social science courses on the Pacific Rim, politics, space, militarization and the environment.

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**Chiara Mazzucchelli (2015). *The heart and the island: A critical study of Sicilian American literature*. Albany NY: State University of New York Press, 197pp. ISBN: 978-1-4384-5923-3, US\$85.**

The Sicilian diaspora in North America prompted the peculiar evolution of a strongly rooted social identity that led to the birth of a cultural hybridization with American society. This process, which unraveled through subsequent waves of emigration/immigration since the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, is captured in Sicilian American literature. Chiara Mazzucchelli brilliantly explains and tracks this evolution in her analysis of four well-known second-generation Sicilian American authors.

Mazzucchelli is herself a Sicilian native who landed in the US in 2003 for her doctoral studies in comparative studies at Florida Atlantic University. Her PhD dissertation later became her book: *The heart and the Island*. This explains the strongly academic nature and style of this well-documented publication of hers, whose enthusiasts may therefore be found mainly among scholars. The layman may find it less appealing if not provided with a vivid interest for Italian (or more specifically Sicilian) American literature.

The book starts with an extensive introduction to the Sicilian cultural historical background and its distinctiveness as compared to 'mainland' Italian culture, particularly of

Northern Italy. A sociopolitical approach explains the Sicilian social identity, as well as the Sicilian diaspora to America and its tight and lingering links with the European motherland. The book's introduction is a dissertation on its own that lays relevant guidelines for a better understanding of the chapters that follow.

Chapter one is devoted to "Sicily and its ripples" intended as the determinants that gave birth to what Mazzucchelli calls *siciliamericanità*, i.e. the way of being a Sicilian and an American at once. The two cultural dimensions are originally far apart, but are life-compelled to converge into a unique self-perception, where conflicting cultural tendencies ultimately learn to merge or, at the least, to co-exist. Among the most significant determinants, Mazzucchelli includes Sicily's island nature, which conditions physical and social events in distinct ways. The Mafia and its historical role in Sicilian society are other social-shaping factors that are very much present in Sicilians' self-perception as a whole, as well as in the Sicilian and the Sicilian American literatures. On the other hand, several Sicilian authors, such as Sciascia, Pirandello, Maraini and others, are discussed as elements of a cultural fabric that directly or indirectly influenced their Sicilian American "relatives". In chapter two, Mazzucchelli focuses on Ben Morreale, a second-generation Sicilian American born in the 1920s. Morreale spent part of his childhood in Racalmuto, Sicily, which allowed him to inherit the local vernacular culture and to be an interpreter of the dual identity of a Sicilian American, with all its contradictions and need for making sense out of them. His work is therefore a quintessential interpretation of *siciliamericanità*. In chapter three, Mazzucchelli discusses Jerre Mangione, who digs into his personal experience for explaining to the American public what it means to be a second-generation Sicilian American. In this regard, Mangione differs from Morreale who rather plays a role of interpreter of *siciliamericanità*. The deep feeling of being an "outsider" to both Italy and the United States becomes a constant struggle for self-acceptance and understanding. Here is where Mangione try to explain Sicilian culture to non-Sicilians in an attempt to correct the negative impact of the mafia on the image of Sicily and its people. Humour and impersonal tones are often used to transport his narrative. In chapter four, Mazzucchelli analyses the work of Rose Romano, whose poetry is also rooted in the spirit of ethnic Sicilian islandness. However, her stances on identity issues are permeated with a contestation of traditional roles. By celebrating her pride in her lesbian identity, she challenges the institution of the family, so important in the Sicilian social organization and culture. Romano's work also exposes and defies the socially constructed nature of race categorization as a different facet of discrimination. Romano's "political" contribution is therefore one that subverts the arbitrariness of the traditional values of her ethnic background. Mazzucchelli devotes chapter five to Gioia Timpanelli, a writer and oral storytelling practitioner who bridges *siciliamericanità* with the American culture. As Mazzucchelli argues, Timpanelli transcends time and place by twisting folktales into a universal medium.

The book is elegantly written, although some redundancies may prompt the reader to gloss over some sections discussing subjects already treated in previous chapters or sections. The discourse is sometimes lengthy, particularly when describing in detail works of the authors under scrutiny. This being said, the four main authors that Mazzucchelli has focused on are exemplary facets of a multifarious Sicilian American cultural identity and of how it may be perceived and internalized by its adherents. Many Sicilian Americans may then find Mazzucchelli's book to be an interesting introspective exercise, both as individuals and as members of a big family defined by a common heritage. On the other hand, non Sicilian

Americans would find the book a revealing opportunity for understanding the complexity of this ethnic reality mostly and unjustly known through its stereotypes.

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**Jione Havea (Ed.) (2015). *Islands, islanders, and the Bible: RumInations*. Society of Biblical Literature. Semeia studies, No. 77. Atlanta GA: SBL Press. ISBN: 978-1-5898-3946-5. US\$35.00.**

Most of the articles in this book come from papers presented at different meetings of “Islands, Islanders, and Scriptures” (the former Society of Biblical Literature group “Islands, Islanders, and Scriptures”) over the past six years. The work can then be rightly considered as the first anthology of exegetical texts written from the peculiar island-thinking and -feeling perspective expressed in a twofold theme: “biblical texts are like islands, and readers are like islanders” (p. 19).

The geographical origins or teaching place of the authors is worth noticing: five from (or teaching in) the USA, four from the Pacific, two from the UK, four individuals connected with Jamaica, Barbados, Indonesia/Japan, China, who thus offer the reader a worldwide point of view.

The structure of the book deliberately follows the flow of the sea, either expanding or contracting, forming, according the preface, “three clusters of waves.” After a meaningful introduction which is an attempt to sketch a kind of geographic outline of island hermeneutics by locating each contribution on a map, a panel of authors is invited, at the end of the book, in a “second” and “third wave,” to read some of the articles backwards in order to open up more questions. Very suggestive in the whole publication is the use of the metaphorical strength of the semantics of the sea as well as the use of numerous plays on words, opening new and mindful horizons.

