

Reviews

Forestillinger om "Den Andre"—Images of Otherness. Edited by Line Alice Ytrehus. (Kristiansand, Norway: Høyskoleforlaget AS, 2001. Pp. 246.)

The current volume is an ambitious effort by a group of Nordic scholars to address the discursive construction of and subsequent representations of the "Other" in Europe. The approaches of the essayists reflect a broad series of disciplinary perspectives—linguistics, ethnography, cultural history, sociology, and folklore—and provide excellent insight into how an interdisciplinary approach to complex phenomena can lead to an understanding that is more than the sum of its parts. Although the majority of the articles deal with the Nordic countries, two articles move further afield to interrogate the impact of constructions of "Otherness" in European political discourse and action. The first of these articles engages Nazi-era Germany and the confluence of anti-Semitism and anti-modernism in the Third Reich's genocidal ideology. The second focuses on recent developments in Austria and Serbia. The volume is book-ended by two excellent critical essays by the editor, Line Ytrehus, a folklorist from the University of Bergen, that give analytical focus to what otherwise may have been a highly competent—yet slightly disjointed—series of articles. With Ytrehus's primarily historical introductory essay and her final theoretical essay revealing the challenges confronting scholars who

explore the status of ethnic minorities in the Nordic countries, the collection is properly situated in the context of European and global concerns surrounding the discursive construction of the "Other."

Ytrehus's opening essay provides an excellent historical overview of the construction of "Otherness" in Europe, highlighting the frequent representation in oral tradition and visual media of the ethnic "Other" as unclean, childlike, primitive, uncivilized, criminal, and a source of dangerous contagion. Using the early nineteenth-century public displays of the African woman Saartjie Baartmann (the Hottentott-Venus) as a starting point, Ytrehus traces the development of the category of ethnic "Other" in modern European thought, and emphasizes how "differentiation and hierarchies in interpersonal relationships can have dramatic consequences for the practical organization of everyday life" (13, my translation). She links the emergent category of ethnic "Other" to that of burgeoning nationalism(s) in the nineteenth century. This historical overview of the construction of the "Other" lays the groundwork for the ensuing articles.

In her lead-off article on the "Shifting notions of 'Us' and 'Them' in Norway," Marianne Gullestad reveals how the word *innvandrer* (immigrant) has, in Norway, become a rhetorically charged—and overdetermined—word that carries significant political weight, noting, "The meaning of the word

[*innvandre*] seems to oscillate between an implicit code based on 'race' (dark skin) and social class, and a dictionary definition in which these categories are not relevant. This span of ambiguity partly explains its rhetorical power" (49). Societal debate in Norway has shifted away from issues of class to issues of gender and cultural difference in recent decades, and these debates have accordingly raised significant barriers for immigrants' possibilities for being considered by non-immigrants as part of the overarching imagined community of Norway. In large part, the *innvandre* are seen as a threat to the imagined Norwegian community defined by a master narrative of the welfare state. Ultimately, because of the perceived differences—differences constructed by majority discourse—that separate the majority from the immigrants (this is an exclusionary process), the *innvandre* emerge discursively as a threat to what it means to be Norwegian. Although the particular importance of the social welfare state in Norway—and in the other Nordic countries—make Gullestad's argument immediately applicable to the Nordic countries, she correctly notes that a similar exclusionary process plays itself out to a large extent throughout Western Europe.

Pertti Anttonen's study of the emergence of the modern nation Finland provides an excellent historical overview of how folklore can be deployed in the highly political environment of nation building. While the role of Lönnrot's *Kalevala* in the imagining of a Finnish nation has been explored by numerous other scholars (indeed, it is a classic case

study in the relationship between folklore and nation building), Anttonen adds a significant dimension to our understanding of how, through the *Kalevala* and its attendant scholarship, "Sami" and "Karelians" were both mobilized as conceptual categories in the process of defining a Finnish identity. He reveals the ramifications of this "Othering" for the actual populations that were "Othered" in what turns out to be significantly different manners. Whereas the "Sami" were "Othered" and forced into a position where they were represented as the primitive "Other" (partly because of their nomadic life style), the Karelians became "Othered" in a manner where they emerged as a window onto a lost, earlier Finnish culture.

