

BOOK REVIEWS SECTION

Anna E. Wilkens, Patrick Ramponi & Helge Wendt (eds.) (2011) *Inseln und Archipele. Kulturelle Figuren des Insularen zwischen Isolation und Entgrenzung* [Islands and Archipelagos. Cultural Figures of the Insular between Isolation and Delimitation], Bielefeld, Germany, Transcript Verlag. 324pp, ISBN: 978-3-8376-1242-4. €31.80. Detailed table of contents at: www.transcript-verlag.de/ts1242/ts1242_1.pdf

The collection of essays in *Inseln und Archipele* [Islands and Archipelagos] arose out of a scholarly conference on the topic *Orders of the Insular* at the University of Mannheim's Philosophical Faculty (Germany) in 2008. The book takes an innovative, interdisciplinary perspective on islands and archipelagos as culturally coded and symbolically charged spaces. The volume combines contributions from different fields of research such as literary studies, cultural theory, political and social science, fine arts and musicology. According to the editors' preface, the book is oriented along cultural scientific lines and contributes to island studies as a field of interdisciplinary academic research (p. 7). It is remarkable that the editors claim, correctly, to examine the spatial configuration of the insular and islands as rewarding heuristic instruments of knowledge for the first time in the German-speaking scholarly community (p. 8). Hence, the volume attempts to promote further scholarly investigation on islands.

Inseln und Archipele mainly aims at questioning rigid descriptions and traditional interpretations that European or rather continental thought ascribes to the cultural figure 'island'. Perceived as closed and homogenous systems that are separated from the mainland, for instance, islands are supposed to represent stability, timelessness and inner homogeneity. Thus, dichotomous structures such as continental/insular, centre/periphery or autarchy/interconnectedness became a standard pattern of association. As a recognizable setting that carries specific connotations, the island motif thus serves as a topos in countless literary works. Now it is time to challenge the traditional ways in which islands are used and featured, and develop instead research perspectives on islands which are innovative and dynamic.

The volume is thematically divided into three sections. The first two essays that introduce the topic are followed by four essays concentrating on one single island as the basis of the narration, and the third part of the collection includes eight essays that deal with several islands and archipelagos.

The introductory essays constitute the most extensive parts of the volume. They do not systematically develop a basic terminology on island studies or cultural theory, but illustrate islands and archipelagos exemplarily as a subject of narrative literature and contemporary art. Ottmar Ette (pp. 13-56) points out a mobile conception of literary spaces that does not consider islands as isolated territorial entities but as interconnected, translocal objects in a dynamic space. He primarily refers to romance literature and novels of authors such as Reinaldo Arenas, José Martí, Mario Vargas Llosa and Cécile Wajsbrot. In this context, a certain prior knowledge of romance literature, especially of hispanophone literature outside Europe, would facilitate the reader's comprehension enormously. Organizing his essay on the basis of such keywords as *sea*, *projection surface*, *time* and *power*, Ette provides a useful structural orientation to the further reading of the book. Anna Wilkens (pp. 57-98) presents the concept of a temporary exhibition of contemporary art that was organized parallel to the conference in 2008. The works of seventeen international artists – pictures, video, installation and performance on the subject of islands and archipelagos – are partially printed and

described in detail. With the intention of gaining new insights into the spatial configurations of islands, a dialogue between theoretic approaches and visual arts was creatively initiated.

The essays that follow engage with one single island as the basis of the narration and offer new perspectives on different texts of German and Italian literature. Sylvie Grimm-Hamen (pp. 99-114) examines the island motif in Raoul Schrott's novel *Tristan da Cunha oder die Hälfte der Erde* and shows how the spatial structure of the island itself serves as an organizing narrative principle. Katrin Schneider's essay on Arthur Schnitzler's novella *Die Frau des Weisen* (pp. 115-134) illustrates how two potential lovers idealize the island as a tempting place of longing that promises the fulfillment of their love. In the end, the island is revealed as irreversibly connected to the mainland by the memories of the two lovers and does not present an alternative place or heterotopia. Torsten König (pp. 135-152) surveys how Sicily serves as a projection surface for literary fictions and how its interpretation as hermetic space could be widened to a rather relational and dynamic space in the second half of the 20th century. Thus, König succeeds in revealing the spatial configuration of Sicily as a result of symbolic practice and discursive constructions. In her essay (pp. 153-168), Regine Zeller focuses on islands as a motif in contemporary children's literature. Using as examples various German children's books, she vividly demonstrates how traditional interpretations of islands – as isolated, bounded and timeless spaces – can be challenged. Thus she suggests a new interpretation of islands as societies *en miniature* which provide the possibility of communication and exchange.

We now move on to the third part of the collection, in which the essays mainly focus on several islands and archipelagos as objects of study and go beyond a solely literary perspective. Anne Peiter (pp. 169-186) discusses Georg Forster's *Reise um die Welt*, a scientific travel report of James Cook's second journey of exploration in the Pacific (1772-75). On a postcolonial reading of the report, Peiter reveals how the colonists succeeded in establishing an unequal relationship between themselves and the indigenous population. As a place of demarcation, the island's beach plays a central role in this context. Elke Krasny (pp. 187-208) argues that in our capitalistic society, the island brand seems to fulfil our modern dreams. The Palm Islands, an artificial archipelago in Dubai, represent an *anything is possible* attitude and a hyperreal place. The individual longing for an island paradise merges with the promises of pleasure by the marketing and tourist industry. Marcus Termeer (pp. 209-224) uses the classic island metaphor of isolation as a hook on which he hangs the broader theme of the increasing domination of nature in occidental history. Jan Mohr (pp. 225-244) focuses on 17th-century literature and identifies an *insular narrative style* in German picaresque novels due to their episodic structure. Insular concepts are connected with the evocation of the tension between providence and contingency in the Early Modern Age. On the other hand, Daniel Graziadei (pp. 245-264) treats insularity in the mirror of contemporary Anglo- and Hispanophone Caribbean migration literature. The metaphorical potential of islands is applied on identity constructions of migrants. What follows is an eloquent discussion of Christopher Columbus's *Brief aus der neuen Welt*, which mirrors the striving for hegemony of the Spanish crown in the 15th century (pp. 265-282). Silvan Wagner outlines how contemporary political and theological concepts – the centralization of the Spanish state and salvation history – are transferred onto the recently discovered islands in the Caribbean and thus Columbus interprets the new territories as a manageable archipelago that just needs to be occupied. In his essay, Christian Luckscheiter (pp. 283-302) argues that archipelagos might serve as a model of a new conception of the European Union as a pluralistic connection of single states and a new flexible European identity. Michele del Prete (pp. 303-316) then elucidates how tonal islands are orchestrated in Luigi Nono's opera *Prometeo – Tragedia dell'ascolto*. Here, as well as in

the previous essay, the non-hierarchical structure of an archipelago is considered as a profitable model.

To conclude, the collection of essays undoubtedly provides a broad interdisciplinary insight in current tendencies of research on islands and archipelagos as culturally coded spaces and heuristic instruments of knowledge. Moreover, the volume sheds light on a wide range of different subjects with particular emphasis on literature. As the book title indicates, the attributions of *isolation* and *delimitation* provide a thematic framework for the individual essays. However, whether these two characteristics will still be able to provide a reference framework in the future – when modern means of transportation let spaces shrink and thus perhaps negate specific island characteristics – remains in question.

The strength of the individual essays is that they are profound and detailed and, for the most part, also compact and focused. They expect a certain prior knowledge in the concerned topics – sometimes they do not even translate foreign-language quotations into German (as on p. 139) – and achieve a high standard of originality. At that point, the book profits from having recruited as authors a number of talented young scholars as well as renowned researchers. Each contributor follows the main premise of the book to overcome traditional island topoi: This is what connects the essays which, due to their disparity and their high grades of specialization, rather encourage a selective reading of the volume.

The volume certainly appeals to those with a background in literary studies, cultural and social science or similar disciplines – with a good knowledge of German – and above all, to those who are interested in islands, archipelagos and atolls as multi-faceted and interesting phenomena. In the end, the individual studies appear to be thematically closed islands in a vast interdisciplinary sea that the interested reader should discover on his own!

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Mark Schuller and Pablo Morales (Eds.) (2012) *Tectonic Shifts: Haiti Since the Earthquake*, Sterling VA, Kumarian Press, 271pp. ISBN: 978-1-56549-512-8. US\$75 hbk, US\$24.95 pbk, US\$20.99 e-book.

On Tuesday 12 January 2010 at 16:53:10 local time, a shallow and intense earthquake struck 25km WSW of Haiti's capital, Port-au-Prince. Decades of poor governance, underdevelopment, external exploitation, and poverty had left the country unable to cope with the shaking – even to the extent that body counts were difficult with estimates of the death toll varying from under 100,000 to over 300,000. If the lower count were accurate, that still yields a death toll of around 1% of the country's population, with over 15% directly affected (killed, injured, or displaced). On islands, the proportional impacts of disasters can be horrifying beyond the absolute numbers.

Many scholarly works have explored the catastrophe with the usual emphasis on the seismology of the region and the engineering failures that brought down buildings. In-depth analyses covering the disaster's causes, as distinct from the earthquake's cause, are less frequent. *Tectonic Shifts* aims to fill part of that gap by detailing long-term social and political processes that began long before the ground started shaking and were hardly resolved afterwards. Those processes created and continue to maintain the ever-present vulnerability in

Haiti that manifested as the 12 January 2010 disaster. As one example, the editors begin by explaining how Port-au-Prince was selected as the capital by external powers and then drew in masses of Haitians living there in inadequate buildings because of those external powers' continued policies dictating Haitian livelihoods and centralized governance.