Summarizing every article in this book would be impossible within the confines of a book review. I will just try to highlight some key points within them.

The introduction (pp. 1-21), written by Steed Vernyl Davidson, Margaret Aymer, and Jione Havea, titled “RumInations,” offers a perfect example of this use of language skills. “RUMInations” points first to the necessity of understanding islands differently from places that are “remote, unoccupied, isolated, and importantly small” (p. 3). Island spaces generate different representations and focus on the islander’s perspective in order to evaluate what can be considered peripheries or margins. Then “rum-I-nations” (p. 8) explores the dialectic relationship between communal and individual island thinking/feeling. This part raises the issue of community in biblical studies: a simple fact is that a “scientific” Bible reading belongs to a minority of people in the world, while the majority is involved in a community of faith and culture. Furthermore “rumiNATIONS” (p. 13) deals with postcolonial themes like domination, nationalism and tribalism. Finally, the editors insist on the plurality of the slants (“*iSlands*”) proposed in the book more to open reflection and practice in island hermeneutics than to answer questions definitively.

In “Islandedness, Paul, and John of Patmos” (pp. 25-36) Margaret Aymer, who was born in the Barbados and migrated to the US, considers the island as “diaspora place” (p. 28)

due to migration. From this perspective three reactions are possible for the islander in regard to the “host culture”: alienation, reaction, or accommodation. Applied to the New Testament, John of Patmos could be identified as a typical representation of alienation, whereas Paul could be seen as a perfect representation of accommodation, resuming both Jewish and Gentile traditions. Applied to the Biblical studies today, Aymer asks: “what is the nature or our *marronnage* from the newly forming discourse around islander/island or nissiology?” (p. 36).

In “Building on Sand: Shifting Readings of Genesis 38 and Daniel 8” (pp. 37-55), Steed Vernyl Davidson lists four qualities related to sand: it is unstable, that is revisionist (p. 39); it has a “doubled quality”: “Sandscapes are inherently open space but at the same time bounded spaces” (p. 43); it “exists as the product of tidal movements” (45) and it is a very good building material (p. 49)! On this hermeneutical basis, Davidson interprets the struggle between the goat and the ram in Daniel 8 as a shift in the issue of domination and violence and considers the text as both “engaging and distancing” (p. 43).

Writing “Island-Marking Texts: Engaging the Bible in Oceania” (pp. 57-64), Nasili Vaka'uta pleads for a contextualised reading of the Bible, starting from Tongan cultural concepts such as *lolenga motu* (doing things in the way of the islands) - which is a variation of the most widespread *vaka pasefika* or *Pacific Way* - and *fale o kainga* (the house where reciprocity is celebrated). Struggling against the “epistemological domination that dictates biblical scholarship” (p. 58), Vaka'uta recognises a progression in that matter through postcolonial and ecological Bible reading. But the peculiar situation of some Pacific islands is to be taken into account: colonialism is not finished, and “protecting nature” would be better understood as protecting islanders “at the mercy of nature” (p. 58).

Mosese Ma'ilo seems to follow Vaka'uta's outlines in “Celebrating Hybridity in Island Bibles: Jesus, the Tamaalepō (Child of the Dark) in Mataio 1:18-26” (pp. 65-76). Jesus' problematic filiation could better be expressed in a Samoan context through the expression *tamaalepo* and *tamaaaiga*: the first expression refers to a child born after “having sex in the dark” (p. 72), outside of marriage, whereas the second one refers to “a person of large family connection,” as Matthew's genealogy indicates. Missionary misunderstanding of Samoan language created an artificial standard in Bible translation. Most desirable from an island perspective is an “in between” translation characterised by hybridity.

In “Creolizing Hermeneutics: a Caribbean Invitation” (pp. 77-95), Althea Spencer Miller offers a literary point of view. She shows how the Mariniqian novelist Edouard Glissant – heir of the French “Négritude” movement – criticises a “totalizing, systematized, linear progressive Eurocentric History” (p. 82) and stands for a disruptive process of creolization “filled with ruptures, options, alternatives, multiplicities, contradictions, inventions and creativity”(82). Creolization consists in rejecting mimicry or simple hybridity in order to free subversion and transformation's processes.

Through “Gaelic psalmody and a theology of place in the Western Isles of Scotland” (pp. 97-113), Grant Macaskill leads the reader to colder shores. He shows how some biblical names of places have been replaced in order to a deeper involvement of the people in salvation history. He considers this peculiar form of hymns as a “symbiosis of practice and place” (p. 105) furnishing “a theology that takes seriously the place of place in God's relationship to the world” (p. 112).

J. Richard Middleton – “Islands in the sun: overtures to a Caribbean Creation theology” (pp. 115-134) – criticizes the distinction between history and nature which comes from Pico della Mirandola and was overtaken by Karl Barth. We need to rediscover the

holistic vision of God's intention to renew and redeem creation (p. 121). As *imago dei*, humans must "work and protect the garden" (p. 122), but not in a spiritual way insisting on salvation after death as churches most often do. They rather may prefer a popular way, celebrating the beauty of creation in a Caribbean mood as Peter Tosh or Bob Marley do in their tunes, characterised by a "creation-oriented eschatology for ethics" (p. 129).

In "The Island of Tyre: the exploitation of peasants in the regions of Tyre and Galilee" (pp. 135-145), Hisako Kinukawa explores the story of Jesus and the Syro-Phoenician woman (Mark 7:24-30) and suggests a distinction between the city of Tyre, which may have been an island before Alexander the Great, and the rural area of Tyre and Sidon. Understood from the background of a social class conflict – the peasants exploited by the rich merchants of the Island city – the words of the woman about the dogs under the table and the crumbs take on a new meaning: "She asks Jesus to be consistent in putting the primacy of the marginalized wherever they are" (p. 144). Kinukawa explains the use of the feeding metaphor by Jesus and its link to the sickness of the woman's daughter. Belonging to an expansionist island, Japan, the author confesses how this concern helped her to understand this story in a different way.

