

## Book reviews

**Helen Kapstein (2017). *Postcolonial nations, islands, and tourism: reading real and imagined spaces*. 226pp. London: Rowman & Littlefield International. ISBN: 978-1-78348-645-8. US\$120.**

In *Postcolonial Nations, Islands, and Tourism: Reading Real and Imagined Spaces*, Helen Kapstein offers previously published and new research to illustrate how the tourist gaze organizes the postcolonial island/nation, from within and without. The book is an enjoyable, richly developed monograph which uses critical theory “to return a critical gaze on the normative and ideal island space.” She analyses how island spaces and “tourist tales” have been used in literary texts and the popular imagination “to shore up the fiction of the nation” as it “struggles to maintain its intactness.” Kapstein effectively exposes the “dirty work of colonialism” in challenging the fictions and violence that undergird both tourism and nation-building in a global economy.

Kapstein’s academic background is in Anglophone postcolonial comparative literary and cultural studies. Her book is organized geographically into three sections of two chapters each; focused on England, Sri Lanka, and South Africa respectively. Across chapters, Kapstein examines the island as a paradox that is “supplemented and reiterated by other spaces, real and imagined, internal and external” while she deconstructs the “false dichotomies of islandness versus connectedness and coherence versus contamination.” She establishes in Chapter One the failure of the island to provide a central organizing concept for the nation. She shows the island, the nation, and the Robinsonade genre as similarly elusive and vulnerable. Chapter Two, like the book itself, is full of examples which compete for the lead. Many deserve their own volumes.

The book’s second section reviews emerging trends in tourism through Sri Lankan author Romesh Gunesequera’s oeuvre. Herein, Kapstein illustrates how nation-building around tourism is a “global proposition—a mode of translation (albeit a fraught one)” that works at many scales. Her choice of fictions displays tourism in its “frustrated, messy, and failed forms.” She describes adventure and dark tourism as manifestations of the postmodern tourist’s desire for authenticity or “a reality effect, that is, for wanting to be an insider” where increasingly, “work and war become the object of the tourist gaze” in “a new kind of safari” (Gunesequera’s term). Her applied focus in this section on the tactics and strategies of tourism provides clear connections between theory and material (economic) effects; for instance, she observes that both the nation and the island share the priorities of “accumulation, storage, and investment in a particular space.” Here, as well, Kapstein demonstrates her ecocritical sensibility when analyzing both the agency and neoliberal production of nature as an integral part of nation-building. She impressively describes in a single frame the “vexed spaces” and “shared violence” of the nature preserve, the game park, and the war zone, wherein the impossibility of achieving authenticity increasingly “ratchets up the tourist experience,” suggesting more disturbing trends to come.

Kapstein’s final section on Robben Island is her strongest. As the product of mixed methods, these chapters upstage her earlier text-based analyses. Her complementary combination of close reading, field study, discourse analysis, and primary source archival research best exemplifies an interdisciplinary approach that “lends equal authority to different kinds of knowledge.” Here, she provides insightful readings of “cultural artifacts” such as visitor questionnaires, memoirs, correspondence, advertising, and official documents. Kapstein also vividly describes her experiences as a young researcher in place (including being a castaway “stranded” overnight on Robben Island). The methodological shift between chapters provides markedly different reading experiences yet advances her goal of moving beyond island “as trope” to examine “actual power relations, specific geographies, and material economies.” This section also does the most radical work. Throughout the book, after Homi Bhabha, Kapstein catalogues ways in which the center-periphery dichotomy is “disrupted.” Noting that

returning the colonial gaze “is a key component of postcolonial empowerment,” she is purposefully “making space for resistant [re]imaginings” which might “destabilize those same spaces.” For example, these final chapters raise social justice questions of uneven access to and control over the world heritage site for average South African residents and “domestic tourists.” Additionally, her analysis of the “Brand South Africa” campaign reveals contested visions of the new nation after apartheid. The book could be strengthened by theoretical engagement with uneven development, decolonization, (neo)coloniality/modernity, etc., as well as by the inclusion of more diverse, local voices. A different book—perhaps better focused on “the real lives of most people on the (post)colonial margins”—might find Kapstein deeper in the field, collecting her own visitor surveys and interviews. Missing is a reflexive statement of positionality and/or solidarity with her subjects; as Kapstein wrote in these pages recently, “we must ask who our work is in the service of.”

Kapstein explains why the island and the center will not hold. Though she analyzes these as unstable categories (reproduced and reinvented in new spatial configurations and forms of colonial violence), she stops short of imagining them differently. Needed is a conclusion section to consider implications and alternatives. For instance, the book’s many interisland, intertidal examples—including Jonathan Raban’s *Coasting* and Gunesekera’s *Reef and Noontide Toll*—could benefit from an archipelagic analysis, largely avoided here. Archipelagic readings of being (adrift) in-between or just beyond states seem pertinent to Kapstein’s argument against insularity. Describing the irony of Brexit, she asserts this wider (more archipelagic) perspective: “retreating to island status does not reject global interconnectedness; it reaffirms it.” To rethink the island begs the question of what replaces it, locating island and archipelagic studies squarely in the unique, interdisciplinary position to confront some of the most pressing challenges of our time. The stakes are high with the compounded problems of climate change, limits to growth, geopolitical tensions over immigration and refugees, the rise in nationalism, etc. Abandoning such island myths and mentalities is imperative; Kapstein proves why it is necessary and proper to so argue forcefully.