Then, over 80 contributors listed in the Table of Contents put together 46 short chapters organized into 11 sections (each with its own brief introduction) distributed over 3 parts. The contributors include individuals and organizations, comprising an impressive variety of professional backgrounds while displaying gender and age balance. The high number of contributors from Haiti or who were directly involved in the country long before the earthquake emphasizes the exceptional level of local voices that are heard through this book.

The volume is superbly framed by the editors' introduction summarising the reasoning behind publishing the book as well as its aims and content. The editors achieve what they seek in terms of "critical analyses from a range of perspectives...[to] highlight the many struggles that Haitian people are facing with dignity, offering lessons not only for those directly affected and involved in relief but also for people engaged in other struggles for justice and transformation" (p. 8). That includes their own appropriately biting political commentary such as noting that Bill Clinton used the disaster as "an opportunity to 'build back better,' to undo the damage wrought by policies he championed as president" (p. 1).

Using disaster terminology, the three parts of the book can be roughly interpreted as "vulnerability and emergency response", "early recovery and reconstruction", and "long-term recovery". Part 1, "Geopolitical Structures", sets the stage for the underlying causes of the earthquake disaster, segueing into the continued expression of those vulnerabilities during the immediate aftermath of the shaking. Haiti was known to be in an earthquake zone, yet underdevelopment due to mainly external pressures failed to address the known vulnerability to seismic events—and to other hazards. By reaching back through the centuries, this part explores how mainly external powers created and perpetuated disaster-related troubles, such as by forcing indebtedness and tyrants on the country. Then during humanitarian relief, the same external influences continued to fail to address the vulnerabilities, such as by excluding Haitians from decision-making.

Part 2, "On-the-Ground Realities", is about how Haitians suffered, not just because of the earthquake but also because of the earthquake response. The true meaning of the phrase "First the earthquake, then the disaster" is revealed, in terms of how much of the international response failed to address the deep-seated challenges facing the country and, in some cases, exacerbated disaster vulnerability. For instance, UN workers helping clean up from the earthquake inadvertently imported cholera into the country. Stories from Haitian survivors of their months in the camps are particularly powerful and sad, including forced evictions and gender-based violence.

Part 3, "Emerging Movements", details the flaws and strengths of the recovery and reconstruction beyond immediate needs. The section begins with analyses of Haiti's November 2010 elections which the international community imposed despite clear signals from the Haitian people that their country was not ready. The expected difficulties manifested, from popular candidates being excluded to displaced peoples having problems registering to vote. None of that bothered certain donors who insisted on "democracy" on their, rather than the Haitians', terms. Subsequent chapters demonstrate the strengths and challenges of Haitians themselves dealing with often-neglected post-disaster topics such as

gender and justice. The contrast is poignant between, as the book puts it, “Politics from Above” and “Politics from Below”.

Finally, the volume’s conclusion comprises a summary and two chapters looking towards the future, aiming to understand how a new Haiti could emerge from the rubble—one which is less vulnerable and truly an independent country. Ultimately, for the editors and contributors, entirely in line with decades of research, the disaster in Haiti was not the natural phenomenon of the ground motion. Instead, the disaster was the vulnerability built up over centuries and continued in the aftermath of the tremors.

As insightful and as needed, another constant thread from the editors’ framing and the contributors’ experiences and analyses was what the Haitian people, nation, and country wish to do for themselves. There is no intimation that bottom-up processes are perfect or that all Haitians are helping themselves. But it is clear from the chapters that much social and political change could, should, and did emerge from the ground up—and that it is essential to reconstruct Haiti. The survivors grasped the chance to rebuild what they want for their country and they are trying their best, despite external intransigence impeding them.

The *Tectonic Shifts* in the book’s title are explicitly about political earthquakes in addition to geological ones, primarily because no geological movement can be divorced from political movements where nature’s extremes meet society’s vulnerability. As a contribution to island studies and disaster research, Schuller and Morales have assembled a powerful collection of voices seeking powerful action to do better for their country sharing an island. We need more such in-depth, broad-based research and analysis to truly understand how to deal with disasters afflicting island communities.

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Lesley-Anne Jordan, Ben Tyson, Carolyn Hale and David Truly (eds.) (2011) *Sports Event Management: The Caribbean Experience*, Farnham, Ashgate, xvii+218pp, ISBN: 978-1-4094-1855-9. £45.00stg.

This is the fifth volume in the Ashgate *New Directions in Tourism Analysis* series. The others have dealt with sex tourism, development tourism and mass tourism with reference to Egypt, Cuba, Kenya and the Mediterranean so the series has a welcome coverage of topic and place. This volume considers sports tourism, a significant sector of the market – think of the international crowds attending major events such as the football/soccer World Cup and the Olympic Games. The subject of this volume with its spatial focus on the Caribbean is the hosting of the International Cricket Council’s 2007 World Cup.

Cricket developed originally in England and its international reach has been largely dictated by that country’s colonialism in that the ten test cricket playing nations competing at the highest level are England itself and nine nations with a colonial past, places to which the English took the sport: Australia, Bangladesh, India, New Zealand, Pakistan, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Zimbabwe and the multi-national team from the Caribbean that competes as the West Indies. Of the other cricketing nations which compete at lower levels including one day internationals, some also have had British links such as Canada and Ireland (although Irish

players along with Scots and Welsh on occasion turn out for 'England'); others have no such links – such as the Netherlands. One new national team is that from Afghanistan.

The West Indies cricket team is of interest in island studies beyond the sport itself for it is an example of islands (plus Guyana) combining, scaling up to be able to compete internationally. West Indies cricket involves ten independent nations – Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, St Kitts and Nevis, St Lucia, St Vincent and the Grenadines, Trinidad & Tobago – three British dependencies – Anguilla, Montserrat and the British Virgin Islands – and two other dependencies, the US Virgin Islands and Dutch St Maarten.

Whilst test matches are confined to tours when one country's national team visits another country playing a series of five-day matches, the development of the game's one day format has made it possible for cricket world cups to be held, with a number of teams gathering in a host country playing each other in a format that eventually sees two teams emerge as finalists to compete for the world cup. Such tournaments have been held under the auspices of the International Cricket Council every four years since the inaugural event in England in 1975. *Sports Event Management: the Caribbean Experience* deals with the experiences of and lessons to be learned from the staging of the 2007 International Cricket Council World Cup in the Caribbean.

Organising this tournament across such a plethora of nations inevitably brings politics into play, one of the range of key issues listed in the introduction by Leslie-Ann Jordan: 'regional co-ordination and co-operation; challenges with the free movement of people and border control between the islands, the ability of the islands to accommodate an estimated 100,000 visitors, safety and strategy and strategies to maximise public and private sector investment' (p. 5). The range of issues considered in the 12 chapters is indeed large. There are six chapters that consider the impacts of the event. There is an overall socio-economic assessment, chapters on environmental issues, on leveraging community tourism and a specific consideration of Barbados, Trinidad & Tobago and Jamaica. The chapters are not simply reports on what occurred in 2007; they consider theoretical issues and make comparisons to practices and events elsewhere. For example, in their chapter on greening, Janice Cumberbatch and Kisandra Bynoe list the environmental damage that hosting major events can cause and review good practice before offering a detailed review of Barbados's 'Bag Your Own Garbage' scheme, an approach that enables the co-authors to propose general recommendations about litter reduction issues at sports events generally. The role of sport in the Caribbean is discussed in Anand Rampersad's interesting chapter on the social and cultural consequences of the 2007 tournament. He opines that sport is 'not a primary source of employment, social mobility and status' (p. 98) in Trinidad & Tobago, locals being more concerned with securing a good education and guaranteeing their sources of income. Nevertheless, cricket played an important role in developing identity in both colonial and post-colonial eras: 'cricket has provided Caribbean people with an opportunity to transform a civilising and social controlling sport of the masses into a social and cultural mechanism of resistance manifested in the style of play and festive dispositions of live spectators' (p. 100). Given the 'carnival stage' of Caribbean cricket, there was much resentment in 2007 regarding the impositions of the ICC such as the high prices and restricting the purchase of tickets to online transactions requiring credit cards, a mechanism that cut off access for many local fans. Furthermore, the chapter on Jamaica by Shenika McFarlane found that, whilst the tournament led to the welcome regeneration of the Sabina Park ground and surrounds in Kingston, the lives of the poorer members of the community, including such groups as craft vendors who might have expected better opportunities, were not enriched.

The third part of the book presents a series of four chapters on event logistics and marketing. This is a useful reflection of the tournament, including chapters on agronomy, that is the preparation of the pitches and grounds themselves, accommodating spectators, a review of the Barbados home accommodation program, and marketing. The last chapter, 'Image, logo, brand and nation: destination marketing, nationalism and the 2007 Cricket World Cup' by Leanne White, would seem to have the most potential relevance to readers of *Island Studies Journal*; but, rather than looking at the seven separate island states (Antigua, Barbados, Grenada, Jamaica, St Kitts-Nevis, St Lucia, Trinidad & Tobago) and Guyana which actually staged the matches, the chapter focuses on the 16 international teams who competed, after a theoretical introduction. The Dutch team wore orange; Ireland, green and its fans celebrated their famous victory over Pakistan by consuming Guinness. These are not significant findings, the analysis of this chapter not quite living up to the promise of its title.

The book ends with a concluding chapter by the four editors looking for the legacy of the 2007 World Cup, always an important part of any bid to host a major sporting event but so often a promise unfulfilled. The ICC had expected improvements in infrastructure, economic opportunity, Caribbean promotion, regional integration and the increased popularity of cricket. However, 'in hindsight, these objectives seem far too idealistic and general in scope' (p. 185). Instead, the chapter mentions the debt burden that has fallen on many of the countries involved in staging the event, particularly Jamaica. Seeking specifically island issues, one of the most interesting aspects of this review deals with the 'age old rivalries between countries', 'in-fighting and jealousy' being the 'Caribbean's Achilles heel' (p. 189) and the authors conclude that management of this event was indeed hindered by the large number of stakeholders, a situation exacerbated by the 'lack of regional co-operation that has plagued this region for centuries' (p. 191).