Starting from a Pacific islander point of view, Jione Havea in "Sea-ing Ruth with Joseph's mistress" (pp. 147-161) uses many plays on words to underline the flowing characteristic of a story: "every story, text, and *talanoa* [story, telling, conversation] is a floating land, a drifting home, a routing memory, and a rooting desire in a sea of stories" (p. 149). Havea tries to read in a similar flow, and not in parallel, the episodes of Ruth and Potiphar's wife named the "mistress of Joseph," two "cultural outsiders to the dominating Israelite flow of the Hebrew Bible" (p. 149). Both are stories of desire and refusal with strong sexual connotations, maybe even for Joseph himself and Potiphar (p. 157). The author calls for the reader to "open up the landlockedness of biblical interpretation" (p. 159).

Roland Boer opens the "second wave" of this book with his article "Sand, surf and scriptures" (pp. 165-175). He raises three issues related to Davidson's, Vaka'uta's, and Middleton's contributions: what would be the "role of negatively coded islands and resistance; the problem of biblical thalassophobia and island readings, the challenge of texts that are not respectful, wise ... humble," and how to deal with "texts that counter a biblical theology of this-wordly and natural salvation" (p. 174).

Aliou C. Niang's "Islandedness, translation and creolization" (pp. 177-184) is a re-reading of Aymer's, Ma'ilo's and Miller's papers. If John of Patmos rejects accommodation whereas Paul searches for it, both of them share the same apocalyptic vision: "If John speaks of the fall of Babylon, Paul implicitly expected it" (p. 179). On the issue of hybridity, raised by Ma'ilo, Niang asks for a clearer distinction between "bilingualism" and "linguistic identity" (p. 181). Addressing Miller's creolization, the author suggests that the book of Psalms or Lamentations could be read in this perspective.

In "The Wrong kind of island?: Notes from a 'scept'red isle'" (pp. 185-197), Andrew Mein reacts as an islander belonging – like Kinukawa – to the colonizers. Paying particular attention to the papers of Havea, Kinukawa and Macaskill, he considers that the Bible played a considerable role in the colonial enterprise (p. 185), and if the sea could be seen as a means to connect people (so Havea), it remains historically nonetheless a means of conquest. He understands well Kinukawa's awareness of colonisation but he shows at the same time how the peculiar place of the Bible in the British culture – which is of course quite different in Japan – reinforced the trend of oppression for example through hymnology (in contrast to Macaskill). Replacing "Tarshish" with "Sheba" and "Seba" with "Europe," "India" and

“Persia” the tune “Jesus shall reign” (Psalm 72) could easily be changed into “Britain shall reign,” subverting in this way Macaskill’s positive appreciation of “geographical location” (pp. 193-195).

The three articles of the “third wave” – Elaine M. Wainwright’s “Third Wave Reading” (pp. 201-205); Daniel Smith-Christopher’s “Thinking on islands” (pp. 207-216) and Randall C. Bailey’s “Writing from another “room-in-ating” place” (pp. 217-225) – refer to the nine contributions shaping the first wave. Due to considerations of space in this review I will make just a few comments: Wainwright (reading Aymer) notices that “she raises the challenging question for all contextual interpretations: what are the parameters that make for unique interpretation?” (p. 203). Smith-Christopher underlines the “unique perspective of these *different* island people.” Adopting Miller’s point of view on creolization, he makes an analogy with the Egyptian wisdom in the Bible, which could be seen as a kind of “philosophical creolization” (p. 211). Bailey, though applauding “the writers of this volume as they forge ahead developing and contouring islander hermeneutics” (p. 223), is perhaps the most critical voice in the evaluation of the whole, feeling that some articles could go further in crossing marginalized hermeneutics, dialoguing for instance with black, Asian or queer methodological approaches to biblical texts.

As an island scholar and historian who lived a couple of years within a Pacific Islander community in New Caledonia, but who is now teaching on the mainland and in a French speaking context, I would propose a short comment to conclude. What surprises me most is the wide range of theoretical sources used by the authors, from Pico della Mirandola to Bob Marley and Hegel... How can one reconcile such different approaches quoted in this volume, such as those by Eric Hobsbawm and Cornel West? The suspicion of history (see Glissant in Miller) as linear, continuous, imperialistic, and so on, is such a caricature that a fair debate which would take into account the legitimacy of what Ricoeur calls the “conflict of the interpretations” seems impossible. Furthermore, some areas of the world seem to remain in the shadow of these studies – such as Madagascar as well as all the islands in the far North and their communities. I also have in mind the Mediterranean islands (mentioned in the Bible or not!) and their orthodox traditions bearing holistic perspectives: how could they be integrated into a worldwide island hermeneutics?

Nevertheless, this anthology constitutes without doubt a milestone in biblical and cross-cultural studies. Readers will hope that the flow will continue and let a new volume rise up from the depth of the sea.

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**Jørgen Rasmussen (2015). *Fast grund under fødderne. Ø-filosofiske pejlemærker* (In Danish). [*Solid ground under one's feet: Island-philosophical indicators*]. København: Forlaget Politisk Revy. 184pp. ISBN: 978-87-7378-352-8. Price: DKK 248.**

Denmark was once a country of and for seafarers. Theirs was a cosmopolitan world, centred around seas, ships and ports. During the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, Denmark turned inwards. The typical Dane shifted from being a widely travelled seafarer to a jovial farmer. Denmark became an island nation that lost sight of its islands, now firmly equipped with a continental self-image.

Denmark's 500 or so islands make up a third of its total land area. Around 70 of these are inhabited. While a handful of the largest ones (Sjælland, Fyn, Lolland, and Falster) are densely populated – a majority of the country's population live on them – the rest are rapidly declining. Since the 1930s, the 27 islands that make up the Association of Small Danish islands have lost half of their total population. Just since 2003, every seventh islander has moved away. In 2013, less than 5000 remained. Recently there have been suggestions to discontinue public services on these small islands, move their entire populations to the mainland and use the island buildings as holiday homes for tourists, students and artists. As expected, island spokespeople have protested and highlighted the islands' historic, social and cultural importance.