Stein Mathisen picks up the thread of the "Othering" of the Sami in his essay examining discursive constructions of the Sami in contemporary Norway. He explores in turn three of the main popular conceptions of the Sami: the magical Sami (often represented as a potentially menacing outsider in folk narrative), the primitive Sami (linked to a nomadic lifestyle, and reflective of the early anthropological notions of societal development), and the contemporary notion of the ecological Sami (an Othering akin to the process familiar in contemporary New Age practice where Indigenous peoples are seen as the guardians of ecological wisdom). As Ytrehus notes in her introduction, this final construction of the Sami as ecological sentinels, and the subsequent attempts at "cultural preservation" predicated on the need to safeguard this

ecological wisdom, is equally limiting as other, more deliberately exclusionary processes.

The subsequent two essays represent a marked shift in the direction of the volume and disrupt the primary focus on the Nordic countries. Although they quite competently address significant events in the history of ethnic relations in twentieth century Europe, indeed arguably the most significant, both essays seem oddly out of place. Christhard Hoffmann presents a commendably knowledgeable study of the confluence of anti-Semitism and anti-modernism as part of an emergent struggle over identity formation in pre-war Germany. This struggle laid the foundations for the success of Nazi ideology and allowed the vicious genocidal policies of that regime to reach fruition. Likewise, Martin Peterson provides an intriguing analysis of the rise of anti-foreign sentiment and violent nationalism in Austria and Serbia. The case of Jörg Haider's vituperative FPÖ has a disturbing resonance with the emergence of new ultra-nationalist parties throughout Scandinavia, such as the troubling emergence of Pia Kjærsgaard and her Dansk folkeparti as a major voice in Danish politics. Peterson's admonition that in order to combat these disquieting trends one must develop a deeper understanding of the processes that lead to a build up of nationalistic fervor and ethno-political mobilization is one well heeded.

Solveig Moldrheim brings us back to the Nordic countries in her essay, focusing on representations of *ikke-hvite* (non-whites) in Norwegian magazines

from 1952, 1975, and the 1990s. She explores the structure of stereotypes, offering a two-dimensional scheme for the classification of stereotypes, with the positive-negative dichotomy defining the x-axis and the exclusive-inclusive dichotomy defining the y-axis. On the basis of this model, Moldrheim is able to show both historical continuities and variation in the development of stereotypes of the *ikke-hvite* (and therefore not Norwegian) in the influential popular media. One could perhaps take issue with the underlying category, *ikke-hvite*, as Moldrheim's unsatisfactory explanation of her selection of the category (136-7) seems to fall prey to the exact phenomenon she explores; to an extent her argument begs the question. Despite this analytic lapse, she is able to reveal how there is a clear construction of a category of people who are not Norwegian based on perceptions of skin color among, at the very least, the magazine and ad-copy editors. The extent to which popular reception aligns with this construction of "Other" is open to debate.

Mette Andersson provides a fascinating exploration of how young Norwegians of Pakistani heritage negotiate identity in a society in which the negative stereotypes of South and West Asian immigrants are stacked against them. The manner in which these stereotypes have coupled to an intensification of anti-Muslim sentiment in the wake of the events of September 11 have made Andersson's research all the more important. She focuses her study on ambitious, young members of the Pakistani Student Association in

Norway. Through an analysis of her interviews, she reveals how an individual negotiates a series of identities on an on-going basis that, in the case of her informants, are deliberately and tactically deployed to undermine the narrative construction of Pakistani Norwegians in majority discourse. Calling these young men and women "ethnic entrepreneurs," she notes that "For these young people a central aim is to contribute to the invalidation of the stereotypes about immigrants and Pakistanis in Norway. They want to hold on to the minority traditions they consider to be good, and quit with traditions they view as oppressive and negative" (180). This development is consistent with the types of identity negotiation and cultural hybridity recognized in numerous immigrant communities across the globe.

In an essay describing SOSTRIS, (Social Strategies in Risk Society), Birgitta Thorsell and Peterson combine an overarching sociological methodology with an ethnographic focus on individual life histories. SOSTRIS is a project that looks at groups that have been locked out of the job market in Sweden, Germany, England, France, Spain, Italy, and Greece. As such, the project provides excellent comparative materials across numerous European countries for our developing understanding of the interplay between structural phenomena such as the job market and cultural phenomena such as the classification of some people as "ethnic others" and the closely related stereotypes that purport to describe these "Others." The final essay in the volume

explores how informal spoken language can act as a marker of in-group or out-group membership. Akin to the "valley girl" talk of Frank Zappa fame, Ingrid Hasund explores in depth how small word use in spoken Norwegian acts on both an inclusive and an exclusive level as a linguistic marker of group membership. Given the broken language that constitutes a significant element in the stereotypes of immigrants (see, for example, *Mujaffah spillet* on the website of Danmarks Radio), it is clear how conceptions of the "Other" are not limited solely to perceived differences in physical appearance or received notions of differences in cultural practices.