At one level, *Sports Event Management: the Caribbean Experience* can be read as a history of the ICC 2007 cricket world cup; not of the matches, but of the tournament's management, organization and legacy. In addition, although there is some variation in the quality of the individual chapters, the book speaks well to tourism management, particularly sport and event tourism. It offers lessons and advice for anyone interested in these matters. Those concerned with islands should read this book to gain from its insights into the 'sociological understanding of Caribbean people' (p. 108).

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H. Akia Gore (2009) *Garrote: The Illusion of Social Equality and Political Justice in the United States Virgin Islands*, New York, Wadadli Press, 454pp. ISBN: 978-0-57800822-6, US\$27.00

Akia Gore's book, *Garrote: The Illusion of Social Equality and Political Justice in the United States Virgin Islands*, is an analysis of the personal experiences of mainly African working-class Eastern Caribbean nationals in the predominantly African United States Virgin Islands (USVI) from the 1930s to the contemporary period. The author shows how the traditional push-pull model of migration, so common in world migration, was also operative between the

Eastern Caribbean Islands and the USVI. The former islands were besieged by disjunctive colonial development, while the latter islands experienced growth and development. This uneven colonial development led to a hierarchy of intra-Caribbean migration. Eastern Caribbean nationals were pushed by socio-economic challenges in their homeland and pulled by job opportunities in booming industrial and service sectors of the USVI economy. Paralleling this influx was the out-migration of USVI nationals to the US mainland, creating a further demand for domestic labour. As for the book's title, native Virgin Islanders used the word *garrote* ... 'to express a combination of negative perceptions about Eastern Caribbean nationals that included, but were not limited to, such characterizations as uneducated, unsophisticated, primitive and loud' (p. 104).

The Eastern Caribbean nationals were subsequently sought and brought to the USVI to work under an Alien Worker Program. This work program was poorly designed, and as a consequence, was plagued with many problems. Chief among them was the loose connection of the alien worker program with the four-way interaction among the US immigration policies, the local Virgin Islands government, the employers, and Eastern Caribbean nationals. US immigration policies were inconsistent with the sub-region migratory dynamics. The employers appreciated the availability of a cheap labour supply but preferred no serious restrictions and regulations on them, and so Eastern Caribbean nationals were at the mercy of the aforementioned entities: they were exposed to permanent exploitation (low wages, poor living conditions, intimidation, rape) and were denied basic amenities (social services, education, labour rights, immigrant status, among others) in a US-controlled island society. They were also psychologically affected with a fear of deportation at any given time. The authorities tried to deal with the challenges of the alien worker program as they surfaced, essentially providing bonded and certification statuses to Eastern Caribbean nationals. This was essentially a band-aid approach. It was not until 1980 that Eastern Caribbean nationals were given permanent status in the USVI, thereby creating over half of a century of what became a wholesale culture of suspicion, anxiety, and animosity among Eastern Caribbean nationals. The author argues that, while some measures were taken to rectify some problems associated with the alien worker program, the basic characteristics remained the same. That is, Eastern Caribbean nationals should not stay permanently in the USVI. The new measures practically regulated the entry and exit of Eastern Caribbean nationals to the USVI irrespective of their concerns.

The impact of the alien worker program on Eastern Caribbean nationals was manifold. Foremost was that, not only did it push Eastern Caribbean nationals to overstay or leave the islands to the US mainland or form desperate unions with Virgin Islanders to attain the security of residency, but it also increased illegal migration to the USVI. Perhaps worst of all was that the program created a perception among Virgin Islanders that the influx of Eastern Caribbean nationals was displacing the native workforce. The reality seemed to be that Virgin Islanders were not interested in the low-paying jobs and were opting for greener pastures in the US. The alien worker program also created a paradox common in immigrant host societies. Like elsewhere, Eastern Caribbean nationals were wanted in the USVI to fill a labour shortage; but they were to remain unattached, temporary, and content with their low-status and low-paying jobs. They were expected not to take advantage of available social services or even compete with Virgin Islanders. Few immigrants generally conform to the aforementioned status. Instead, they simultaneously negate and affirm, dismantle and construct, reject and reshape their purpose and place. Over time, they will become a visible minority competing for resources and opportunities like anyone else.

Despite the dependence on Eastern Caribbean immigrant labour to generate growth and development in the USVI—particularly in tourism, construction and light manufacturing—Eastern Caribbean Nationals continued to face verbal and physical abuse from all sectors of USVI society, including law enforcement officers and high-ranking government officials. The presence of Caribbean nationals in the USVI became even more precarious in the early 1970s, when it was widely believed that five Eastern Caribbean nationals were responsible for murdering an eight-year-old Hispanic girl. Some of men were acquitted of the crime immediately, but three of them were put on trial and given lengthy sentences. Although they were eventually released on appeal, the arrest of these men cemented the long-held belief that Eastern Caribbean nationals were crime prone. Their arrest also provided the opportunity for the authorities to forcefully and inhumanely deport thousands of Eastern Caribbean nationals back to their homeland. The forceful repatriation affected the economy and placed a negative and indelible imprint on the minds of Eastern Caribbean nationals, which Gore documents extensively. He also shows how regional leaders reacted to the roundup and deportation of the immigrants. He concludes that their efforts were ineffective in bringing any significant change to the ill-treatment of the immigrants. As expected, most Virgin Islanders, including Hispanics, supported repatriation of Eastern Caribbean nationals. Towards the end of the 1980s and onwards, the relationship between Eastern Caribbean nationals and other USVI ethnic groups was more amicable due largely to fairer immigration laws, intermarriage as well as upward economic and political mobility of Eastern Caribbean nationals, among other things. However, some deep-seated resentment still remains, which has been reflected in the recent constitutional draft that affords special privilege and exclusive rights to those who can trace their bloodline in the UVSI before 1932. This clause makes Eastern Caribbean nationals feel unwelcome in the USVI.

According to Gore, the reasons for this friction among Eastern Caribbean nationals and Virgin Islanders were the transition of ownership of the islands from Denmark to the US, which improved the standard of living of Virgin Islanders, creating a stratified class society, competition for scarce resources, a poorly planned Alien Worker Program, the scapegoat theory, the newcomer takeover and victimization syndrome, and the general lack of understanding of other Africans in the African Caribbean diaspora. However, these concepts are not well analyzed or supported by a sound theoretical approach in Gore's book. Instead, they are sketched and scattered throughout the text, making reading cumbersome and confusing. Additionally, information is repeated and is not well cited. The use of vital literature is also missing, such as James Green's study on the Alien Worker Program.

In the final analysis, one must commend Gore for bringing this experience to the general public. It should prove relevant to those who suffered during the Alien Worker Program, as well as remind and reinforce in the minds of today's Eastern Caribbean community the sacrifice their ancestors made for them to be in the USVI.

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Jay Dobbin (2011) *Summoning the Powers Beyond: Traditional Religions in Micronesia*, Honolulu HI, University of Hawaii Press. 286pp, ISBN: 978-0-8248-3203-2. US\$55.00.

From a purely academic standpoint, *Summoning the Powers Beyond: Traditional Religions in Micronesia* by Jay Dobbin has merit. Collecting an impressive array of archival materials, it provides an assemblage of the disparate record of pre-Christian religions in the region of Micronesia. After a brief consideration of his understanding of religion, Dobbin goes on to focus on individual island societies of Chuuk, Pohnpei, Kosrae, Marshall Islands, Yap, Palau, and Kiribati and Nauru in separate chapters. But, as much as I wanted to like this book, its flaws are so great, and so many opportunities for analysis are missed, that one comes away from it wondering how a professional theologian such as Dobbin, a Jesuit priest, could so fundamentally misconceive what “religion” is and how it operates in the islands today.

To begin with, there is the problematic idea that, if nothing else, Dobbin wants to ensure that these so-called “old religions” (a term he repeats throughout the book) are dead, perhaps to reinforce the Christian nature of the island communities today. He writes early on “The old religions are gone and only remnants and memories remain” (p. 7), and that these religions are representative of “a vanished culture” (p. 12). To drive his point home, Dobbin employs a methodology that requires him to interact solely with the archival record, one dominated by the interpretations and mediations of western visitors (including Christian missionaries) to the islands in the 19th century and American anthropologists who spent limited time among island communities in the period following World War II. Additionally, Dobbin dismisses oral history as not “real” history, since such approaches to remembering are too intertwined with “myth” and “folklore” (his terms), and that “The problem, then, becomes determining where reality ends and the fairy tales begin” (p. 9). This is especially true for Dobbin when it comes to the island of Pohnpei, where oral histories both exist as legitimate histories, and persist as social memory today. But what is most egregious here is that such a methodology allows Dobbin to avoid encountering actual islanders; as a result he misses out on his own field of interest, which he states “is about the religious symbols Micronesians used to find meaning before their mass conversion to Christianity” (p. 5).

Thankfully, I had the opportunity to read the chapter on Kosrae with my wife, who is Kosraean. Popularly considered the most Christianized of the islands, due to the massive population decline in the mid-19th century thanks to exposure to disease from western whalers, Kosrae underwent a massive cultural change between 1830 and 1880 as the population dropped from some 7,000 to 300 islanders and the American Missionary Society arrived to remake the social structure in the image of the Christian church. Yet, pre-Christian ideas are still firmly held in Kosrae today, and play out in church life on a daily basis. As an example, Dobbin writes of “mediums” (*tol* in Kosraean) who speak with the dead. Yet he does not make the connection with the use of that term today, as *tol* now refers to the caretakers of the church, typically in the form of lay ministers who sit outside the chapel and ensure that the flow of traffic in and out of the church runs smoothly. Dobbin also explains that the word *anut* (today spelled *inut*) was used to refer to “nature deities” (p. 109), but makes no mention of the fact that the word in contemporary usage means “ghost”; nor that *inutnut*, which Dobbin tells us means “to conjure,” in popular parlance refers today to what my wife calls (for lack of a better term) “black magic.” Nor does Dobbin, who spends considerable time explaining the so-called “myths” of the breadfruit goddess Sinlanka, bother to relate the well-known account, repeated often on Kosrae today, of how or why Sinlanka left: sensing the coming of a more powerful and brighter light in the form of the Protestant Church, she bade goodbye to the islanders the night before the missionaries’ arrival and left for Yap, to the west.