It is from the perspective of Danish small islands that Jørgen Rasmussen sets out to discuss a number of large 'island-philosophical' issues, such as the relationships between culture, space and place, islandness, remoteness, marginalisation, borders, boundedness, size, and scale, issues that the author sees as especially prominent on small islands. Rasmussen is himself a resident of the small island of Omø (146 inhabitants) in the Great Belt, the strait between the large islands of Sjælland and Fyn. So, one should not be surprised that, through this text, he steps up to serve as a spokesperson for Danish small islanders. In the first of the book's three chapters, the author asks what would happen if the normative continental narrative of the modern world were to be set aside and islands were to instead be approached not as exceptions but as the rule.

Through a mixture of existential ruminations; polemical standpoints; insights; and arguments from social psychology, sociology, geography, philosophy, and islands studies, the author proceeds to contemplate what it means to be a (Danish) small islander in an urban, continental world. The concluding chapter, 'Continents do not exist', arrives at the insight that every piece of land, whether small or large, from Omø to the planet itself, can be islanded, depending on one's perspective. It is from such a position that the author suggests the book to be read, as a collection of loosely organised arguments, considerations, and thoughts concerning the notion of 'the island', islandness, and the position and status of islands in global socio-cultural systems. This leads the author to a style and format in which academic prose is mixed with a more personal, essayistic strand, resulting in a sometimes rather puzzling text, which drifts freely between the general and the specific; the abstract and the concrete; the theoretical and the empirical; and between a limited number of Danish small islands, the islands of the world, and 'the island' as idea and metaphor.

Rasmussen's point of departure and main argument is that the possibilities of Denmark as an island nation have been neither fully understood nor developed in modern times. Islands, he proposes, possess a metaphysical power that generates new ideas and perspectives. At the same time, islands embrace, confine, and isolate their inhabitants. This ambivalence, the author concludes, leads to a sharpened experience of life and a heightened experience of the

lifeworld as a whole, which in turn leads to an enhanced feeling of authenticity, something he thinks is easily lost in modern urban life.

The discussion is wrapped around three dimensions or perspectives: small islands as nature, *logos*; as perceptions and ideas, *ethos*; and as particular forms of life, *bios*. Throughout, large modern and continental urban centres serve as the counterpoint against which small islands contemplations are mirrored.

Early on, the book discusses islands as nature/*logos*. Island geographies underline the isolated, remote and bounded, but such factors must be understood as relative. And islands are surrounded not only by seas but also by ideas, images, and narratives. Their logos is complex, ambivalent, even contradictory, which is part of their metaphysical power, since people are attracted to the richness inherent in such contradictions. Islands as ideas/*ethos* relates to the dynamics of an “insular gravity” consisting of three elements: surveyability, remoteness, and isolation, on a scale from low to high. Islands represent a third space – neither sea nor continent – and are thus often placed in a diminishing discourse and a deficit model, valued for what they lack and are not. Islandness is discussed as an interplay between demarcation and limitation, constituted by contrast to the surroundings. All sorts of spaces that contrast meaningfully to their surroundings can be islanded: in the end, an ‘island’ is a difference that makes a difference. Indeed, ‘the island’, Rasmussen emphasises, is an archetypical metaphor so embedded in ordinary people’s understandings, that it can be difficult to experience the island directly as anything but exotically different.

The forms of life/*bios* on Danish small islands are today threatened by a functional drain, which however forces islanders to develop new resources, insights and solutions on a daily basis. According to Rasmussen, this is precisely what makes these small islands important for Denmark (and the world as a whole), as sites of new insight and action, which may help produce “a culturally and socially more nuanced and unpredictable Denmark.” A hypothesis and perhaps a conclusion is that islands, by being bounded, encourage a quite specific interplay between space and place, which leads to a feeling of living in a centre.

In many places, Rasmussen produces illuminating and enlightening formulations, introducing interesting perspectives and providing food for thought. Apt empirical observations, mostly based on the author’s own experience of life on Omø, are however also mixed with sweeping generalizations in an often confusing manner and perhaps with too little attention to given to the diversity of experiences provided by small islands around the world.

But this does not detract from the book’s merits. What lingers after a careful reading of the book is a lament, a regret that the Danish islands, especially the smaller ones, have so entirely disappeared from the horizon of today’s Denmark. The book offers a persistent plea to reinvigorate island perspectives in the discussion of how to achieve a sustainable future for Denmark, and indeed for the rest of world.

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**Mark J. Rauzon (2016). *Isles of amnesia: The history, geography and restoration of America's forgotten Pacific islands*. Honolulu HI: University of Hawai'i Press. 234 pp. ISBN: 978-0824846794. US\$24.99.**

Mark Rauzon's book on ecological restoration in the central Pacific includes informative accounts of many of the small islands and atolls across the region. The book is filled with personal vignettes, illustrations, and historical tales of events that took place on some of the lesser-known islands in the Pacific. With chapters on Ta'u Island and Rose Atoll in American Samoa, Kiritimati, Palmyra, Howland, Baker, Johnston Atoll, Wake Island, Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands; the book focuses on US territorial possessions (with the exception of Kiritimati which is part of Kiribati). One thing that is not made abundantly clear from the book's title is that much of the book is about descriptions of bird population protection programs as well as rat and cat eradication efforts on these islands. For biologists interested in the history of invasive species management and pest eradication in the Pacific there is a wealth of interesting first-hand accounts from an author that clearly has extensive on-the-ground experience and – due to the fact that he has worked on so many of these islands – a unique perspective on how these individual islands fit into larger regional ecologies.

The style of writing is very descriptive and the author weaves historical accounts with his personal experiences. In some chapters there is more emphasis on personal stories of eradication (especially in chapters on American Samoa, Jarvis, Howland and Baker, and Wake Island). Some of the stories are quite graphic first-hand accounts of blasting cats with shotguns as well as less bloody examples of rat control programs using poisoned bait. In other chapters there is more emphasis on historical events ranging from early European shipwrecks, to the development of outposts for trans-Pacific flights in the 1930s, to the ravages of World War Two, to the post-war years of biological, chemical and nuclear weapons testing on these islands.