The essays all stem from an international conference held at the University of Bergen in 1999 entitled, "Images of Otherness: Tradition and Identity," which emerged from a larger research project focusing on "Det Nye" [The New] at the Center for European Cultural Studies and was funded in part by the now defunct Nordic Network of Folklorists (a successor to the ill-fated Nordic Institute of Folklore). Unlike many conference volumes that are marked by either far too much uniformity or far too little central focus, the current collection presents a series of competent essays all focused on a complex issue of considerable importance in contemporary society. Since many of the essays are in English, the volume is accessible to audiences outside of the Nordic countries. Of course, it would have been advisable for the introduction with its essay summaries to appear in English. The volume would make an excellent

addition to most classes focusing on contemporary Europe and will also be of interest to researchers engaging topics related to nationalism(s) and minority / post-colonial studies. Although some of the English is tinged by non-idiomatic expressions ("Swedish do-better" instead of "Swedish do-gooder" (191)), these minor gaffes—all of which could have been easily corrected by a native English speaker—should be overlooked given the volume's important contribution to our understanding of the construction of the "Other" in the Nordic countries and Europe.

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On Biocultural Diversity: Linking Language, Knowledge, and the Environment. Edited by Luisa Maffi. (Washington and London: Smithsonian Institution Press, 2001. Pp. xxi + 578, introduction, notes, bibliography, index, illustrations.)

On *Biocultural Diversity* approaches the dilemma of language loss, the deficit of knowledge, and the devastation of the environment on a global scale. Part of the problem is neatly summed up by D. Michael Warren: "The relationship between the viability of a language and the knowledge that has been created, preserved and maintained through that language is inextricable" (453). Biological loss is well recognized, but the loss of cultures, languages, and the knowledge contained within these human environments is ignored to a remarkable degree. The crisis now experienced by Indigenous peoples is far-reaching, possibly more so than many of these authors claim, and more so than what has been experienced ecologically.

The thirty-nine contributions in this volume treat this crisis in Papua New Guinea, Botswana, Amazonia, Indonesia, the Mayan lowlands, and the Sonoran Desert. The reader is exposed to topics including issues of globalization, the effects of ecotourism, human rights, language and politics, biological and ecological prospecting, intellectual property rights, and the domino effect of language death. The broader disciplines of the humanities, science, and law merge into an integrated approach to the

growth of uniformity and the loss of diversity taking place worldwide.

These essays are predominantly Euro-western in perspective, but they are an excellent collection of strong composition by respected scholars. This one volume makes significant additions to our base of knowledge. Among the contributors are anthropologists, linguists, sociologists, indigenous scholars, biologists, psychologists, agriculturists, resource economists, botanists, environmental researchers, and conservationists. The diversity located in the interrelationships between the human environments of languages, cultures, and knowledge within ecological environments is treated here as an essential aspect of our very existence.

Both a utilitarian imperative and an ethical imperative are enlisted here by a number of authors. In "Biodiversity and the Loss of Lineages," Brent D. Mishler states that we as a species have no moral right to despoil a four-billion-year history of ecological development. Within the utilitarian framework, biological losses are economic losses. He points to the evolutionary needs for maximal genetic diversity. As this line of reasoning relates to the human species, Mishler finds that we are witnessing the destruction of the "cultural species," moving towards an intellectual monoculture and depleting our human resources for sustainability.

However, David Harmon asserts the existence of what he calls a "species problem" in our notions of culture in "On the Meaning and Moral Imperative of Diversity" (58). The notion of human cultures as "species" is not conceptually available.

Therefore, alarm at the prospect of "cultural homogenization" is unwarranted. As Harmon notes, the "biological extinctions and cultural homogenization" are driven by "practical forces" (61). My question is, what are these practical forces? The forces that have that have led to the loss of language, culture, knowledge, and the unprecedented loss of biological species can be attributed directly to colonialism of past and present. What Harmon spells out clearly is that the logism *biodiversity* now "carries an explicit, unprecedented sense of urgency, of impending catastrophe" (62).