The closest Dobbin comes to acknowledging the possibility that the current church may have “filled the vacuum” (p. 240) left by the decline in pre-Christian Kosraean social structures comes in a footnote hidden at the end of the chapter, but the idea is given no further consideration. But again, Dobbin is not concerned with how such “fairy tales” play out in Kosraean society today, since this is a work built not upon the experiences of islanders but upon the observations of westerners. And, as such, Dobbin is content to tell us that the effect of Christianizing the island was that “The old social structure and the religion died a quick death” (p. 107), and that the religion of pre-Christian Kosrae is “long dead and only dimly remembered” (p. 120).

The other predominant use of pre-Christian religious practices in the region today is that of healing. As a case in point, whenever I visit Kosrae with my wife, we are given gifts of treated coconut oil to take back with us to the Marshall Islands, where we live, in order to protect us from whatever foreign (that is, non-Kosraean) spirits we may encounter there. Even at the College of the Marshall Islands where I teach, students who are sick often will visit a local healer, whose repertoire includes the use of chants and application of balms, before entering the local hospital, which is often seen as a place of last resort for those who have yet to get better. But Dobbin misses this connection as well, briefly dismissing both the healing arts as well as pre-Christian religions in one fell swoop in the conclusion: “With the exception of healing and curing, I doubt that Micronesian religious institutions effectively ameliorated the human condition” (p. 220). No more is said on the topic, reinforcing once again the idea that Dobbin is neither aware of nor interested in the lives of islanders as they are lived in Micronesia today.

If he was, he may have tempered his concluding statement by recognizing that pre-Christian religious practices are neither “long dead” nor a thing of the past, but that, perhaps, islanders have found a way to syncretize both pre- and post-Christian habits into a legitimate set of beliefs that hold no contradictions for them today. Indeed, it may even be possible that there is no clear break in the history of religious practices in the islands as Dobbin argues, and that his attempt to draw a clear line of distinction between what he dismisses as Micronesia’s “gentle religions” (owing to the absence of ritual cannibalism and prolonged fasting) and Christianity betrays a lack of understanding of the ways in which islanders think, believe, and act. Dobbin ends his book by stating “It is my hope that this work will help Micronesians, in some small way, appreciate a bit more deeply an important aspect of their traditional culture, one that permeated everything else. In doing so, they will also be recapturing their past” (p. 221). It is too bad that Dobbin, while admirably performing an impressive archival feat by collecting historical accounts of pre-Christian religious customs from non-Islander sources into one volume, completely misses the fact that those very religious practices and beliefs are alive and well, if only he could see them.

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Phillip Vannini (2012) *Ferry Tales: Mobility, Place, and Time on Canada's West Coast*, New York, Routledge, 240pp. ISBN: 978-0-415-88307-8. Accompanying website at: <http://ferrytales.innovativeethnographies.net>. US\$31.95.

In the interests of full disclosure, I will start this review by admitting that I have never lived on a small island, and certainly not for any extended period of time. But I have lived in Prince George, a somewhat isolated community in northern British Columbia, for the last decade, so I understand the transportation challenges facing islanders. In fact, I read large portions of this book while flying to and from my home to other, isolated parts of the Canadian north. So, it was strangely coincidental when I read “Fog is awful for navigation and it messes with schedules” (p. 172) while circling above Prince George at 1 o'clock in the morning, waiting for the fog to clear so we could land at the airport. It never did and we had to turn around and go back to Vancouver. But I digress...

This is a captivating and innovative book that effectively weaves theory, reflection and storytelling into a rich ethnographic tapestry. The companion website, complete with audio-visual and interactive components, complements the written text and makes it more appealing to a wider, and perhaps less scholarly, audience. Despite its short length, the book is ambitious in terms of scope. This is the story of many different and varied islands and island experiences, viewed through the lens of the ferry service that connects them. The author has fully embedded himself in the topic, making countless ferry trips during the course of his research, and even moving with his young family from “mainland” Vancouver Island to a much smaller island. While this might leave him exposed to charges of bias in some academic circles, he freely admits his passion for islands and island life from the very beginning of the book. At the same time, he tries to present a well-rounded picture of the benefits and challenges of living on islands.

Although the diversity of the islands that dot coastal British Columbia is clearly apparent, after reading this book, I concluded that there are three common themes connecting these places and the people who live on them. First, with the exception of Aboriginal peoples, the vast majority of west coast islanders are recent migrants. As such, “[b]eing from “away”... does not carry stigma” (p. 123). New islanders are often welcomed quickly and completely into the community, as long as they are full-timers and not seasonal migrants. To my mind, this is very different from many other parts of the world, where people whose families have lived on a particular island for generations are still not considered “real” islanders.

The second common theme concerns the relationship between islanders and mainlanders (and, in particular, so-called “city-dwellers”). The islander perspective is aptly summed up in the following passage: “Many BC islanders and coasters [people living on the mainland coast in isolated communities that are only accessible by ferry] view the outside world – most often pejoratively referred to as “the mainland” – as a runaway world of global homogenizing trends, of constant directionless motion, of hurriedness and anonymity, of rude crowdedness and vacuous, fleeting relationships” (p. 82).

Indeed, this seems to be a common, and at times tiring, refrain throughout the book. Some mainlanders might suggest that it represents a deep-seated inferiority complex, or a perverse form of comparison that is more commonly found when Canadians define themselves by what they are not (i.e. Americans). Personally, I think it has something to do with the fact that many of these islanders are recent “refugees” or “escapees” from larger, nearby cities, such as Vancouver. In the absence of historical ties that bind the community together, the islanders fall back on their intense dislike of city life as the basis of their common identity.

This culture of opposition to the mainland (read cities) among BC islanders is reinforced by the fact that, despite their best efforts to escape the cities, they are still dependent on the mainland and the ferries that transport them there. On the one hand, ferries have become an essential and integral part of island life. They provide an important lifeline for goods and services that are not available on small islands. On the other hand, however, they have a profoundly negative influence on island life because they tie islanders to places they love to hate. As one Saltspring Islander put it: “People move to an island to get away from the rat race, but sometimes that means they corner themselves, they get backed up against a wall with no way to escape except for the path they came from” (p. 124). This negativity is further compounded by the tension between the more fluid island time and the rigid timetables set by ferry schedules. In the words of a Vancouver-based mainlander: “I never understood how people can say they move to small islands to be more in tune with a sense of place, when the ferries in actuality end up controlling every movement they make” (p. 193).

The third theme that seems to unite islanders is a critical attitude towards the BC Ferry Service: not the hard-working employees who operate the ferries, but the faceless, quasi-corporate executives who make decisions about routes and fares. The long-standing issues of government funding and corporate control reveal an interesting contradiction in the ideology of islanders, on which the author does not really elaborate. By their very nature, many BC islanders are libertarian in that they value the individual freedom and self-sufficiency that island life offers. That said, they are also communitarian or community-oriented, in marked contrast to the “rootless cosmopolitans” who live on the mainland. Moreover, their libertarianism is countered by a general belief that the state should be responsible for a ferry service that is inexpensive, regular and attuned to the ebb and flow of island life.

While I found this ideological mishmash to be fascinating, the most interesting connection was the one that unites islanders and mainlanders, especially those who live in rural, northern and remote parts of the province. Like many parts of Canada, British Columbia has an extremely complex geography that makes transportation and communication a challenge. This is as true on the west coast, as it is in the north. But this complex geography also means that British Columbia is a wealthy province, full of natural resources that are located outside the urban centres of the Lower Mainland. Should more of this wealth be used to overcome the enormous challenges facing islanders and the inhabitants of northern and remote communities? Northerners and islanders alike would say: yes, it should. Will it happen in an era of neo-liberal down-sizing, where the majority of voters live in larger, urban centres, and are increasingly disconnected from the rest of the province? Unfortunately, I have my doubts.

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Ursula A. Kelly & Elizabeth Yeoman (eds.) (2010) *Despite This Loss: Essays on Culture, Memory and Identity in Newfoundland and Labrador*, St John's NL, ISER Press, ISBN: 978-894725-09-5. 274pp. Can\$26.95

In *Despite This Loss: Essays on Culture, Memory and Identity in Newfoundland and Labrador*, Memorial University Professors Ursula A. Kelly and Elizabeth Yeoman along with twelve cultural workers including teachers, curriculum specialists, academics, an architect, an Innu activist, a visual artist, and a playwright investigate the intricate legacy of loss that haunts and institutes—in part—Newfoundland and Labrador (NL) identity. “Grief is not a house, it’s a country,” states Bernice Morgan in *Cloud of Bone*. Likewise, for Kelly and Yeoman, NL performs as a “country” whose multiple significations—while over-determined and elusive—are profoundly mediated by the allusiveness of loss. About their book’s contributors, Kelly and Yeoman write: “They invite us to understand loss as inevitable and disruptive, as inconsolable and productive. Together, they suggest that the chaos born of loss can become a space in which to reconsider what in life is germane and to reorient—to make something of what loss leaves us by resituating ourselves, individually and culturally, in relation to the event. Examining loss can propel a renewed ethic in relation to memory” (p. 254). In this undaunted and principled view, NL is not so much a fixed place as it is a practiced place, comprising unforgiving temporal/spatial realities and the need for consciousness to articulate and safeguard itself in mobile and creative ways.