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**Ilan Kelman (Ed.) (2017). *Arcticness: power and voice from the north*. 160pp. London: UCL Press. ISBN: 978-1-78735-014-4. UK£17.99.**

This anthology draws inspiration from island studies and its work on defining ‘islandness’ to explore the identity of islands and islanders. It applies this line of enquiry to the Arctic and its peoples, both challenging and developing the concept of ‘Arcticness’. The collection examines Arcticness through the lenses of ‘power’ and ‘voice’, as the title indicates. In terms of power, it explores Arcticness as an identity that can be instrumentalised, both politically (in terms of resource rights) and financially (as a commodity which sells). It also seeks to convey Arcticness as a human construct, shaped and defined by multiple voices. Structure echoes content, for the text is comprised of a series of chapters by authors from different disciplinary backgrounds—from art to resource management, engineering to anthropology—each contributing to a working definition of Arcticness.

The diversity of *Arcticness: Power and Voice from the North* is highly impressive. Ilan Kelman, a reader in Risk, Resilience and Global Health at UCL, has put together 13 chapters written by 28 contributors, including PhD students, experienced academics and artists. Indigenous and non-indigenous perspectives from the Arctic appear alongside those of people living outside the Arctic Circle. The contributions are hugely varied, ranging from a graphic essay to personal accounts of Arctic living, which sit alongside academic essays covering

everything from resource frontiers to radar measurements of ice. It is rare to find a collection that incorporates such a wide range of perspectives, and it makes for a fascinating and compelling read. This multiplicity also conveys the idea that Arcticness is a relational construct, composed of manifold subjectivities; a discursive skein of perspectives emanating from the arts and sciences. From an island studies standpoint, this imbues Arcticness with archipelagic qualities, which is appropriate considering the numerous islands and archipelagos located within the Arctic Circle.

One criticism that might be levelled at *Arcticness: Power and Voice* is that because it incorporates so many different disciplines, a reader might struggle to critically engage with each chapter. However, all authors have clearly made efforts to explain their arguments in concise and jargon-free language, with Arcticness providing a point of connection within a kaleidoscope of different ideas and perspectives. In some chapters, defining and interrogating Arcticness constitutes the main thrust of the argument, whilst in others it is just one facet of an Arctic-based research question. Marius Warg Næss's 'Reindeer Herding in a Changing World' is an example of the latter. In this chapter, a comparative analysis of reindeer herders in the Arctic and the Qinghai-Tibetan Plateau, Arcticness is not explicitly mentioned until the conclusion. Initially the mention is jarring, but Næss does succeed in contextualising it with his own research question. He suggests that Arcticness is in danger of being defined as a quality linked to a specific place or reality, which could lead to exoticisation or reification. However, comparative studies such as his own make links between the Arctic and other places and peoples, and in forming these connections the Arctic is no longer a place apart, fundamentally different or radically Other.

Larissa Diakiw's graphic essay, 'Conversations in the Dark' does not explicitly mention Arcticness, but it clearly engages with the term as a form of marginalisation and oppression. Through text and illustration it discusses 'The Truth and Reconciliation Commission', an enquiry into the legacy of residential schools for Canada's indigenous and First Nations population. It explores the atrocities committed at these schools through the lens of hunger, quoting from pupils' reflections on their deprivations, showing how food—or lack of—can be instrumentalised as a weapon, not only through imposing scarcity but by alienating people from their culture and modes of survival. Although the graphic essay is a fascinating addition to the anthology, there is a danger that some researchers might not find it sufficiently 'scholarly', as it doesn't synthesise or substantiate information in the same way an academic essay does. However, what it does successfully show is that Arcticness should not solely be perceived as a theoretical construct or intangible quality. Instead it forms part of the fabric of daily life, and can be situated in a specific time and place.

The chapter that constitutes the most sustained engagement with Arcticness is Patrizia Isabelle Duda's 'Arcticness: In the Making of the Beholder'. Duda argues that 'outsider' perspectives have influenced Arctic politics and shaped 'insider' narratives of Arcticness. Outsider perspectives constitute a form of 'Arctic orientalism', one which she shows is undeniably gendered, as it evokes the Arctic as a pristine space to be conquered and managed by the rugged scientist-explorer-hero. Duda shows how these colonial themes have pervaded the neoliberal commercialization of the Arctic and permeated Arctic policy. She suggests that Arcticness is a concept built upon backwards-looking historical legacies, but driven forward by technological, political and economic opportunities. She concludes that Arcticness is a mobile construct, one which has the potential to contribute to northern countries' empowerment. Duda's argument is compelling, and her chapter is one of the few in the collection to approach Arcticness from a gendered perspective.

Ultimately, this book makes a clear and original contribution to the field of Arctic studies, with each chapter adding an extra dimension to the discussion of Arcticness. The anthology should be credited with opening up a conversation about Arcticness, which can be built upon and developed by subsequent theorists working in multiple disciplines. The

establishment of Arcticness as a relational construct will undoubtedly make it a work of interest to island studies researchers, as will the discussions of how Arctic peoples might avoid being essentialised, and reclaim their diverse identities.

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**Luis Galanes Valldejuli (2018). *Tourism and language in Vieques: an ethnography of the post-Navy period*. 157pp. Lanham MD: Lexington Books. ISBN: 978-1-4985-5541-8. US\$110.00.**

In 1941, the United States Navy (USN) appropriated two-thirds of the Caribbean island of Vieques for the purposes of live ammunition training, specifically sea-to-land and air-to-land bombardments and amphibious landings. The civilian population was confined to a corridor along the centre third of the island. In 1999, a grassroots movement to oust the military from the island gained transnational momentum and the USN left the island in 2003.