Along these same lines, Eric Smith looks to the essential points of connection between biological, cultural, and linguistic fields of study in his "On the Co-evolution of Culture, Linguistic, and Biological Diversity." For Smith, the imperative is that we must maintain and foster an environment that enables the natural growth and expansion or decline of diversity. Eugene Hunn makes the connection among linguistic, cultural, and biological species, and then brings us E.O. Wilson's words: "species extinction equates to the burning of a library" (120). How do we know what knowledge has been sacrificed due to the extinction of languages, cultures, and their environments? Gary Nabhan's subject in "Cultural Perceptions of Ecological Interactions" is "traditional ecological knowledge of plant-animal interactions" among the world's Indigenous populations (146). This knowledge is being lost to the Western consortium of world knowledge. Nabhan demonstrates the seriousness of this loss using a Western system of value, showing that Indig-

enous knowledge does give insights to "ecological and evolutionary theory" (148). From my perspective, Euro-western science is invoked here only to prompt an attitude of respect and legitimacy for Indigenous knowledge. We are faced, if we do not heed Nabhan's words and the words of others in this volume, with what Nabhan identifies as the "extinction of experience" (153), the results of which would be a loss of knowledge to all peoples, Indigenous and non-Indigenous.

Jane Hill calls upon the reader in her contribution, "Dimensions of Attrition in Language Death," to see how the Euro-West is victimized by its notions of race and class, a cultural and linguistic positioning that she calls "ideological noise" (177). The "noise" of ethnocentrism interferes with the ability to look objectively at non-western cultures. This positioning results in a loss of languages, and that reduction leads directly to the irretrievable loss of knowledge. As Western notions of superiority are forced upon non-Western peoples, the damage occurs to the human species as a whole. Phillip Wolff and Douglas Medin regard this process as "devolution," and they present a hypothesis based within the Western historical present in their essay, "Measuring the Evolution and Devolution of Folk-Biological Knowledge."

What is knowledge? Andrew Pauley contends that it is "a subjective thing, encompassing 'perceptions,' 'beliefs,' and 'understandings'" (228). He calls to linguists to inform all disciplines by representing the knowledge held within a language community. Pawley suggests the illumination of a cosmology of knowl-

edge within the documentation process by what he terms "a subject matters language" (235). Grammars produce a list of words, while subject matters language seeks the contextualization of language in a culturally relevant process.

Jeffrey Wollock demonstrates patois eloquence with his contribution when he writes, "Language is a motion of the soul" (257). He then takes the necessary step towards opening the discussion of colonization as "mono-mentality" (251). As imperialism and monoculture are "imported and imposed, extrapolation occurs, societies destabilize" (252). Societies become disconnected from land, and "cultures homogenize and no longer uphold biodiversity" (252). According to Wollock, "The real cause of the environmental crisis is a particular way of thinking" (248). The symptom of this can be seen in the rapid decline we are witnessing in linguistic and biological diversity worldwide. Bioprospecting has claimed that its endeavors to preserve the knowledge of an Indigenous populace amount to a form of reparation. From my position, it is more akin to assault, as multinational corporations strive to lay claim to traditional Indigenous knowledge in the form of patents. What is experienced next by many Indigenous peoples is cultural death, language death, and physical death.

The protection of Indigenous peoples' knowledge base—language, political systems, ecological and biological analysis, law, i.e., culture—has been approached within the sphere of Intellectual Property Rights (IPR). IPR is addressed in this volume by Darrel Posey, Luisa Maffi, and Stephen Brush. The con-

tinued existence and protection of intellectual property is understood to be an integrated defense of culture(s) as a human rights issue, determined by international bodies (WIPO, UNESCO, WCCD, WGIP) and are inclusive of "traditional obligations" (416) as established by Indigenous norms.

All of these pieces have been written from the etic position. The salient issue for me is the threat to Indigenous epistemology. For an Indigenous perspective on the historical and current consequences of Euro-western ideology and the exigency of retention, look to L. Frank Manriquez's contribution to this volume: "Silent No More: California Indians Reclaim Their Culture—And They Invite You to Listen." All the contributors here have attempted to view the interconnectedness of separate and seemingly disparate disciplines. Finally, Western minds find their way to an Indigenous perception of equilibrium.

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On Holiday: A History of Vacationing. By Orvar Löfgren. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999. Pp. 320, introduction, notes, bibliography, index, illustrations.)