However, the problem is that, as Adam Phillips reminds us, “from a psychoanalytic perspective, the patient is always suffering from the self-knowledge he has had to refuse in himself”. The intrusion of a personal/collective remembrance of loss onto a terrain of melancholia creates identities that are emergent and turbulent spaces of struggle and agency. This theme anchors many of the chapters. Vicki Sara Hallet (pp. 74-90), for example, presents a case study of NL’s intergenerational patra-linear families to reveal the performative geographies of island spaces in which newcomers are “strangers”, a designation that produces the aporia it names. R. M. Kennedy (pp. 103-116) draws on Walter Benjamin’s notion of the catastrophic “wreckage of modernity” to read loss autobiographically against the sign of Ron Hynes’ “Sonny”, a supple identificatory figure whose “burden expresses the melancholic dilemmas of love and loss for all minoritized cultures” learning to live with colonial ambivalence and grief. Like Kennedy, Kate Bride (pp. 226-245) wonders what it means to remember loss through iconic forms of cultural heritage, for example, Cassie Brown’s *Death on the Ice (1972)*. Bride demonstrates how the book’s photographs of the heinous 1914 sealing disaster have become a part of the cultural imaginary of what it means to be a Newfoundlander/Labradorian—identity positions imbued with notions of death and living with loss.

We should ask under what conditions, discursive and institutional, do “identity” differences become salient or defining characteristics of people and their ways of life, especially given the anomalous state of the sundry spaces and bodies of Newfoundland and Labrador? Kelly and Yeoman’s interpretative methodologies embrace geography, history (personal and collective), and metaphor as primary strata for reading that “beautiful terrible” place called Newfoundland and Labrador and its imbrication in social suffering. For Kelly and Yeoman—whether it is in a serious autobiographical meditation on the work of ambivalence in coming and going as an academic Newfoundlander, or on the distinctive ways in which NL remembers its vertiginous eddies of wartime anguish—the past slices grievous lines of hurt into the present. Reading performances of NL identity against this un-mourned “structure of feeling” can, therefore, only bring forward something better: dialogue and increased understanding.

Situated within a tradition of theoretical and philosophical studies that takes the personal as its starting point, this volume bravely tackles the difficult knowledge of loss in a way that is unburdened of the periodic tediousness of academic prose. Artists Marlene Creates (pp. 91-101) and Clar Doyle (pp. 117-126) draw on material culture as commemorative avenues of grace. Both Creates and Doyle anchor their narratives in a strong identification with workers and lay people as keepers of public memory. Tshaukuesh (Elizabeth Penashue) addresses the reader in a first person voice in two languages (Innu-aimun and English), that embodies grace in its invocation to witness development on the Upper and Lower Churchill and the anguish it engenders for Keepers of the Land (pp. 246-253). Similarly, Inuit teacher and curriculum specialist Sophie Tuglavina (pp. 157-175) affirms language as the fragile lynch pin for cultural survival. Tuglavina's bilingual (Inuktitut/English) essay elaborates a cruel narrative of how the inability of Native communities to provide first language education for children—because of scarce resources, qualified personnel and remote geography—results in the spectre of loss of traditional knowledge and the death of well-being.

The states of struggle that these essays portray reach out as fresh and intimate, opening questions about cultural grief in relation to anger, colonialism, development, diaspora, voice, sadness, living North, and facing forward. Writing in a deeply personal way exposed for all to see is difficult to achieve in an academic text, without seeming sentimental or solipsistic. A clear strength of *Despite This Loss* is that the editors and authors achieve this, while at the same time informing their perspectives with the rigor of helpful insights from Sigmund Freud, Walter Benjamin, Emanuel Levinas, Roger Simon, Deborah Britzman, and Roland Barthes, among others.

A significant strength of the book is how it affirms NL as both a geographical and a metaphorical reality in whose spaces co-exist primary expressions of coloniality; and therefore of post-coloniality. For example, it is difficult to read Robert Mellin's chapter about vernacular architecture and resilience on Fogo Island (pp. 34-73) without at the same time thinking about the dizzying postmodern building extravaganza that native multi-millionaire Zita Cobb has begun through her mammoth investment on a stretch of rock long known for its ability to clear the ground for new relations. Susan Tilley (pp. 127-136) sabotages notions of fixedness in NL identity in her personal narrative about being devalued in academia through language, at the same time as being exoticized and romanticized by outsiders. In Tilley we read NL identity as a mobile practice, capable of operating on the fringes. The losses that attend diaspora can excite difference as a space of hope for those who return "home". This is a theme that also grounds the chapters of John Hoben (pp. 200-225) and Jennifer Wicks (pp. 137-156). In asking how representations of loss are mediated by discourse and mythology, Hoban reads survivor testimony in a NL rural community as a form of counter-hegemonic discourse, that—even though it may lack nuanced historical complexity—demands from the witness an ethical response. Wicks draws our attention in important ways to how very difficult it is to research discursive processes in relation to identity, especially in the company of research participants whose voices are overpopulated with the politics of historical colonialist relations. By revisiting loss through the politicized routes of specific cultural, social, and personal genealogies, *Despite This Loss* contributes to critical educational practice by constructing new theoretical and methodological perspectives on mourning and memory, thus engaging subjugated histories. Ultimately, NL lives on in the reader's imaginary as a dynamic site in the production of new meanings about loss and identity, legible from the salvage of these perspectives.

Educational writing at its best does not provide easy answers and solutions; it creates problems. It performs a transitive affect. I am grateful to Kelly and Yeoman *et al.* for editing and authoring a collection that brings the human in its frailty and precariousness onto the educational stage, thereby allowing us, as Judith Butler says, “to stand for the value and dignity of human life, to react with outrage when lives are degraded or eviscerated without regard for their value as lives”. I thank them also for the honour of including, posthumously, the voice of Dianne Grant in the collection. Grant’s contribution (pp.176-191) squarely implicates schooling in the reproduction of inequality for Canadian students. Schooling in Canada’s North is implicated in projects of loss that situate division at the core. Confederation, first language struggles, and the lure of the Land coalesce in processes of grief. *Despite This Loss* opens conditions for acquiring a new sense of immensity and humanity that may incite and motivate change.

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Aparna Vaidik (2010) *Imperial Andamans: Colonial Encounter and Island History*, Cambridge Imperial and Post-Colonial Studies Series, New York, Palgrave Macmillan, v+282pp, hbk, ISBN: 978-0-230-57605-6. US\$89.00.

This book presents an original, critical, reflexive evaluation of the imperial and historical frame of reference against the backdrop of Andaman Islands.

The Andamans, known also as ‘*Kalapani*’ (or Black waters), were traditionally foregrounded with images of depravity, and notoriety being the infamous penal colony of the erstwhile Raj. The phantasmagorical images of this island space being inhabited with criminals beyond redemption, of revolutionaries and mutineers and the cannibalistic tribes continued into the historicised memory of modern India. The recent controversy relating to the exploitative tourism demeaning the ‘traditionally hostile’ Jarawa tribal women ended in a flurry of media frenzy with Delhi, the distant national capital, seeking an immediate ban and redress of this inglorious practice. This book therefore helps to dispel the myths of ‘islandic’ existence away from the mainland of the subcontinent and helps to reconnect the multi-scalar identity of the Andamans, which was imbricated between ‘*Kalapani*’ and ‘*Muktitirth*’ (or site of pilgrimage) in the collectivized memory of independent India. This book presents the eventual trajectory of transformation of penal space to that of a nationalist space to redeem the excesses of the colonial rule.

The Andamans emerged as a natural prison for the rebellious mutineers of the 1857 revolt. This book attempts to engage with the physiography of such incarceration, and India’s ability to enforce incarceration, surveillance and segregation at various stages of its history. The reductionist assumptions are thereby challenged providing a fresh insight into both the penal and ‘imprisoned’ history of the islands. The book brings to the fore the continued debate relating to penal versus free colony and reassesses the moral profligacy of the Andamans. The final reinstating of a quasi-penal settlement allowed the option of implementing ‘voluntary migration’ to the islands.

The author uses diverse sources to evaluate the historical foundations of the Andamans, and to excavate and reclaim the voices of the subaltern classes - and of women in particular – thus somehow balancing official narratives with unofficial texts. The marginalization of island spaces, on the peripheries of civilization, is an abiding issue through the text. The book challenges the idea of a cosy relationship between island spaces and prisons. Island geography militated against its categorization as a penal colony, a natural prison. This resulted in the emergence of the ‘discordant dialectics between space and punishment’ and what was meant by punishment, which echoes on-going debates in liberal democracies today. The book seriously questions the overarching analysis of the normative disciplinary framework of governance advocates in colonial and post-colonial studies of empire. Indeed, in this space, the original indigenous population was marginalized to become relics of the past.

The book is divided into seven chapters imaginatively titled to highlight the spatial context of the island and its community. The first chapter provides the island problematic where the discourse of cannibalism is superimposed on pre and colonial discourses. The idea of impurity, cannibalistic, demon-spirited island status is passed on to the lore of the times.

The second chapter provides the context for a social and spatial insularity of the tropical island, a condition which helped to reinforce assertions and imaginations of death and disease. At all times, one can discern the enormous effort made to invoke providence and thereby justify paternalistic colonial rule in the subcontinent. Penal transportation was advocated as the basis for the creation of a new moral order with the rule of colonial law in the wake of the revolt of 1857.

The next chapter sets out the imperial agenda for the territorialization of the oceans and establishing the outposts of the empire. Control of island spaces becomes legitimate in order to pursue the imperatives of trade. Indeed, the Andamans were initially abandoned as an option in 1796, only to be reclaimed when there was difficulty in establishing a foothold in the neighbouring Nicobar island chain.

Chapter three presents the mode of reclaiming the wilderness of the Andamans. This domestication proceeded with an explicit understanding that remoteness of space would provide a natural quarantine; a deterrent to the escape of hardened criminals. Here, surveillance and segregation was not strictly enforced as in normal prisons. The mortality rates soared in the region, thereby making the island space uneconomic.