While the book is filled with interesting information and stories, there were some things that I found somewhat unsettling about the book. Namely, how US conquest and control over these islands is represented. The author does do a great job going into empirical detail on some of the horrible events that have gone on in these areas (especially the accounts of the ways ecological studies of bird migrations went hand-in-hand with US military chemical and biological weapons testing in the region). Despite the inclusion of some criticisms of military operations and US governance, there are places in the book where controversial issues of US sovereignty over these islands are somewhat naturalized and US control is seen as either a given or a blessing – especially when it means the islands fall under the jurisdiction of US Fish and Wildlife or other US agencies. This glossing over of issues of political and cultural appropriation in the region is not helped by the author's occasional use of overdramatic language that reveals some cultural and nationalist biases – or at least does not take notice of the potential problems of American representations of this politically contested region. For example, with reference to US control over the Mariana Trench, he says, "America's manifest destiny rides under the Asian continent" (p. 228) and he adds that life in the trench "finds safe harbour under the American flag" (p. 235). On page 7, I was a bit startled to read the line, "Waters that conjure the aqueous humour of God's blue eyes" (Really, God has blue eyes?). It is comments like these, as well as the focus on US-based wildlife management schemes, that make a reader realize that this is essentially an American story told in Micronesian and Polynesian places.

It may be that representations like the ones just mentioned are meant to be taken lightly, and are deployed mostly for aesthetic reasons. They did, however, cause me to pause and think a little deeper on the fact that many of the ecological restoration regimes being put into place in these islands are US-centric enterprises saturated with assumptions that American scientists and bureaucracies know what is best for Pacific islands ecologies. While this may not be particularly problematic in places like Howland, Baker and Jarvis; it is quite different when we are talking about the US federalization of landscape management in Guam, American Samoa and the Northern Marianas. It draws forth the question: what might decolonized environmental management look like on these islands? Or, what might an indigenous critique of these American programs look like? While this book does not claim to get into that territory of cultural and political critique, it does seem to be a direction ripe for further research.

Those critiques aside, there is much of value in Rauzon's book. First, it is an interesting, thought-provoking and entertaining read based on many decades of experience in these unique places. It is also a good resource for scholars interested in these lightly-studied islands. Furthermore, the book is especially useful for those interested in how landscape and ecological change happens quickly in these isolated places surrounded by vast oceans.

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**Ishihara M., Hoshino, E., and Fujita, Y. (Eds.) (2016). *Self-determinable development of small islands*. Okinawa, Japan: Springer Japan for International Institute of Okinawan Studies. ISBN: 978-981-10-0130-7 hbk; ISBN: 978-981-10-0132-1 (eBook).**

What is the role of edited volumes in the current scientific writing landscape? They are not as rigorously reviewed as journals and periodicals, but they provide an opportunity to publish texts that are not as dry and fact-bearing; they can instead summarize recent developments in a discipline or a research area and provide overviews that would not otherwise be easily published.

The volume in hand is on "Self-determinable development of small islands" produced from a collective research project, funded by the Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology. The issue is significant to island scholars and development economists and especially in East Asia/ Oceania, with many small and remote islands and histories of patronage and colonialism. Small islands are almost by definition 'open systems' due to their size and (often) remoteness. In this sense, "self-determinable" development presents even greater challenges to them than to other islands or countries in an era of globalization of goods, people and capital flows. Especially since the main economic activity for most is tourism, an activity that is volatile and dependent on a wide variety of factors, almost all of which are external to the islands.

I anticipated therefore a fascinating read. It was fascinating, but not always illuminating in the direction of the title. I would expect that the editors would set an agenda from the Introduction and then bent the contributions to this agenda. Here, the contributions sometimes felt as if they had a life of their own. Some sections, e.g. the fifth part on

languages, are rather loosely linked with the central theme, while even others that are thematically very relevant – such as the international context and ocean policies sections – failed to address the issue directly. In the end, the reader deserves an editorial that stitches the different pieces together and discusses “self-determinable” development.

Let us examine the different sections. The first chapter (“US military bases and human security in Okinawa”) by E. Hoshino, discusses issues of ‘human security’ in an island setting. Islands are considered as “safe places” in general, but the example offered here, that of Okinawa and the US army bases, tells a different story. The most interesting part is the discussion of the compensation that islanders received for hosting the base and the dilemma of “ending compensation” and moving towards higher “self-determination” of local development. Some of its findings feel odd: I do not feel that this is a clear case of ‘human’ against ‘state’ security. Yes, Okinawa residents may rightfully feel second-class and unheard, and this is a common sentiment among many people in the world that host dangerous, damaging or polluting facilities. ‘Compensation’ – in jobs and resulting incomes, in this case – can be considered as a form of ‘bribery’. I expected the author to stress the international relevance of this example and the balance between ‘human security’ and compensation.

The second chapter (“Formation and development of an Okinawan global network using an island hub”) by H. Miyauchi, discusses immigration from ‘remote’ and ‘marginal’ islands in Japan and elsewhere. This is another typical development on islands globally (e.g. there are today more islanders from Kalymnos in Greece living in Florida, USA, rather than on the island). Immigrant diaspora networks are vital to the original island. The chapter’s detailed description is probably of interest to locals, but less so to international readers. The concluding section though is very interesting: can these networks (‘hubs’) be considered as ‘self-determined’ with so many outside influences?

The third chapter (“Ryukyu Kingdom diplomacy with Japan and the Ming and Qing Dynasties”) by K. Tomiyama, takes us to earlier times. The description of the diplomatic and political relations with China and the rest of Japan make a fascinating read; but the reader wonders if this would have been better placed at the beginning of the book and the section. A map would be helpful here (as in other places of the book).

The fourth chapter (“Language revitalization efforts in the Ryukyus”) by M. Ishihara, discusses modern efforts to keep the rich linguistic heritage in the Okinawa region alive. Alas, little effort is provided by the author to place this – an important local development – in a broader island context.