On *Holiday*, the sixth release in the on-going series, California Studies in Critical Human Geography, follows a generally linear path in its discussion of vacationing, but with a readable twist. Rather than struggle to digest and explain all contributing elements in relation to a stream of historic events or other emerging and interacting phenomena, the author prepares a sort of filet of the subject and sets it in an appropriate context. Orvar Löfgren opts to string together carefully chosen illustrative examples which link logically one with another. Drawing mostly from western Europe, England, and the United States, the author creates a broad introduction to what we call holidaying or vacationing.

These particular choices in no way preclude other workers with differing perspectives on analysis from grinding out some mighty tome or indeed from bringing into being another traditional social history. Löfgren leaves ground for other scholars of culture, leisure, and gender to till. Löfgren notes what he feels to be characteristic of class practice within the construction of the meaning of holiday.

By necessity and design *On Holiday* is selective of its coverage, offering a representative sample of issues within a consumable scope. This approach is fairly

standard. By way of comparison, John A. Jakle heaps item on item in his *The Tourist: Travel in Twentieth-Century North America* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1985), with little emphasis on analysis, and MacCannell creates a more or less compelling analytical argument in his *The Tourist: A New Theory of the Leisure Class* (New York: Schocken Books, 1976) and offers only occasional necessary examples. *On Holiday* nestles at some point in between. In addition, the focus of Löfgren's book is in a real sense narrower than the basic topic of tourism. Here is an examination, and close discussion, of folks involved in leisure away from home, but not necessarily in foreign or exotic settings.

Orvar Löfgren is Professor of European Ethnology at Sweden's University of Lund, and he has penned about a dozen books. This current release, *On Holiday: A History of Vacationing*, has a clear connection with what has been suggested is his best-known publication (with Jonas Frykman), *Culture Builders: A Historical Anthropology of Middle-Class Life* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1987). While *On Holiday* does not contest the area chestnut that "travelers are those who can travel" (implying that as the proof of the pudding is in the eating, the expenditure of resources is evident in mere observation), it does raise the interesting observation that class is often obscured on vacation, holiday, or in tourist events.

Löfgren writes tightly and parsimoniously, but he frames the information with a winning amalgam of straight reportage, occasional reference to rote data,

prudently chosen anecdotal material, and just enough personal narrative to be warm while avoiding identity overexposure. The transparent prose may be off-putting to that tribe of reader sutured to the idea that obscurity suggests profundity.

The text is developed through the presentation of details contemporary with the emergence of mass tourism, with obvious emphasis on the holidaymaker. These components, mostly dealing with the period from 1850 to 1950, are supported by earlier historical matter. Ideas of the picturesque and the sublime are important in the later growth of leisure travel, and while *On Holiday* is not a discussion of changes in intellectual perspective across the 1700s, this period is usefully brought to bear on vacationing in the 19th and 20th centuries. Most readers will be familiar with this period of social fermentation, so Löfgren limits himself to sketching the historical context in brief, using short but apt excerpts and quoted text from a number of sources. At the close of the book, the reader is brought through to the end of the 1990s.

Löfgren paces his book along three sections further divided into eight chapters. Thus, the text moves from "Landscapes and Mindscapes," with its three chapters, to "Getaways," and its pair of chapters, and finally "Between the Local and the Global" containing the closing three. This organizational scheme allows the scholar to follow threads—such as changes in the way the viewer "views" the natural world—across a terrain composed of technical and social shifts. The

more than thirty illustrations are well chosen, and they include many examples of art (the generic term for graphic imagery used in commercial advertising) as well as period and contemporary photographs. Again, not only do these illustrations help tease out the meaning of Löfgren's text, but the presentation as a whole should suggest opportunities for other work to readers involved in the areas mentioned above.

Especially useful is the coordination of Löfgren's description of change in holidaymakers' perception of the outdoors and wilderness with the examples of early advertising. One area which could certainly be extended and enlarged upon is the author's fairly brief discussion of the Mediterranean's manufacture of local "front" and "rear" stage areas (199). Do holiday participants seek to play out desired "roles," for which an authentic backstage would be a handicap, or do visitors want to gain insight into the daily life of "real folk"? MacCannell deals with this idea at some length, and Löfgren seems to confirm the theory that visitors stimulate the creation of complex double-voice social and political discourse.