Chapter four highlights the nuances of the ‘redemptive space’. This is a very interesting chapter, highlighting the internal dissensions of colonial administration. There was a disconnect between the stated official command and the practices on the ground. The dialectics of space and punishment have been a key innovation of this chapter. The skill-based classification of convicts was highly innovative, meant to extract the maximum rents out of the bodied population in the colony. The definition of crime, criminality and depravity assumed new meaning in the Andamans. “Island space became a normative, redemptive and a creative domain”.

The issue of convict and free-settler dynamics (as elaborated in Chapter five) came to the fore in the management of labour transported from India and surrounding extremities of the British Asian empire. The colonial administrators were alarmed with the imminent rise of child population in the Andamans. Race, ethnicity and religion were closely imbricated in the settlement colony. Key distinctions between life convicts versus short-term convicts, local-born and non-convicts provided powerful insights into the boundary between efficient and

inefficient labour. This was also counterpoised with the civilization of the indigenous population of the Andamans. Thus addiction, licentiousness and sexual promiscuity all were in dire need to be managed by colonial scientific endorsements.

Chapter six highlights the myriad character of Andamans. The 1910 saw the eventual conversion of this penal settlement into a nationalist space. This space became part of the nationalist hagiography.

Convicts who were released after their time out on the penal colony chose not to settle in the Andamans, thereby jeopardising the very idea of an imagined future for the islands. The Andamans thus became a space for challenging the liberal notions of western civilization and the 'rule of law', which at most instances were declared and condemned as being racist and inhumane.

The last substantive chapter engages with the issue of sustainability of the penal colony, in terms of the extensive experimentation undertaken in the 1860s and 1870s. There was a conflict of interest between the developmental needs of an island colony, the disciplinary modes of moral conduct, of penal administration, financial viability and indeed the issue of free settlement of the Andamans. The increasing blurring of the boundaries between the penal identity and that of a settlement colony became inevitable. Was there any indication or anticipation of this situation unfolding itself in the formative years of the acquisition of Andamans?

The inscription of space as a text throws up interesting questions on how discourses are linked to space (Foucault) or to Lefebvre and his notion of the 'production of space'. Indeed, the meaning of space is unaccounted for in the quest for the identity of that island space called the 'Andamans'. The book does well to suggest that the island space was not construed and constructed in a socio-political vacuum. My query is whether the representation of space can be causally linked to the production and administration of space. This book presents an island space produced through conflict and compromise between those who control the space and those who inhabit it. Both are seen as participants in the same historical trajectory.

Thus, the extension from a penal colony to that of a free settlement saw the eventual incorporation of the Islands into the Indian Union of States. Insularity was given a new meaning by the advent of colonialism and imperialism. Isolation and remoteness still remain issues in the postcolonial context and 'wildness' today is substituted by sexually manifest exoticism.

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Roger Lovegrove (2012) *Islands Beyond the Horizon: The Life of Twenty of the World's Most Remote Places*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, iiv+228pp, hbk, ISBN: 978-0-19-960649-8, £16.99.

Roger Lovegrove's *Islands Beyond the Horizon* offers descriptions of twenty remote islands, in which the author reflects on their wildlife and vulnerability. A chapter is devoted to each and the book is topped and tailed with an introduction and epilogue. There is an appendix detailing the scientific names of species mentioned throughout the text, along with a page of notes and four pages of references organized by chapter. An index focuses upon place names and species. Each island chapter is prefixed by a decontextualized outline shape of the island. There are 21 black and white photographs distributed throughout the book, and a simple outline map locating the places, as well as a tipped in section of twenty colour plates. Like most OUP volumes, this is a nicely designed package. The prose is carefully written and words are chosen with care. It looks quite nice and reads well.

Lovegrove is a conservationist, whose career has been spent fighting for birds and wildlife. I like Lovegrove's books. His *Silent Fields* is a passionate and engaged history of the warfare waged by British people against wildlife, in the name of sport. Carefully researched and evidenced it presents a beautifully written and compelling narrative, arguing the conservation case, and revealing a largely unreported history to a crossover audience. Small wonder then that *Islands* also emphasizes the natural world. Unfortunately, I am much less convinced by this book. Sadly, and in comparison to previous books, this volume feels lightweight and partial, but also lacks the visual flair and passion needed to carry it to a wider audience. It comes across as yet another narrative about islands as wild and remote places, and yet another general reflection on a random selection of visited places, but without the confidence to stand out from the field. As such, it is quite hard to see who would buy this book.

The selection of islands is an eclectic mix. Instead of cherry-picking biodiversity hotspots, or going for any geographical spread, this book flags up islands that the author has visited. A partial geography emerges, centered on the UK and Atlantic, but also emphasizing cold water islands. Of the twenty, only Guam and Tuamotu are in the Pacific, and only Ile Aux Aigrettes falls in the Indian Ocean. There is not a single North American island, nothing from the Mediterranean, Baltic, South East Asia, or Antarctica. On the other hand this is a refreshingly different list of places. Bird islands predominate in the descriptions and, despite claims to the contrary, this book only rarely considers human communities. The common factors leading to vulnerability become atomized because of the focus on individual islands. However, and paradoxically, there is not really enough space devoted to develop each island story, and so only a limited sense of each place comes across. Maps might have helped here, or some indication of how isolated and remote each case actually is. A more careful selection of photographs, with stronger links to the text, would have strengthened the story.

I also really wanted to know how these places might relate to each other, or to continents or broader themes. Lovegrove doesn't do this. Instead, he acknowledges in his preface that this book gathers together and records island experiences. But as he says in the introduction: it is a 'fairly personal' account. How much more interesting it would have been had he *actually* recorded his experiences in each place, and made the book 'very personal'. That is what the best nature writing does. Robert Macfarlane wouldn't give a 'fairly personal' account: his *Wild Places* works because of direct personal encounter, and arguably the best island writing should also be personal. What we get in *Islands Beyond the Horizon* is a description of each island, nicely compiled, but often strangely anodyne, and repeating quite well known published accounts available elsewhere. The prose only comes alive when Lovegrove

recounts a personal experience, for example when visiting the Lianamuil cliffs on Mingulay in the Hebrides for the first time, or when describing moonless nights on Great Skellig.

So the mystique and magnetism of remoteness flagged up in Lovegrove's introduction isn't really captured in this book. Contrast Judith Schalansky's *Atlas of Remote Islands*, a best-selling success [Reviewed in *ISJ* 6(1), 2011], where eclecticism works because of design, and where the appeal of the remote becomes successfully commodified. Contrast Darwin's descriptions of the Galápagos in *Voyage of the Beagle*, where direct observation is deployed in the name of earth-changing science. Sadly, Lovegrove's book sits uneasily between two markets, part conservation science (witness the limited bibliographic references tacked on at the end), but part travelogue (witness the at times anecdotal style adopted for each chapter). It is quite nicely written, and is reasonably well designed; but it lacks both depth and confidence, and as a consequence fails to offer anything of great consequence to either the mass market, or to Island Studies.

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Karin Topsø Larsen (Ed.) (2012) *From One Island to Another: A Celebration of Island Connections*, Nexø, Bornholm, Denmark, Centre for Regional and Tourism Research (CRT), 204pp, ISBN: 978-87916-77-29-8. DKR.99-.

Island studies is a new issue in Denmark; quite paradoxical as this country is a nation with several major and many smaller islands, which suffer difficult conditions as sustainable all-year communities. Despite the small scale of Denmark, the islands have not yet achieved their logical place in the major discussion about peripheral areas which is part of the public debate concerning favourable conditions for all parts of the country. An essential step towards an actual self-understanding as a Danish island-nation has thus not yet appeared.

This book is therefore a welcome opportunity to launch a focus on the island situation from angles that highlight key themes in an analytical and forward-looking manner, arguing for a much more differentiated understanding of the varied territories of the nation by reflecting on their specific conditions and challenges.

This book offers a collection of research articles from a recent ISISA (International Small Islands Studies Association) conference held on the Danish island of Bornholm in August 2010, and is described as being "written by island researchers for islanders". But it is certainly more than that: since the research centre CRT as the organizer of the conference and publisher has set the framework, it is also a depiction of Bornholm as a symbolic as well as a concrete take-off for a vital understanding of islands as laboratories for valuable insights and tests of prospective national importance. Thus, the book sets out an interdisciplinary approach as well as a focus on Danish self-understanding, especially viewed from the perspective of Bornholm.

The collection of 16 articles and the triple foreword generates a starting point which specifically communicates the local research results, and brings contributions from other places as well to orchestrate an island context of Bornholmian, Baltic and Danish designations altogether. The foreword and the introductory article launches the articles: CRT, ISISA and island research in general before the unfolding of the five themes with three articles each

under the headings - I: *Islands, Denmark, Bornholm, and CRT*; II: *Island cultures – design, history and identity*; III: *Island development - heritage, food and tourism*; IV: *Island sustainability – capacity building and knowledge promotion*; and V: *Green islands – sustainable energy and sustainable living*. The contributors consist primarily of researchers from CRT or from the Bornholm area, including significant detours to the Baltic and northern Germany and, further afield, Canada, Chile and Australia.

At the end of the introductory article about the content and thematic span, a crucial emphasis is put on the text's ability to become a testimony of collaboration, followed by an essential question: *Is this* (configuration of efforts of academic scholarship, business enterprise, government initiative, research agencies and international organizations) *perhaps yet one other impressive achievement that is easier to deploy on small islands than on large and sprawling mainlands?* Well, it seems essential to create new alliances which precisely embrace the challenging issue of qualitative scale. Exactly because islands really do offer a clarity through their ability to integrate complex projects; simultaneously pointing at and generating vital impact on their environment, rather than being absorbed by the myriad of quantitative opportunities on the mainland.