The end of military exercises in Vieques raised concerns about the challenges of developing the island and improving the islanders' quality of life. Close to two-thirds of the island was polluted by heavy metals and radioactive materials, the island population had reported a disproportionate number of cancer cases, and two generations had lived under intense bombing, which had left islanders with psychological and nervous system disorders. However, there were reasons for staying optimistic about Vieques' post-USN development. After all, the islanders had mobilised the international community to persuade the most powerful military in the world to abandon its interests in the northeastern Caribbean during a time when US militarism was on a rise. Would these same actors be able to coordinate a sustainable development plan on their own terms? Luis Valldejuli's conclusion, after ten years of conducting interviews and participant observation on the island of Vieques, is that the voice of the *viequense* has been ignored in the post-USN scenario.

*Tourism and Language in Vieques: An Ethnography of the Post-Navy Period* argues that the post-Navy period in Vieques has been dominated by the tourism industry, which has been led by immigrants from the continental United States. The book's analysis centres on the language and discourses that *viequenses* use to describe their relationship to the tourism industry and to continental immigrants. Valldejuli finds that the local understandings of the situation in Vieques have not been heard by decision makers associated with the state and capital, leaving local islanders without the means to participate in designing the future development of their island. Valldejuli reads the "silencing" of the *viequense* voice as an illustration of the post-colonial subaltern who is not listened to even when their utterance is formatted along hegemonic frames of reference.

The book explores this process in seven chapters that address local understandings of the tourist economy, tourism imaginaries, access to land, values associated to work, race relations, and the future of Vieques. Valldejuli reads the power relationships of Vieques' tourist economy through a binary opposition between 'hosts' and 'guests' where the hosts are represented by the *viequenses*/Puerto Ricans and the guests are represented by white North American immigrants. While the permanence of the binary opposition between hosts and guests may strike some readers as dated, I found the analysis consistent. If tourism is to be read as a set of power relations, then the story necessarily requires actors to align themselves along clearly delineated camps.

However, I would have appreciated a more thorough explication of the characterisations Valldejuli assigns to the groups. For example, the book's conflation of *viequense* and Puerto Ricans needs more explanation. While Vieques is within the jurisdiction of Puerto Rico and

*viequenses* may correspond to the ethnic and linguistic characteristics of the Puerto Rican nationalist project, I would not be surprised if *viequenses* strike a distinction between themselves and Puerto Ricans. *Viequenses* have developed a cultural relationship with the English Caribbean (which is not an acknowledged part of the Puerto Rican national space), have had a long history of French presence on the island, and *viequenses* oftentimes view Puerto Ricans, or people from the 'Big Island', as the putative 'other' in addition to North American tourists. Further, the author identifies a local distinction between 'good' Americans and 'bad' Americans, suggesting that the terms of the binary opposition are not as consistent as the argument requires. Also, there is evidence in the book that suggests that the American community in Vieques occupies a transnational space and is constantly on the move. The complexities that emerge from this transnational condition are not accounted for in this analysis.

One fascinating theme that is described in the book relates to local responses to land access. Valldejuli identifies three squatting groups on the island and examines their different strategies. The material shows how the *viequenses* are divided on the appropriate strategies for squatting, resulting in serious disagreements between the groups. While showing the internal complexities of local politics is the hallmark of good ethnography, the idea that the *viequenses* are fragmented amongst themselves puts pressure on the binary opposition that lies at the heart of the book's argument.

My critiques are not meant as challenges, but are questions inspired by the book's central argument, which is a consistent and welcome contribution to current research on Vieques and the northeastern Caribbean. The book tackles the difficult question of power relationships in a tourist economy and describes the ways in which *viequense* language and discourse is silenced within discussions on the island's political economy. This case is illustrative of the continuing contradictions at the heart of the US-Puerto Rico colonial relationship. Valldejuli offers provocative parallelisms between Vieques' current predicament and the Caribbean's historical struggle with imperialism, which result in a situation where the *viequenses* are left with limited resources to develop their agency. For all the pessimism that animates the interviewees, Valldejuli makes a positive case for the 'heteroglossic', chaotic, and open-ended aspect of *viequense* language and discourse. I would only hope that the 'heteroglossic' language and discourse that Valldejuli describes may produce a character that would be able to negotiate creatively the different fields of power that lie at the heart of contemporary Vieques and prove Valldejuli's final predictions, of an expropriated population, wrong.

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**Owe Ronström (2016). *Öar och öighet: introduktion till östudier [Islands and islandness: introduction to island studies]*. 314pp. Stockholm: Carlsson Bokförlag. ISBN: 978-91-7331-790-0. SEK240.**

Island studies are still in quite short supply in a Nordic cultural context, in the sense that the field has contributed infrequently to the self-knowledge of the Nordic countries. This is perhaps because they already conceive of themselves as island nations to such a degree, that the need for and relevance of studies of islands have not seemed clear or urgent.

In this context then, it is remarkable that a systematic introduction to island studies has been published in a Nordic language. Owe Ronström's *Öar och öighet (Islands and Islandness)* begins from a local island context, and is enriched by extensive references to Swedish as well as Nordic cultural areas. The result communicates a thorough

connectedness between island perspectives and their general Nordic context, which offers a beautiful and highly detailed depiction of local island relations and global island perspectives.