Obviously, part of the value of survey projects such as Orvar Löfgren's *On Holiday: A History of Vacationing* is the emergence of connections and associations which bubble up while one reads chapter through chapter. Development of the means to move, the invention and eventual accessibility of steam power, for example, created the industrial warren while producing the mechanism for carriage to a natural setting. Odious indus-

trial settings have been transmuted into revenue generators as sites of "Industrial Tourism."

On Holiday makes a fine read for a motivated, curious consumer, even for those with little inclination to pursue the minutiae of these issues. Serious scholars on the topic may find themselves wishing that adult themes would have been more ardently and fully fleshed out. Happily, Löfgren does deal with the issue to some small degree—especially the reality of adults seeking sex on vacation. As a general rule, the text is more descriptive than analytical, with short shrift given to thick theory. It is far more relevant that the choices for inclusion were made with clarity and cohesion and that the book is useful to readers.

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When Law Goes Pop: The Vanishing Line between Law and Popular Culture. By Richard K. Sherwin. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2000. Pp. xii + 325, introduction, notes, index.

How trustworthy are American juries? Can the courts be counted on for justice? *When Law Goes Pop* examines these questions and offers some pessimistic answers. According to the author, current trends in popular culture threaten to undermine public confidence in the legal system.

Richard Sherwin, a professor of law at New York University, thinks that boundaries between law and pop are rapidly disappearing. As a result, public belief in the law's legitimacy is eroding, and so is the public's ability to distinguish truth from fabrication. He locates the causes of this crisis in "an unprecedented convergence" (4) of intellectual, technological, and economic forces:

Constructivist ("postmodern") theory, communications technology, and the needs of the marketplace are coming together with tremendous synergistic impact. As a consequence of this impact we are seeing a marked destabilization in our sense of self, and in our social and legal reality. Legal meanings are flattening out as they yield to the compelling visual logic of film and TV images and the market forces that fuel their production (4).

Sherwin's argument has two parts. In the first, he shows that American trials have always enacted deeply held cultural val-

ues. Using Gerry Spence's masterful closing statement in the murder trial of Idaho militiaman Randy Weaver as an example, he depicts trial lawyers as storytellers who rely on myths to reach juries. He extends this analysis by considering the notorious trials of John Brown for the Harper's Ferry raid, Henry Ward Beecher for adultery, and Harry Thaw for the murder of architect Stanford White. In each instance, Sherwin explores how the events contested at trial symbolized central tensions in contemporary society, repressed issues of guilt and desire that the opposing counsels addressed through their stories. The verdicts in these trials, he suggests, turned on whether the public faced up to the issue or retreated into collective fantasy. Notorious trials are thus testing grounds of public sensibility.

Against this backdrop of trial-as-cultural-ritual, Sherwin pursues the second part of his argument, a diagnosis of the present. He uses *The Thin Blue Line*, Errol Morris's quasi-documentary film about a botched murder case, to describe "the postmodern challenge" (107). Morris creates two frames for understanding the events. The main plot, "causal and linear," is a straightforward exposé of the police and prosecutors' frame-up of the defendant. The shadow counterplot, "acausal and nonlinear," raises troubling doubts about the defendant's innocence and, indeed, the validity of "representational order" (126). Sherwin's point is that to be truthful to the real complexity of human conduct, as Morris tries to be, "chance and necessity must also be reckoned with when assessing individual accountability" (116).

This insight leads to the pivotal distinction in his argument between "affirmative" and "skeptical" postmodernism (131). Sherwin believes that the public, more aware than ever of the constructed nature of meaning, may go in one direction or the other, either towards renewed belief or towards disenchanting cynicism. The future of justice depends on the affirmation of meaning through a sense of "tragic wisdom" that "expressly takes into account the contingencies, uncertainties, and limitations of human understanding and the imbalances that exist in particular linguistic interactions" (237). This path represents a "fundamental epistemological shift" away from "the rationalist ideals and repressive impulses of the Enlightenment" (246). Skeptical postmodernism, however, threatens to take society in the opposite direction. It is characterized by "the substitution of virtual (electronically mass mediated, passively received) experience for real life—and the ensuing inability to tell one from the other" (260). Emblematic of this trend in the law is the Supreme Court's 1981 ruling in *Estes v. Texas*, in which Chief Justice Warren Burger justified the televising of trials. According to Sherwin, Justice Berger's reasoning implies that is not justice but "the appearance of justice that counts most" (158). Sherwin cites a number of instances of "the jurisprudence of appearances" (141), in particular of lawyers manipulating opinion through the media, which he dubs "litigation public relations" (152).