The fifth chapter (“Geopolitics, self-determination, and China’s rise in Oceania”) opens a new section in the book on international perspectives. It does so with a bang. Wesley-Smith’s text on the rising role of China in Oceania, besides being an interesting read, tackles head-on the self-determination issue of small islands which are influenced (whether they want it or not) by a big player (p. 93). China is treated as such a player, replacing other Western ‘partners’ (or patrons) such as the US, Australia and former colonial powers (UK, France). In such an area, where ‘remoteness’ and ‘small size’ have a new meaning for islands, self-determination seems to be rather a goal than a reality and the rise of China underlines this.

Chapter six (“The similarities and differences between tensions over the Senkaku islands and Dokdo island”) reminds us of the strategic importance of islands and their place in disputes over sovereignty in land, air and sea. Given the importance of marine resources now and in the future, such disputes are insightful. The author presents two South-east Asia examples and succinctly summarizes the history and current state of play. In a time when self-

determination is a trend in many areas of the world where 19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> century borders (sometimes drawn hastily by colonial powers or by international treaties after wars) are disputed and often re-drawn, small islands keep being subjected to outside forces and influences. This debate is well served by the detached and critical approach of the author.

Chapter seven (“Taiwan’s East and South China Sea policies and the US factor”) by C-Y. Lin, takes us on a history trip to Taiwan, China, Vietnam and the Philippines. Besides the rich information on the complex political and historical decisions involving 6-7 different local players and the US, an underlying feeling behind this timeline is that, for small islands that are located ‘between’ countries, it may be impossible to self-determine their place and identity. In my view, this whole section fails to engage properly with the wider discussion and remains confined to a country (and not island) driven point of view. It is national perspectives that dominate issues of self-determination.

Part III (‘Economic and social development’) starts with a long chapter on the ‘development potential’ of Small Island Developing States (SIDS) by T. Umemura. The author discusses changes in the international economic environment due to globalization that affect SIDS, followed by a review of the potential for (private sector) development in Oceania SIDS with a focus on fishing and tourism. Lacking here is a discussion of population dynamics, a factor that affects development prospects in any area, but especially in SIDS.

Chapter nine (“Small island destinations and international tourism: market concentration and distance vulnerabilities”) comes as a surprise for more than one reason: the focus shifts geographically, as it is for small islands all over the world. It discusses tourism vulnerability in these islands, but only statistically and in relation to “objective” criteria (e.g. distance, economic dependence on tourism, dependence on major markets). Lacking is some effort to discuss this from the islands’ point of view: how much power do they have to change these variables and criteria? How truly vulnerable are they in the face of their dependence on tourism, directly and indirectly?

Chapter 10 (“Self-determination for the communication policy in the Pacific Islands”) by R. Hayakawa is closer to the main theme of the book: it addresses self-determination in terms of communication for islands and then presents the case of Vanuatu. How can small islands make their voice heard in a global audience? Colonial pasts can sometimes provide a more sympathetic audience, but bring along a heavy baggage and make self-determination difficult. This is a very good contribution; a gem for island studies.

The 4<sup>th</sup> part of the book deals with “Ocean Policies”. The first chapter here is Chapter 11 (“Management of islands and their surrounding ocean areas and Japan’s ocean policy under the new ocean regime” by H. Terashima. It reviews international conventions and agreements that govern oceans and then discusses the Japanese response to these and its ocean policies. The text does well in reviewing how these policies and agreements relate to the elusive self-determined development of the small islands in Oceania.

Chapter 12 (“The US National Ocean Policy: priorities, benefits and limitations in the insular Pacific”) by C.E. Ostrander presents ocean policies from the US perspective. The principles of this policy (pp. 225-226) sound almost too good to be true; this is acknowledged by the author. Although potential benefits and pitfalls are presented and some are discussed, two aspects are weakly treated: the impact on small islands, especially those not directly under US jurisdiction; and the self-determined development of small islands. The US has dominated large parts of the Pacific for seven decades and has acted as a patron to many Oceanic islands.

How will this policy play out with strategic, economic and even military engagements in the region and competing policies? Perhaps the author could have offered some insights.

The last chapter of this section (13 “Challenges and opportunities in managing remote islands: the Australian practice”) by M.A. Palma-Robles presents Australia’s Ocean Policy, another major player in the area. Again, the presentation is thorough and provides many insights to the reader. As with the rest of the section though, this wealth of information does not really inform self-determinable development. The chapter describes (again) the status of islands under international law and sustainable development of small islands (pp. 234-237) and then addresses (pp. 243-246) the environmental and development-related challenges to their management. “Management plans”, tailored to each of these, are supposed to provide a guide for “all policies, decision-making and operations in an island” (p. 247). But: who should determine these plans, and how are these to take into account what has been described in previous sections of the book? How are they to become “self-determinable”?

The final part of the volume deals with “indigenous languages”, with chapters on the Chamorro language of Guam (14), Ainu languages of northern Japan (15) and Welsh language policy (16). All are interesting reads, but none managed to really contribute to the overarching theme.

“Self-determinable” development is critical to island studies and still relatively unexplored in the literature and this is highlighted by many of the contributions of this text. A steady editorial hand would have tied the chapters closer and better together; this would have benefited the volume greatly. And the book feels rather uneven and not well balanced. Nonetheless, the text informed me of many issues, while some chapters are also quite enjoyable reads. In this respect, it is a successful and welcome contribution. Students and scholars of South-East Asia, Australia, Japan and Oceanic islands will much benefit from it. In this sense, and in spite of its hefty price, the volume is an interesting and worthy addition to any University and personal library.