Owe Ronström, Professor of Ethnology at the University of Uppsala, lives and works in Visby on the major island of Gotland, where he was born and raised. In the introduction he uses this biographical aspect to unfold some basic phenomena of island existence as an inspiration to the general reader before proceeding to his specific topic of research.

The introduction also conveys a thought-provoking feature of the Swedish way of writing. To my knowledge hardly any other alphabet shows such a direct and symbolic relation between typography and meaning. The Swedish word for island—the letter ö—represents in its simple form the hallmark of the island world. The circular ö, including its two dots—communicates all the positive and all the negative aspects of “islandness,” and the related duality and ambivalence of islands. The positive: small scale, proximity, comfort, and community, representing the utopian and the paradisiacal view of islands. But the opposite is here as well: inbreeding, backwardness, *tristesse*, like prisons, horror, terrible...

The book, instructively and richly illustrated, consists of 15 chapters, each of which explores a specific theme. Each chapter offers an examination of its ideas and content relevant to its theme and uses a mixture of expected and unexpected approaches. This book demonstrates Ronström’s willingness to reflect thoroughly and deeply on every specific theme, taking nothing for granted. The reader is conducted in a simultaneously personal and highly professional manner through each chapter and, importantly, Ronström’s writing style reaches far beyond the strictly academic. The benefit of this approach is the book’s potential to appeal to many more “island readers” than most academic monographs.

In this manner the book deals vividly with basic questions of island research, engaging perceptively with numerous fields of study, and offering an instructive example of McCall’s call for island studies to be cross-disciplinary. Ronström takes the reader from the now classic island studies question, ‘What is an island?’ through ‘An archipelago of words’, unrolling an abundant semantics of island words. Island designations in several languages are examined, depicting an exciting multitude of island meanings across a variety of cultures and their histories.

The following chapters discuss shifts in the perspectives of island research away from a traditional ‘continental’ mindset, their unstable history of culture, island designs in the humanistic sciences, and islands in modern language. The chapter, ‘In or on islands’, analyzes the significance of the two propositions for the meaning of islands and islandness. Other chapters analyze basic concepts such as ‘definedness’, ‘remoteness’ and the two classical concepts, ‘archaism’ and ‘endemism’.

In the final chapter, ‘Presence and absence’, Ronström examines the titular themes in the light of a late modern mindset (Giddens et al.), theories of globalization and their consequences for island societies and their understanding of themselves. Ronström explains these consequences as a confrontation with deeply rooted traditions and conceptions. Islands, he argues, are not isolated (anymore), but serious players in the dynamic relations between ‘isolation’ and ‘connectedness’. These days many island societies choose to perceive and define themselves as uniquely local. Ronström mentions Mauritius, which has developed a powerful consciousness of local cultural character and potential isolation at the same time as taking part in strategies of globalization to avoid negative social and cultural insularity. Isolation has become increasingly relative in the ‘eternal’ now of global

presence, and the question arises for islanders about how to maintain a form of local culture amid all the similarities.

A main point of interest in the final chapter becomes the ‘natural’ islandness of islands: the limits between island and the outside world are culturally being created consciously and unceasingly, and at the same time they are being blurred by traditional conceptions of certain forms of specific natural borders. The conception of islands exemplifies all the well-known binaries (center vs. periphery etc.), but the definable and the insular in itself has a special status within the Western history of ideas. The definable represents a protection against all the surrounding space, being perceived as empty and meaningless. Islands provide a lexicon for a double discourse about marginalized phenomena, offering a wealth of symbols and metaphors, a rich treasure of pictures and conceptions that have been of great importance for Western societies.

Ronström’s work is important also because it focuses on the relevance of Nordic islands to various significant international contexts. For example, it contributes to debates about whether the Scandinavian/Nordic countries represent a specific area of study by pointing out the high density of islands on one most ‘populated’ belts on earth, on the northern hemisphere, especially between the 58<sup>th</sup> and the 66<sup>th</sup> northern latitude. While it may not be Ronström’s intention, his approach could generate new reflections about the character and values of Nordic island culture. Nevertheless, this book inspired my thinking about future research on Nordic island culture as a valuable player in global island connections. For example, the area around the Åland Archipelago is so densely populated, why have the remote islands of the Pacific Ocean dominated literature (Robinsonades), more than this *world of islands*?

Ronström’s introduction to island studies is careful and comprehensive. It conveys much new and substantial knowledge about Nordic islands as well as raising open, inspiring questions about islands in general. This book offers the crucial insight that islands and islandness are much more than simple facts and unambiguous phenomena. They are instead highly complex entities, and an island studies approach such as Ronström’s enables a richness of reflections, which indisputably points far beyond the understanding of islands as such.

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**Maria Cristina Fumagalli (2015).** *On the edge: writing the border between Haiti and the Dominican Republic.* 430pp. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press. ISBN: 978-1-78138-160-1. US\$120.70.

I spent months looking for a printed map of the island of Hispaniola while I lived in the Dominican Republic (DR) in 2017. I could not find one. Not even the fridge magnets of the island that street sellers offer tourists had the full shape of the island. The Haitian side was always missing, even though in reality the western side of the island includes about a third of its landmass. The impossibility of finding a complete map of Hispaniola is a symptom of the fragmentation of the island, and concomitantly, searching for it became a utopic quest.