Island studies is, in its interdisciplinarity, continuously and consciously focusing on a basic dilemma: a tight linkage to a delimited geographical point of view *in relation to* the indispensable bid to put forward knowledge *beyond* this – potentially – entrenched kind of view. Otherwise one is at high risk of locking up the whole area as just another specialized, even absolutist field of study. That islands traditionally have functioned persistently as tests of social, ecological and economic sustainability demonstrates indeed the need for research that directly work in continuation of this main idea of interdisciplinarity.

The range of themes meets the above ambition of a testimony of cooperation. The introductory articles and the very thematic approaches make up a solid whole in their scope, elucidating the common situation of islands on the global level with the far-reaching possibilities they offer to enrich the remaining 90% of the planet with new and untested ideas. Individually and collectively, the articles also generate a delicate balance between being scholarly and their ability to reach a wider public of island-supporters of various sorts.

A presentation of island research in a Danish context is yet so unusual that this anthology contains sufficient novelty to be described as a qualitative breakthrough. In this sense, island research has become closer to land on Danish latitudes and longitudes, clearing the way for a changed and much needed Danish self-understanding in a cultural and social context.

In the same breath, another dilemma soon occurs: as reporting the results and status of actual island research the book is an excellent testimony by its geographical focus and orientation. However its Anglophone design will still actually have a limited impact on major Danish audiences, although most Danes generally have achieved a comprehensive skill in the English language. In this situation a wider communication of its findings to several other circles on a national level would be most desirable too.

Another criticism deals with the range of islands in this alleged focus on 'Danish islands'. As the most specific empirical focus exclusively concerns the seven largest islands (for obvious methodological reasons), some essential parts of the rest of the Danish archipelagoes have become *de facto* deselected, rather than being included as a logical consequence of the overall premise of urged island collaboration. This lack of scope thereby confirms the official picture outside this book project despite the – understated – opposite intention. A consistent approach

should dare to embrace the rich diversity of Danish islands at the same time as it adopts this otherwise constructive focus.

In the introductory article, Bornholm is described as a “small Danish island”. Indeed, but it’s also the biggest of the real Danish islands, that is; those without a bridge to seriously weaken their islandness! Let us hope that CRT and other island-researchers on the Danish scene soon will integrate islands *of any size* in the perspective of their presentations that are just as vital and convincing as in this work.

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Godfrey Baldacchino (Ed.) (2011) *Island Songs: A Global Repertoire*. Lanham MD, The Scarecrow Press Inc., 340 pp, hbk, ISBN: 978-0-8108-8177-8. US\$70.00

This stellar collection of essays, edited by Godfrey Baldacchino, fills a gap in recent literature on song and its connection to island life. The study of the Island location is an important laboratory for the articulation of the process of “emplacement”, the construction of place through music, and specifically song. The fundamental premises of the book—that islands and island cultures are concentrated convergences of “place” and all that this entails, and that intersections of power dynamics, multiple histories, self/other relations, and communal wellbeing are revealed through song—are well supported through the diverse essays found in this volume. In addition to broader issues, a range of valuable information on specific cultures gives this volume added significance for scholars. Awareness of place is fundamental to creating a meaningful life, and song itself is a complex negotiation of identity in the contemporary globalized world.

The liminal nature of island life—between land and sea, points of transition that become places of dwelling—give rise to an expressive culture that can serve to reach out and protect against the incursion of the “mainland”. The importance of song to/in island life is contained in the intersection of narrative; the power of song and music to generate community solidarity, and as a mode of cultural transmission. The song is a form that creates a bridge between the unique histories expressed through individual and group narratives, and serves to inscribe the island landscape with deep meaning. The music provides the visceral expression of a shared history, brought to life and experienced through the act of singing. Song is an important locus for the negotiation of identity.

The complexity of identity and language, and the relation of song as a means of defining oneself as unique, in juxtaposition to the mainland, tourist culture, colonial hegemony, and/or as part of broader historical narratives, is a thread in several of the book’s chapters. Ijahnya Christian examines the role of song, popular music and the Creole language of Caribbean Islands as a site of resistance to oppression and poverty, a celebration and preservation of African traditions, and as locus of the “double language” which fosters in-group identity. The construction and preservation of a shared cultural heritage are discussed by Soraya Marcano in relation to building identity in Puerto Rico, Heather Sparling discusses language preservation and a Gaelic past on Cape Breton, Henry Johnson looks at language revitalization on the island of Jersey, and Jennifer Cartermole considers at the uncertain future of *Sigidrigi* songs on the Fiji Islands. Key questions about authenticity and the

construction of identity through song require a complex discursive analysis, and the themes of each of these essays are fertile ground for continued research. It is important to ask difficult questions about the continued validity of traditions if they no longer resonate with local lifestyles, and whether they should be preserved through institutional support.

The forces of globalization and the erosion of local culture are endemic to many island cultures, apparent in the impact of tourism, the global mass media, and changing demographics. Responses to these processes can vary greatly. Deatra Walsh examines the group Hey Rosetta!, which still expresses identification with Newfoundland's culture, even though the music and lyrics are distinct from "traditional" Newfoundland music. The complex matrix of discursive meaning expressed through song is traced in several essays. Judith R. Cohen examines traditional song in Ibiza, which faces an uphill battle for survival as it is threatened externally by burgeoning tourism, and internally by the erosion of traditional performance contexts and their lack of relevance with contemporary local youth. In Sicily, Sergio Bonanzinga contends that institutional preservation of local song traditions has helped in their survival and continued development in new contexts of "world music".

The study of song also offers a range of historical analyses, including the development of language and changing social contexts in island life, and the array of influences from migration and mainland musical forms. Song is a repository of embodied cultural practices and oral histories, and is doubly important for cultures that lack a written language. At the same time, revival movements and definitions of "authentic folk culture" are often constrained by political and economic considerations. These issues are outlined in several of the essays, including Waldo Garrido and Philip Hayward's examination of the music culture of the Chiloé archipelago, in Chile, with the influence of tourism and the intervention of marketing considerations in the performance of "authentic" folk song.

The act of singing is a performance of identity, and represents a particular mode of agency that is both discursive and embodied. Language, repertoires, and performance contexts both support and define local communal experiences. The importance of song to well-being is explicated in Ray and Kathryn Burnett's chapter on Scotland's Hebrides. The relation of an individual's song to the natural world, through iconic representation of bird song, and also to the supernatural world through fairies and personified forces of nature, was an important means of creating communion with the environment. At the same time, the shared body of songs and stories provided a deep sense of communal connection, important in the challenging life on the Hebrides.

Island Songs is well organized, diverse, and thought-provoking. As part of the AIRS Project (Advancing Interdisciplinary Research in Singing), the cumulative effect of these essays clearly demonstrates how song and music serve not only as important subjects in themselves, but also shed light on many other fields of enquiry, including ethnomusicology, anthropology, and history. This book may also be of interest to students of social geography and philosophy. Song, while shared among most human cultures, can also function as a performance of the local, or the musical method of mapping self and other on a broad continuum. The cognitive operations of song and music perception and production constitute another study area that could expand the research contained in this volume.

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Nicholas Shaxson (2012) *Treasure Islands: Tax Havens and the Men who Stole the World*, London, Bodley Head, pbk, ISBN: 978-1-847-92110-9, £14.99.

Many islands have been tax havens since at least the 1920s; and from the 1960s some started to host larger, more functional offshore finance centres. In essence this is associated with ‘jurisdiction’ – what has been called the outworkings of the uneven global financial topography. Nicholas Shaxson, a financial journalist who writes for *The Economist* and *Financial Times*, makes the opaque world of tax havens and offshore finance burst into vivid life for the general reader. In itself, this is a huge service, especially for residents of islands hosting this global industry; but the book goes beyond just opening up the sometimes murky world of offshore finance.

Shaxson sets out his stall early on arguing that offshore is not just a ‘colourful outgrowth’ of the modern global economy but rather, it lies at its very centre. He demonstrates this through a detailed overview of the rise of both the individual and corporate use of offshore. The idea of offshore finance being fundamentally more than just an exotic minor branch of globalization is not unique to this book. Academics in international political economy (IPE) and development geography, as well as island studies, have suggested this for some years, but fundamentally this is not a book targeted primarily at academics. Instead, this book challenges the financial sector’s version of events by making this complex, arcane area accessible to the intelligent layperson. Apart from being informative, it is also designed to inspire action, and the book ends with a blunt list of recommendations. If policy-makers in islands or onshore, let alone more junior offshore finance employees, read this challenging book, they may have their eyes opened.

Shaxson’s experience as a financial journalist means that his book is a highly engaging read, but with sufficient chapter notes to point readers to original sources. This blend of very readable analysis and fascinating overarching narrative is reminiscent of Anthony Sampson’s work that dissected the political economy of power, class and the international economy in the 1970s.

The broad narrative is that, since the 1960s, the UK in particular constructed what Shaxson calls a ‘spider’s web’ of offshore finance centres connected to London (itself one of the largest offshore centres). He argues that this is a key part of the global political economy since offshore finance’s magnitude facilitates vast outflows worth billions of dollars as multinational corporations and the world’s wealthiest people dodge their tax liabilities. Crucially, this undermines the basic activities of the democratic nation state itself, both in OECD countries and the less developed world. Furthermore, it fundamentally challenges the post-war social contract between firms and employees, with the largest firms paying the smallest tax bills compared with small businesses or individuals. This big picture argument, whilst logically constructed, is perhaps pushed a little too hard in places, and no doubt the next generation of academics working on offshore might debate the exact role of agency; nevertheless, it is a very interesting notion.