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**Jean-Louis Fournel (2012). *La cité du soleil et les territoires des hommes: Le savoir du monde chez Campanella*. Paris: Albin Michel. 368pp. ISBN: 978-222620903-0. €24.00**

Tommaso Campanella’s *The City of the Sun* is one of the most well-known early modern utopias. Written originally in 1602 and published for the first time in 1623, the work is a ‘poetical dialogue’ between a Genoese seafarer who had accompanied Columbus on his voyages, and his host, a Grand Master of the Knights Hospitaller. The guest gives a vivid and detailed account of the ‘ideal republic’ situated on the island of Taprobana, the historical modern-day Sri Lanka or Sumatra. He describes the city’s architecture, fortifications and government, and its inhabitants’ beliefs, values, customs, education and communication with other peoples. The Solarians welcome visitors, engage in commercial activities with foreigners, and are capable of communicating in all the known languages, the grammatical rules of which are inscribed on the city’s walls. A careful reading of Campanella’s utopia will show that the island is not used as a literary trope denoting an ontological isolation or an escape from reality. On the contrary, rather than being a paradise-like getaway (a

commonplace portrayal of islands), this fictional island is a place of open knowledge, communication and exchange.

The realism of Campanella's utopianism is one of the leitmotifs of Jean-Louis Fournel's book, which was awarded the 2013 Prix Monseigneur Marcel silver medal by the Académie française. The first chapter sets the tone by arguing that Campanella's utopia is not so much about 'unknown lands' (for there are none, the author argues) but depicts a possible alternative to the social reality with which the philosopher was all too familiar. *The City of the Sun* was, after all, published as an appendix to Campanella's markedly realist treatise on politics, and its 'poetical' character evokes the classical understanding of *poiesis* as transformation. *The City of the Sun* also represents a synthesis of Campanella's encyclopaedic reform of knowledge, which saw freedom and unity as its ultimate end.

Fournel's expansive volume does full justice to its title, for it deals as much with Campanella and his works as it does with the ideas of 'territories' and 'knowledge' of the world. Few books manage to cover such a broad scope while ostensibly focusing on a single philosopher and his major work. The breadth of Campanella's own philosophical enterprise lends itself to such a task, but it certainly takes a scholar of early modern political thought of Fournel's calibre to produce such an engaging work, which at once unpacks the intricacy of Campanella's system and the complexity of the dawn of modernity. This volume represents a successful attempt at overlapping and intersecting the philosopher's ideas and his vision of the new world with the historical developments that led to its emergence. Fournel's narrative brings together the key geopolitical and religious mileposts of the 16<sup>th</sup> and early 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, exposing the shifts in territoriality and worldviews following Columbus, Machiavelli and Luther (figures who are very present in Campanella's works). One of the main theses of this book – though certainly not the only meritorious one – is that Campanella was one of the earliest authors to interpret and manifest the spirit of modernity. His utopia captures this reality and is thus a *géosophie*, a new way of understanding the real world through the renewal of knowledge and a special attention to territorial politics. Fournel's exposition of Campanella's political thought appears as a succinct and accurate interpretation of the philosopher's seemingly extravagant claim, in his intellectual autobiography, that he had "founded political science" ("... *et politicam scientiam condidi*").

The author places a particular emphasis on reading Campanella's works, and his political writings in particular, against the backdrop of the territories known to him: from Naples (chapter 2) to the New World (chapter 3) and from the Low Countries (chapter 4) to Italy, Spain and France (chapters 5 and 6). The seventh chapter, on 'the impossibility of a thalassocracy' looks at the politics of the sea as extending beyond the Mediterranean of the great maritime republics and into the oceans on its west and east. Fournel's discussion of Campanella's views on the rule of the sea (*la signoria del mare*) is especially noteworthy for its originality. The concluding chapter is a captivating account of the emergence of the new Europe resulting from divisions and wars. Though ostensibly Eurocentric, Campanella's reflections capture the spirit of the *mundus novus* and, in Fournel's view, his vision of and for Europe is that of *hétérotopie*, not a 'no-place' but a place of coexistence in diversity. It is in the light of the paradox of a new world that is really emerging yet unfulfilled that the prophetic nature of Campanella's thought is brought compellingly into perspective.

Plato's *Atlantis*, Thomas More's *Utopia* and other works in the utopian genre have too often been interpreted rather superficially as depictions of idealized societies that are purposely removed from the real world, albeit constituting a critique of it. The dichotomy

between fiction and reality, or between ideals and practice, undermines the proper poetic nature of utopias as transformative and communicative visions. Campanella's utopia is perhaps even more explicit than its predecessors in being less concerned with homogeneity (notwithstanding the apparently rigid aspects of its governance) and more emphatic on the need of knowing the reality outside the island and of communicating with others. In this respect, *The City of the Sun* stands as a critical reminder that islands – whether literary or physical – are connected rather than isolated, as microcosms of unity in difference. Though separated by the sea, their borders are made porous through the inhabitants' knowledge, openness and exchange.

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**Brigette Le Juez and Olga Springer (Eds.) (2015). *Shipwreck and island motifs in literature and the arts*. Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill Rodopi, 351pp. ISBN: 978-90-04-29874-3 (hbk); ISBN: 978-90-04-29875-0 (ebook). €91/US\$118.**

The genesis of this book was in a summer school on “Interdisciplinary and Comparative Perspectives on Motifs in Literature and the Arts: The Shipwreck and the Island,” held at Dublin City University, Ireland, in July 2011. From that beginning, the editors have brought together a collection of nineteen essays which explore the “atemporal and universal” motifs of shipwrecks and islands from a variety of disciplinary perspectives, from literature to art history and from philosophy to music, and ranging across Anglophone, Francophone, Gaelic, Germanic, and Hispanic sources. The book is divided into five thematic sections, all of which will be of interest to island studies scholars.