Maria Cristina Fumagalli’s *On the Edge: Writing the Border between Haiti and the Dominican Republic* is a solid contribution to the quest to foster an imagination of Hispaniola that conceives the island in its totality. Fumagalli describes the book as an “*intercultural archive*” about the whole of the island, which is variously named Hispaniola, Ayiti, Bohio, and

Quisqueya. Fumagalli uses 'Hispaniola' despite its colonial imprint, because it is the one name historically used to refer to the island's totality and not to one of the nation-states that were established there.

Fumagalli engages with an extensive body of literary works, films, paintings, sculptures, and other art forms that have Hispaniola at its core. The volume is based on a rich dialogue among works produced between 1796 and 2012 by artists, writers and travelers who shared an interest in understanding and shaping Haiti's and DR's understanding of each other. The latter was, and continues to be, central to the ways these nations understood themselves.

Through the lens of literary geography, Fumagalli successfully explains the role of colonial and occupying powers in shaping Haiti and the DR. Spain, France, and the United States were keen on erecting and reifying what Fumagalli describes as a vertical border between the two nations. These powers idealized the possibility of obstructing communication and trade between the two countries, often constructing them as mutually unintelligible. Fumagalli explores the logics of belonging and sovereignty that shape the island from a bottom-up perspective that engages with the ways the island is conceived and experienced.

*On the Edge* examines the management of the island's territory by powerful leaders and institutions, which saw the idea of interaction and integration among island peoples as either a promise or a peril. For example, Fumagalli's Chapter 3 focuses on indigenous Anacaona and her leadership over Jaragua, an indigenous Taino region located in the west and center of the island, which would be fragmented by the border if it were existing today. Jaragua was notorious for welcoming several Spaniards who were in defiance to the Spanish Crown, and for facilitating interethnic and interracial alliances.

The author sets these integrative perspectives in contrast with others that reify the border. Fumagalli highlights the regularization and criminalization of transnational interactions based on the 1952 treaty signed by dictators Francois Duvalier and Rafael Trujillo to regulate the importation of Haitian labourers into the DR. These efforts materialized, among others, into the use of Haitian paramilitary men to infiltrate Dominican plantations in order to eliminate any interaction between Haitian migrant workers and Dominican union leaders (Chapter 8).

Fumagalli identifies a fundamental tension in the island's history. On the one hand, a line of thought has exalted the impossibility of coexistence between two nations and has reified the necessity of the border. Take, for example, the works of Médéric de Saint-Mèry's *Description Topographique et Politique de la partie espagnole de l'Isle Saint-Domingue* from 1796, or Juan Carlos Mieses's *El día de todos* from 2008. On the other, an opposing line of thought notable from José Martí's *War Diaries* (1895) to Rita Indiana's *Da pa lo do* (2010) emphasizes the emancipatory potential of a transnational perspective of the island, one that understands the borderland as a horizontal fertile ground of interaction and interculturality.

Fumagalli's volume addresses Haiti's and DR's supposed mutual unintelligibility and animosity (also referred to as the 'fatal conflict model', a term coined by Samuel Martínez) by contextualizing them historically and politically. Her analysis sheds light on the tensions between France and Spain, and traces the island's history as a stage where European tensions played out. Also colonial were the ways racial differences were highlighted in the nation-building processes of the island, especially in terms of the need to control African presence, African origins, and blackness.

The 'fatal conflict model' represents a partial and transcendent part of Hispaniola's history such as the massacre of 1937 in which the Dominican dictator, Rafael Trujillo, commanded the death of thousands of Haitians and Dominicans of Haitian descent. Between 10,000 and 40,000 men, women, and children were killed north of the border. Fumagalli devotes two of the twelve chapters of *On the Edge* to the 1937 massacre and its repercussions both in the north and the south of the borderlands. While addressing this period in all its

severity, the author privileges a perspective of possibility that comes after a tragedy, or what Fumagalli calls 'concrete utopias'.

Fumagalli's agenda is to contribute to a utopian interpretation of the island and its peoples. Her work explores the horizontality of the borderlands and the way interculturality takes place in the island despite past and current efforts to deepen the differences and conflicts between the two countries that inhabit it.

*On the Edge* illuminates the cultural richness of the borderlands, by describing the vibrant communities that inhabited them during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as a possibility of what can be, nurtured with the certainty of the cultural richness that was already there in the past. The book's main contribution is to come to terms with the irrepressibility of interculturality between Haiti and the DR, which has transcended the frontier and lies at the heart of the two nations. To Fumagalli, coexistence is not only unavoidable but also emancipatory.

Despite her choice to embrace the idea of a future of possibility in which both nations grow together, Fumagalli does not ignore the hardships confronted across the island today. For example, *On the Edge* discusses the deep environmental degradation of the island and the Dominican Constitutional Court's 2013 decision to open the possibility of denationalizing all Dominicans of Haitian descent born since 1929.

All in all, Fumagalli makes a significant contribution to our understanding of Hispaniola.

She gives prominence to voices that build and imagine the island from the ground up. By doing so she nurtures a transnational lens so important in the current times of increasingly sealed borders and forced human mobility.