Certainly, the emergence of new offshore centres, often in small islands, was highly convenient for global financial capital (and was normally designed by players in the sector). And, given the sheer scale of offshore transactions, this development remains hugely profitable. However, I am not sure that the balance of broad brush narrative (almost conspiracy) fully stacks up against expediency of action and individual agency in the fast changing post-war world linked to existing patterns of finance originating from British

imperial links. That said, Shaxson quotes some fascinating memos that have been recently found in the UK National Archives that fundamentally challenge some islands' own glossy narratives of their emergence as offshore centres. This use of new archive material to illuminate contradictions within different parts of the UK state is a real strength of the book. The memos show different opinions within the onshore state between the Foreign Office, Bank of England, Inland Revenue and Overseas Development (now DFID) as to whether some territories should pursue offshore activities. The weakness is that at times Shaxson slips into polemic which some readers may find a little irritating. However, that is the risk that comes along with popularizing a controversial subject.

The book contains much of interest on islands and island societies as the hosts of offshore finance, particularly independent Caribbean states and the UK's Overseas Territories such as the Cayman Islands. There is also substantial mention of the UK's Crown Dependencies of Jersey, Guernsey and the Isle of Man. Jersey is used to flesh out some of the human stories within the offshore world and here I need to declare an interest. Given my family origins in Jersey and research on its offshore centre, I was interviewed by Shaxson myself, and in fairness, he has been broadly faithful to the interview material.

The parts in the book where Shaxson presents the notion of the 'captured state' are fascinating and will engage many readers. For islands and other small polities, there are serious questions here about local political control (or not) of the offshore sector, and how financial capital exploits the limitations of small jurisdictions and the restricted public space for robust, evidence-based discourse. Shaxson does an important service to small jurisdictions when he details the unpleasant side of small local communities and how dissent from the officially constructed narrative may be treated. He uses personal stories of former offshore employees and outspoken politicians in both the Caribbean and British Crown Dependencies to illustrate the confluence of the interests of financial capital and the islands' local political elites.

One small omission is the book's lack of a bibliography. Although there are detailed chapter notes, a bibliography would have been useful for readers wanting to follow up specific references.

Overall, this is probably the best book on offshore finance written for a general audience that I have read. For islanders and policy-makers who wish to understand the industry on their doorstep, it may serve an important purpose as it challenges official versions of events and brings many ethical questions into the light that the offshore industry and some island governments might prefer remain unasked. For island scholars, the book is also a useful resource as it gathers in one place the 'state of the art' of recent research on the significance of offshore finance. This book would also be an excellent supporting text for courses on island studies, regional development/geography such as those focussed on the Caribbean, as well as more mainstream IPE and international development classes.

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Maeve McCusker and Anthony Soares (eds.) (2011) *Islanded Identities: Constructions of Postcolonial Cultural Insularity*, New York, Rodopi, hbk, xxviii+243pp, ISBN: 978-904203406-8, € 54 / US\$ 73.00

In a brief account of the emergence of island theory in his contribution to this volume, Matthew Boyd Goldie describes the conceptual overlaps between this field and that of global studies. He focuses in particular on a shared reliance on various notions of the network, but distinguishes island theory by the fact that it ‘grows out of a more critical postcolonialism and looks back at least to the Early Modern era’ (p. 30). In *Islanded Identities*, Maeve McCusker and Anthony Soares have responded to a need to explore the distinctiveness of the field – not least in terms of its historical dimensions, and its interconnections with postcolonialism – by bringing together the current selection of ten diverse but complementary essays. The volume contributes actively to the continued evolution of island studies theory whilst ensuring that the various constructions of ‘cultural insularity’ – a term foregrounded in the collection’s subtitle – are granted the central space they merit within the evolving field of postcolonialism. As such, and as the editors state in their introduction, the authors aim to elaborate ‘critical perspectives that complement, but are often critical of, prevailing theories of the postcolonial’ (p. xvii). The collection accordingly provides a useful continuation and expansion of discussions evident in previous key publications such as Rod Edmond and Vanessa Smith’s *Islands in History and Representation* (Routledge, 2003), a collection with which a number of contributors to the present volume engage.

In a regularly cited phrase, Edmond and Smith stated that island narratives have, in the past, ‘tended to slip the net of postcolonial theorizing’ (cited p. xxvi), but the contributors to *Islanded Identities* demonstrate how much this situation has evolved over the past decade. They cover a wide range of geographical sites and island spaces, whilst at the same time underscoring a variety of cultural and linguistic traditions. The cross-disciplinary manoeuvres between and within chapters are ambitious, drawing on historiography, literary studies, sociology, anthropology and cultural studies. The connections suggested across the volume are consequently rich, and the editors have helpfully encouraged cross-referencing between essays, ensuring that this meeting of postcolonial and island studies is presented as an archipelago of cases and ideas that allows recognition of specificity whilst permitting the identification of those patterns of convergence and divergence that increasingly transform ‘insularity’, ‘islanding’ and related terms into evocative and often provocative items of critical currency across the humanities and social sciences.

The editors’ introduction maps the scholarly context of their collection and sketches out a clear rationale for the intellectual urgency of the issues addressed by the essays that follow. Islands are presented as ‘both archetypal and prototypical sites of the colonial experience’ (p. xi), representing a spectrum of forms of such experience that ranges from ‘a particularly complete model of domination and exploitation’ to the possibility of imagining ‘a uniquely sovereign space’ (p. xii). Yet neat models of island identity are disrupted by a recurrent awareness – evident also in a number of the individual chapters – that the colonial or postcolonial island (such as Timor, Ireland, Cyprus or Haiti) is often characterized by division, fracture, fragmentation and a subsequent ‘non-identity’, evidence of the ‘complex afterlives of empire’ (p. xv) apparent throughout much of this volume. The opening chapter by Matthew Boyd Goldie offers a clear historicization of recent island theory and at the same time interrogates key items of critical currency, such as ‘island space’, ‘island habitation’ and ‘island culture’. His overview of the scholarship produced over the past three decades serves an invaluable introductory purpose, and provides as a concise overview of models of insularity as well as of modes of what he calls ‘inter-island connectedness’ (p. 10). The main

body of his study draws on island theories from the classical and medieval worlds, exploring in particular the place of the Antipodes in the elaboration of understandings of insularity as a ‘temporal and spatial condition that is common to islands and continents’ (p. 27). Goldie’s aim is to suggest the presence of conceptual continuity within geo-historical discontinuity, and his reflections have direct relevance to the following four chapters, all of which focus on specific islands in the Caribbean and Indian Ocean. In an illuminating essay on Patrick Chamoiseau, for instance, Maeve McCusker complements much recent work on Edouard Glissant by examining the place of the island in the writings of this other key Martinican author. Taking as her starting point the systematic French diminution and ornamentalization of colonized island spaces, she suggests that Chamoiseau deploys in a text such as *Un dimanche au cachot* a focus on the local in order to present the Caribbean island as a complex, palimpsestic space in its own right. In conclusion, McCusker states the need ‘to sound rather than to map the island space, and to plumb the multiple layers of the past through speculative interrogation’ (p. 59). In Jonathan Skinner’s study of post-disaster poetry from Montserrat, a type of ‘literary marooning’ (p. 67) is seen as another means of responding to neo-colonial dependency whilst articulating a postcolonial consciousness. Two chapters on Mauritius – Ritu Tyagi on ‘Mauritianness’ in the work of Ananda Devi, and Burkhard and Cornelia Schnepel on the negotiations of island identity through the performative genre of *séga* – analyse the creative responses to insularity in a space that lacks a (human) pre-/colonial past and is marked by the fissured identities of the present. *Séga* is presented as a ‘multi-layered, multi-facetted, polysemic, and hybrid genre’ (p. 116), on the one hand a reflection and performance of a creolized identity, but on the other a form of touristic exoticization common to many island spaces that is far removed from the open, even universalist ambitions of Devi’s literary work.

Also studied in the collection are the ways in which cultural insularity serves as a means of understanding enclaves within colonized, continental or sub-continental spaces, the subject of Ralph Crane’s chapter on British India as a ‘human island’. Crane concludes that such a practice of self-segregation created ‘an enclosed habitat that would isolate, but could not, ultimately, sustain its inhabitants’ (p. 142), and the remaining essays pursue further this key idea of the balance between isolation and connection. Mark Wehrly studies the persistence of power relations in the spheres of journalistic influence that link Ireland and Britain. In a chapter on Timor-Leste, Anthony Soares tracks the ‘islanding’ of Timor through various waves of historical invasion, and highlights the persistent yet ambivalent role of Portugal and Portuguese as elements in a struggle to remain part of globalized processes of communication and exchange.

In their introduction, the editors characterize the postcolonial island as ‘a space of isolation or as one of relation’ (p. xiv), positing in the latter term an emphasis on a generalized emergence of archipelagic spaces described by key thinkers of the local and the global such as Edouard Glissant. Two concluding essays explore in different ways this tension that is already very apparent in the different studies of India and Timor-Leste that precede them, namely the varied place of the intercultural or transversal in island studies theory. Lyn Innes builds on Kamau Brathwaite’s notion of a ‘tidalectics of routes and roots’ (quoted on p. 192) to think about national literary histories and cosmopolitan reading practices, using the island to posit a mode of literacy that allows us to understand ‘what it means to be both inside and outside various cultural contexts, and experience the different kinds of spaces and insularities those contexts permit’ (p. 204). Moving beyond the literary to reflect on the post-imperial polity, Paulo de Medeiros draws on Derridean notions of islandness to think about contemporary Europe itself as a pattern of islands, ‘interconnected, and yet [...] at times in utter isolation’ (p. 221). Challenging myths of insular purity, de Medeiros suggests an island-inspired

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alternative, effectively 'islanding' Europe itself, that furnishes a fitting endorsement of the ambitions of the volume as a whole: 'Perhaps, if we imagine Europe as a conglomerate of impure islands, we might come to build bridges between them and the other islands of the world that are no longer made up of the mountains of corpses that daily arrive at these shores' (p. 221).

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