The four essays grouped together in the opening section, “Shipwrecks, Islands and Subjectivity,” explore the nexus between the motifs of shipwreck and island in sources ranging over three and a half centuries, from Shakespeare's *The Tempest* to the Beach Boys' classic 1966 album, *Pet Sounds*. Shakespeare's iconic island play, with its opening shipwreck scene, engages directly with the two motifs that give the book its focus. It is fitting, then, that this section opens with Volkmar Billig's essay, which examines ideas of the “insular subject” that he argues were first developed in early seventeenth-century island narratives including *The Tempest*. Yulia Pushkarevskaya Naughton, Gerald Naughton, and Samiah Haque bring us forward to the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in their examination of ‘The Island as Chora’ in a range of texts from Alexander Dumas' *The Count of Monte Christo* to Michel Tournier's extraordinary Robinsonade, *Friday*, while Phillip Stevenson argues that his namesake's little known, collaborative novel, *The Wrecker*, far from being “a failed experiment lacking in artistic unity,” is a successful deconstruction of both *Treasure Island* and the romance genre more broadly. And ending the section with something completely different, Michael Hinds takes his readers on a guided tour of “the myth of the Robinsonade in pop culture,” which leads to analyses of eight Desert Island Discs, which ‘offer us a narrowing gaze into the repressive perversity of pop isolation.’

In the second section of the book, the editors have gathered three essays which explicitly explore the island as an aesthetic concept. In her interdiscursive reading of works from the

literature, art, and music of the Romantic period that were inspired by the Hebrides, Heather H. Yeung makes the bold claim that art and music were ‘ahead of literature in their ability to express a sense of islandness.’ But, she concludes, Keats and Scott, in their prose descriptions of the Hebrides and Fingal’s Cave, and Wordsworth, in his final Hebridean sonnet, were beginning ‘to express a quite modern island imaginary.’ The remaining two essays in this section both explore the space of the island: Patricia García employs spatial and narrative theories to read Edgar Allan Poe’s unfinished text “The Lighthouse,” and the tale as it has been completed by Christina Fernandez Cubas; and David Garrett Izzo reconsiders the psychological space of the island in Aldous Huxley’s utopian novel, *Island*.

Shipwrecks are the focus of two of the four essays in the third section, “Weathering the Tempest: Images of Shipwrecks and Islands from Ancient to Modern Times.” Robert J. Vrtis provides readers with a close reading of Shakespeare’s *Twelfth Night*, using the imagery of the shipwreck and the storm that washes Viola ashore early in the play to explore ideas of emotional wreckage, both on and beyond the stage. Similarly, Dyani Johns Taff examines Milton’s use of the shipwreck metaphor in *Samson Agonistes*, specifically in terms of Samson and Dalila’s own emotional journeys, but also in the broader religious context of the seventeenth century. Islands – the mythical Hy Brasil, and the islands of West Kerry – are the focus of the other two essays in this section. Barbara Freitag replays the cartographic and cultural history of Hy Brasil (Brasil Island), an imaginary island to the west of Ireland that for centuries appeared on maps and nautical charts. This is a topic she explores in greater detail in her book *Hy Brasil: The metamorphosis of an island from cartographic error to Celtic Elysium* (reviewed in *Island Studies Journal*, 8(2), 2013). Moving from mythical to real islands, Barra Ó Seaghdha uses the structure of a family journey from Cork to West Kerry, through space and time, to revisit the issue of islandness in the context of the Blaskets and other islands in the Atlantic Ocean: the islands off the edge of the island of Ireland beyond the island of Britain.

The fourth section, “The Island as Feminine Space,” gathers four essays which focus on the island as a space in which to explore issues of gender. Both Amy Hicks and Sara K. Day, in their essays on late Victorian adventure fiction for girls and young adult fiction, respectively, traverse ground that will be fresh to many island studies scholars. In an insightful reading of L.T. Meade’s girls’ castaway novel, *Four on an Island*, Hicks finds that the island offers a perfect space to explore the contesting female roles of the Angel in the House and the New Girl. Similarly, Day argues that the liminal nature of the island provides the ideal setting for Libba Bray to challenge assumptions about gender and the appearances and behaviours of young women in her castaway fiction, *Beauty Queens*. The trope of the female castaway is again central to Shawn Thomson’s reading of Edith Wharton’s *The House of Mirth*, in which he argues that Lily Bart’s fall from high society positions her as a castaway, her isolation as a metaphorical island. Sandra Vlasta focuses on the use of island motifs in the movement away from postcolonial islands (real and metaphorical) in Andrea Levy’s *Small Island*, Caryl Phillips’s *The Final Passage*, and Monica Ali’s *Brick Lane*, arguing that in each of these novels the movement away from the island is one towards female emancipation.

In the essays that comprise the final section, “Experimental Shipwrecks and Island as Laboratory,” Shiela Pardee examines Kurt Vonnegut’s use of the world’s best-known evolutionary laboratory in his satirical castaway novel, *Galápagos*; Maria Blaszkiewicz offers a detailed analysis of the maps that are part of the text of Terry Pratchett’s *Nation*, a stand-alone, low fantasy novel for young adults set on a South Sea island in the late nineteenth

century; Pat Brereton transports the reader to the worlds of reality TV and fictional films to show how islands are represented in those genres; and Beatrice Ferrara explores the figuration of the shipwreck as political commentary in the essay-film, *Hydra Decapita*. Together – through close readings of works that span several genres – these four essays look at some of the more experimental ways islands and shipwrecks operate as motifs.

The essays in this volume are concerned with both real and imaginary islands, and with shipwrecks and islands as “timeless metaphors of human existence.” Severally and collectively, they are destinations worth visiting for island studies scholars, particularly those working at the interface of island studies and the humanities.

Sadly, the book is marred somewhat by poor copy-editing and an unsatisfactory index. In the Introduction, for example, the editors still refer to what must be an earlier working title, *Storms on islands: Shipwreck and island motifs in literature and the arts*, rather than the final, shorter version that drops the title in favour of the more descriptive sub-title alone. In the index, the entry on Shakespeare’s *The Tempest* collects all instances of the word tempest, rather than references to Shakespeare’s work. So, for example, the word tempest in the title of the third section of the book (“Weathering the Tempest”) appears in the index as a reference to Shakespeare’s work, as does the use of the word in the title of Robert J. Vrtis’s essay “The Tempest Toss’d Ship,” which is actually about *Twelfth Night*. It would be churlish to give more examples; these grumbles aside, this is a worthy volume.

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