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**Michael Wiedorn (2018). *Think like an archipelago: paradox in the work of Édouard Glissant*. 198pp. New York: State University of New York Press. ISBN: 978-1-4384-6703-0. US\$85.00 (Hardback).**

Édouard Glissant has been a seminal thinker for postcolonial and islands scholarship for many decades. For readers of *Island Studies Journal*, Glissant is a well-known figure, among others including Kamau Brathwaite, Antonio Benítez-Rojo, Epeli Hau'ofa, Elizabeth DeLoughrey, Lisa Fletcher, Teresia Teaiwa, Adam Grydehøj, Philip Hayward and Elaine Stratford, to have been incorporated in the longer relational and archipelagic turns, which I have also been a part of myself. Glissant's work not only disrupts the figure of the insular and isolated island, foregrounding island relationalities and movements, but also approaches islands as paradoxical spaces, simultaneously bounded and dynamically relational.

Given the readership of *Island Studies Journal*, it is useful to first say what kinds of audience Wiedorn's book engages most. On the one hand, if you are very immersed in debates about Glissant you will probably want to buy this well-written and structured book. It is particularly good on the specificities of Glissant's work, especially his later writing. On the other hand, if you are looking for something that is situated within the broader debates of wider disciplines, these are less prominent. I do not think this is a problem. Glissant is an important figure, and I found Wiedorn's book an attentive and useful read, reflecting how Glissant's contribution continues to be interpreted in new and interesting ways.

As a useful departure, the opening pages of the book briefly revisit older critiques and controversial debates that surrounded Glissant nearly twenty years ago. Back then, a range of scholars, most notably Peter Hallward, argued that Glissant's Deleuzian-inspired approach was based on an impoverished understanding of the political. For Hallward, Glissant had adopted

a totalising and globalising ethics, whose singular approach could be contrasted to the specific nature of political struggle. Such debates were more broadly situated against the backdrop of a much wider set of arguments at the time over what constitutes the political (including Badiou's similar critique of Deleuze); debates which of course continue to take place today in new ways.

Wiedorn's new book calls us to look at Glissant's whole body of work again. Wiedorn says that in Glissant's earlier works he was more of "a hot-blooded partisan of Martinican independence, or the fierce critic of neocolonialism and imperialism." But by the 1990s until Glissant's passing in 2011, Glissant had reoriented his approach more around experimental, creative, and aesthetic ways of being political. This central argument for Wiedorn hinges upon "the increasing prominence of paradox in Glissant's work ... [and how this] proves to play a key role in Glissant's political and aesthetic ambitions." I do not think this central argument of the book will necessarily convince those who have already settled upon different ways of thinking about the political, particularly those who understand the political in a more product-oriented way, such as those just noted above. Nevertheless, Wiedorn's important and well-argued book, through his introduction of the running theme of paradox, does bolster the claims of those who are focused upon experimental, creative, and experiential ways of thinking about the political.

Chapter 1 explores how Glissant famously celebrated the Caribbean, creolization, and Relation as *movement*, developing a profoundly different ontological position from modern and Cartesian frameworks of reasoning associated with subject/object, human/nature, and mind/body divides. Thus, Wiedorn argues, central to Glissant's ontology and the associated "cognitive upheaval" is a creative paradox foregrounding a movement that cannot be *grasped*. Given this, Chapter 2 then unsurprisingly turns to situate Glissant as a proponent of Deleuzian "minor literature." Wiedorn analyzes Glissant's reading of Faulkner and the inability of Faulkner to breathe life into the black characters of his novels. This also foregrounds a range of paradoxes which Wiedorn is interested in exploring, including: saying without saying, and the opaqueness of Relation associated with the horrors of colonialism and slavery. As Wiedorn summarises Glissant's approach: "Living with(in) the opacity of the other ... reaching out to a people that both exists and does not exist: all of these paradoxical yet necessary actions represent Glissant's efforts to set forth an ethics of alterity."

But Glissant of course was not only focused upon the local contingencies of Relation; he also developed a global ethics of going-on-and-with Relation too. Here Chapter 3 reads *Le quatrième siècle* and *Tout-monde*, Chapter 4 *Philosophie de la Relation*, and the conclusion to the book explores archipelagic thinking more generally in Glissant's work. As Wiedorn points out, the Caribbean is not only inspirational for Glissant's ontology, it is also "a sort of exemplar for what the world as a whole is becoming, but it is more importantly a model for what the world *ought to be* becoming." Glissant conflates the ontological and the ontic into a global ethics. This has been one of the most controversial aspects of Glissant's work, and one which island studies scholars have rarely wholeheartedly embraced. Whilst for many Glissant takes a step too far, Wiedorn's reorienting move and reading of Glissant is to instead focus upon the experimental, creative, and experiential aspects of the associated paradox of never actually being able to grasp the totality of Relation, only ever imagine it. Wiedorn quotes Glissant: "The imaginary of the world would be entirely different. The imaginary foresees, divines, finds, it predicts nothing in terms of relationships, it accompanies neither possession nor knowledge. It in no way concludes. It supposes an archipelago (*en archipel*)."

Wiedorn thus argues that "we readers of Glissant might do well to focus not on the *products* of our engagement with his texts, that is, on what we might grasp in them or get out of them, but rather on the *process* of reading them, of experiencing them and experimenting with them." The process is transformative and contemplative, but not product-orientated. In contrast to many other readers of Glissant, Wiedorn makes the argument that Glissant's later

work “did maintain its politics as well as its principles, albeit through shifting them onto a different plane.” Here, like Wiedorn, I do not think it is fair to say that Glissant is simply Deleuze imported into the Caribbean. These general approaches were already more widely prevalent in the world at this time. It is often said that we are all Deleuzian now, but this does discredit to Glissant as philosopher in his own right. Wiedorn’s book does an important job in reasserting the creative paradoxes associated with Glissant’s particularly experimental, if still controversial, approach.

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**Philipp Zehmisch (2017).** *Mini-India: the politics of migration and subalternity in the Andaman Islands.* 358pp. New Delhi: Oxford University Press. ISBN: 978-0-19-946986-4. UK£46.96.

This book focuses on the political, economic, social and cultural effects of migration on the making of the Andaman Islands. The Andamans emerges as a melting pot of cultures, ‘a Mini-India’. Here the main actors in this transformation trace their genealogies from criminalised low castes, Dalits, tribals, including refugees, and convicts and indigenous inhabitants, i.e. Jarawas, and others. The focus of this study is not the indigenous inhabitants of the islands, but rather the historic refugees and convicts, including the current migrants who continue to occupy a liminal postcolonial space in the region. The book provides an empathetic understanding of the islanders as disenfranchised and occupying marginal spaces and positions in relation to the hegemonic identity of the few. This hegemonic identity was formed due to the patron-client relationship established during the corrupt colonial period and now continues to exist in a postcolonial state. Philipp Zehmisch unpacks the idea of subalternity and its relevance to the island community. The book thus presents compelling ideas of subaltern marginalisation and agency and their links to migration, relations of production, and politics. Subaltern resilience is a theme introduced in this journey to the islands. The entangled histories and practices of the settlers in the Andamans is fascinating for uncovering subaltern agency, resistance and complicity.

The book is divided into eight chapters, with Chapter One establishing the theoretical contours of the anthropology of subalternity. Of particular interest are the “exclusionary practices” which, in Zehmisch’s analysis, are engaged by both the dominant and marginal members of the island community. Chapter Two contextualises and justifies the Andamans as a site for fieldwork. It presents an overview of the islands’ history, from the peopling of the Andamans as a penitentiary space to its modern manifestation as a Union Territory of India. This chapter attempts to delineate the processes of interaction among diverse ethnic groups and at the same time highlight the particularities of political negotiations across and among the communities. Chapter Three highlights the significance of subalternity in the creation of ‘Andamanian’ identity. Chapter Four contextualises the term ‘Mini-India’ by framing it in relation to the hegemonic perspectives of plural identity and countering the established “subaltern consciousness.” This consciousness is what prevails as “island mentality.” Zehmisch further attributes the uniqueness of the Andaman Islands to the cultural creolisation typical of settler colonies. ‘Mini-India’ represents solidarity and competition among ethnicised groups seeking privileges, despite the competition to survive.

Chapter Five analyses the debate around legacies of the island. Of particular interest is the debate over the politics of recognition among the silenced subalterns with a ‘past’ and criminalised into the future. A detailed and rich description of the ‘Ranchis’ as a dynamic subaltern community highlights their systematic marginalisation and embedded

vulnerabilities. The Ranchis operate outside the hegemonic structural posturing by creating their unique life worlds. Chapter Six delves deeper into the emergence of the Ranchis as an “aboriginal labour force from Chotanagpur,” in mainland India. Their racial typecasting as ‘aboriginal forest dwellers’ since 1918 reinforces their disenfranchisement. This section contains very interesting life histories of the subaltern migrants and the effects of their marginalisation. Chapter Seven provides a reconstruction of the history and culture of the Ranchis and their disassociated links to the place of origin. Zehmisch’s account of place-making along with community-in-the-making presents a nuanced, empathetic reading of the Ranchis’ plight and opportunities. The chapter highlights how an ecological frame conditions the existence of the islanders in the periphery.

Chapter Eight delves deeper into questions of exclusion and the complicity of both the Church and the state in reinforcing the status quo and the marginality of the Ranchis in the Andamans. The passing of such iconic leaders as Birsa Munda has continued to silence the Ranchis’ voices and at the same time provided them with a buffer from the binary discourses of their benefactors. The Ranchis’ choice was between extortionist-hegemonic colonial imperatives and the supposedly “hegemonic national consciousness” after 1947.

All nationalist movements from Europe to Asia and beyond are, by definition, ‘hegemonic’, which, in my view, is the only way these countries have attained freedom from the colonial yoke. We need to make a distinction between ‘freedom fighters’ and ‘ordinary convicts’, rather than conflating the same with labels of ‘bourgeois’ and ‘subaltern’. This simplistic characterisation too can become a ‘hegemonic’ discourse. Thus, the Bengali “babu or the Moplas,” along with others, played a critical role during their incarceration in the Andamans as prisoners of conscience during the colonial rule.

The book’s definition of Ranchis as a fluid category would have benefited much by adherence to key data which distinguishes between migrants based on “place of birth” versus those based on “last residence.” Zehmisch’s assertion that “enumeration” of Ranchis into the islands is incomplete pays too little attention to South Asian migration dynamics. The statement, “Catholics and Hindus compete for the souls of the believers,” is similarly unpersuasive when considered against the history of proselytization and of the key principles of Hinduism in the subcontinent over the centuries. The non-hegemonic state of postcolonial India has enabled Ranchis to be governed by the Church, like a parallel state. Zehmisch’s arguments relating to “exploitation and cultural domination” and his extrapolation of “divide and rule” policies in modern India strike me as loose. It is unfair to blame more than 150 years of social engineering in the Andaman Islands on the postcolonial state of India. Zehmisch does well to highlight the inclusive discussions between settlers and the local inhabitants in the blurring of the boundaries between the island and the mainland. Question however remains whether Mini-India as a social form emerged out of colonialist, statist or nationalist narratives, or out of the Andaman Islands’ own developmental history?

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**Klaus J. Meyer-Arendt & Alan A. Lew (Eds.) (2015). *Understanding tropical coastal and island tourism development*. 192pp. New York: Routledge. ISBN13: 978-1-138-79285-2. US\$170.**

This edited volume by Klaus J. Meyer-Arendt and Alan A. Lew was motivated by the lack of a curated collection exploring the expansion and diversity of tourism as a development strategy to “remotest corners of the world.” Seven of the nine chapters were initially published in *Tourism Geographies* 13.1 (February 2013); the remaining two appeared in the

same journal in later issues. Financially savvy readers will likely read the essays in the journal and avoid the steep investment for the hard copy from Routledge. Notwithstanding this unusual publication history, the overall quality of the contributions makes each chapter individually worth reading.

The chapters explore a diversity of frameworks and theories around a broad theme of tourism as a development strategy for tropical coastal and island geographies. This diversity—a valuable feature according to the editors—reflects the complexity of coastal and island tourism research, and the contextual understanding demanded by diverse places, geographies, and ecologies. The diversity of theories and frameworks, however, is not supported by an overarching narrative. The editors do serve their goal of bringing together fragments of the “abundance of scattered literature” existing on coastal and island tourism. But, their mere one-and-a-half-page introduction does little justice to the chapters and fails to highlight all of the contributions. Readers looking for a higher-level assessment, connecting themes and narratives, and offering ways forward in tourism research will be disappointed. Furthermore, the introduction does little to help readers understand the editors’ perspective, rationale for selection of the work, or selection of themes and contributions. While the editors claim to offer new perspectives on tourism development, in the cases of Brida et al. and Ribeiro et al., the authors use existing models to replicate survey studies from the literature. This is certainly not problematic in and of itself—*islands and coastal regions are indeed worthy of context-specific research—but the editors’ emphasis on new conceptual and theoretical contributions is misleading.*

Broadly, development including tourism expresses insider-outsider, top-down, and bottom-up dynamics that influence development strategies and prioritize certain perspectives. In Chapter Two, Sarrasin takes a macro-view of ecotourism in Madagascar’s Ranomafana National Park, analyzing through a heterodox approach in international political economy. While rural populations are considered to be instrumental in poverty-conservation-economic growth development frameworks, Sarrasin finds that the impacts of ecotourism on conservation and local employment have been grossly exaggerated. Yet, ecotourism is privileged as the development strategy of choice, reinforced through power structures of the government, NGOs and international financial institutions. In contrast, collaboration may be a way forward to develop tourism that is meaningful for primary stakeholders. In Chapter Three, Graci employs Gray’s collaboration theory and Selin and Chavez’s tourism partnership model to outline the potential of partnerships in tourism development on Gili Trawangan, Indonesia. The author considers implementation of cross-stakeholder collaborations to be essential for developing sustainable tourism. The case study reinforces the benefits of collaboration: a holistic approach to problem and vision setting through local involvement, finding common ground for the greater good, and moving from transactional to relational value exchange through developing long-term relationships.

Both Nost and Amoamo (Chapter Six and Seven, respectively) illustrate the importance of insider-outsider dynamics in the construction of place. Through ethnographic field work, Nost questions representations of the Caribe Sur in Costa Rica as a place. Tourists’ desire for ‘authenticity’ and underdevelopment stands in tension with a need for further development and its forms of representation. Amoamo finds that literature tropes and outsider ideas have power in constructing a persistent place-myth of Pitcairn Island as a utopia/paradise. A utopia stands in juxtaposition to how internal experiences and representations of the islands are formed by residents. Both authors illustrate fluidity, contestation, and negotiation in navigating what place means and for whom.

Other authors examine attitudes and opinions of internal and external stakeholders in tourism, namely residences and visitors. Through surveys and cluster analysis, Brida et al. (Chapter Five) segment cruise line tourists into six marketing groups, offering policy suggestions for targeting high-value tourists destined for Cartagena, Colombia. In Chapter

Eight, Ribeiro et al. demonstrate that residents are generally optimistic about tourism in Cape Verde, aligning with previous research on island/coastal areas in initial stages of development. Results from survey data and statistical analysis demonstrate that attitudes toward tourism are segmented demographically.

Hamzah and Hampton (Chapter Four), and Timms and Conway (Chapter Nine) offer new approaches to thinking about the sustainability of tourism. Hamzah and Hampton revisit longitudinal data through the lens of resilience theory. The authors find that the tourism area life cycle's linear orientation is inadequate to explain the non-linear change exhibited by Perhentian Kecil in Malaysia. The authors demonstrate the growing complexity of non-linear tourism development—exogenous pressures and tipping points—and the resilience of local people to respond and adapt to changing physical and social tourist spaces. Timms and Conway offer “slow tourism” as a model for redeveloping marginal/stagnant tourist regions in the Caribbean. Daly's slow growth may serve as a blueprint to counter some of the negative environmental and social aspects of Caribbean tourism and aligns with other bottom-up tourism approaches.

Overall, the book offers some new perspectives from theoretical and conceptual standpoints. The value, however, as most readers will realize is in the contextualized cases, rich data, and diversity of perspectives.

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