Does *When Law Goes Pop* prove its case about the perilous conflation of legal and popular realms? Readers who

feel that ordinary life is suffering a "leeching out of authenticity" (259) may easily agree that the same process afflicts the legal system. But Sherwin does not support the two parts of his argument equally well. The first part, about narrative and symbolic dimensions of trials, is convincing and at times compelling, with interpretations well grounded in records of actual cases. When Sherwin turns to the effects of postmodernity, though, he uses movies far more than law. (Besides *The Thin Blue Line*, he does illuminating readings of Lynch's *Twin Peaks* and *Lost Highway*, Kieslowski's *Red* and both versions of *Cape Fear*.) Maybe he takes this tack in order to introduce postmodern theory to lawyers and law students. Still, there's a paucity of evidence to back up his claim about image eviscerating substance in the legal arena.

This problem becomes apparent when the author tries to show how trial lawyers practice "in hyperreality" (23). His main example is an organized crime case in which attorney Jeremiah Donovan asserts that his client is not a mafia boss (as the prosecution contends), but a wannabe. By this strategy, "Donovan transformed his client into a harmless cartoon character, just like *Pulp Fiction*" (33). But just because *Pulp Fiction* makes gangsters so appealing that viewers laugh when they commit violence doesn't mean that Donovan's story is indebted to that ironic sensibility. Rather, Donovan is exploiting an old folk character type: the fool who pretends. To drive this persona home, the attorney relates a tale to the jury about an Irishman at a bar who gets himself

beaten to a pulp by claiming to be O'Toole and then proudly announces, "I sure pulled a fast one on that big fella"—I'm not O'Toole at all!" (32) Such use of a stock figure to underpin one's version of events may be sleight-of-hand, but it's hardly proof of a shift "to the hyperreal world of free-floating signifiers" (24). It's a time-honored tactic in the trial lawyers' craft.

For another example of hyperreality, Sherwin points to Johnnie Cochran's exhortation to the jury in the O.J. Simpson trial to "do the right thing" and "keep their eyes on the prize." Sherwin reminds us that "these neatly packaged soundbite phrases" (24) come from Spike Lee's film and PBS's documentary series on Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. What's hyperreal about that? Smart lawyers recycle phrases that are on people's lips and in their memories.

At the root of what seems strained to me in Sherwin's approach is his view of the source of the stories that matter. "For most people," he says, "the source is not difficult to ascertain. It is the visual mass media. . . . This vast electronic archive provides us with the knowledge and interpretation skills we need to make sense of ordinary reality" (21). This statement misses the influence of family and friends, of schools and other institutions, of books and other arts, of a person's own life experience. All are sources of meanings different than the common currency of the mass media. Media stories affect us in important ways. But much of who we are and what we know comes from other contexts and traditions.

The trial court is one such context.

Skilled trial lawyers, as I found out when I did the fieldwork for my book *The Trial Lawyer's Art*, make the proceedings a performance that will hold jurors' attention for days or weeks on end. This sort of storytelling is the antithesis of the mass media's slam-bang techniques. True, most people get their notions of what trials are like from the media; yet once they become jurors they are inducted into another sphere with its own practices and expectations. True, lawyers may seize on the latest scandal in the news or the latest technological visual aid if they think these will help their case; yet the main coordinates they work from lie not in the media, but in a centuries' long, still vital craft tradition.

This tradition has evinced much interest in the very matters of contingency that *When Law Goes Pop* regards as the key to affirmative postmodernism. Read Clarence Darrow's closing statements—the Leopold and Loeb case is a good place to start—and you can see the presence of a double frame of reference: one speaking in blunt certainties, the other circling around painful mysteries of human conduct. A lawyer, after all, has to get the jury to act decisively, but the jury may balk if the account ignores life's complexity. Affirmative postmodernism seems less of a break from past understandings than a continuation. Dilemmas of necessity and freedom have been the most enduring of themes for artistic representation.

The main threat to justice in the United States is not, I think, that the public will lose sight of the difference between image and reality. It is that the

system will prove incapable of facing the reality of its failures to offer good legal representation to the poor and otherwise disadvantaged. If the law's direction is complacency rather than repair, cynicism will be well justified.

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Georges Bataille: A Critical Introduction. By Benjamin Noys. (London: Pluto Press, 2000. Pp. viii + 165, introduction, notes and references, bibliography, index.)

"If we do not read Bataille as a thinker of freedom, then we do not read him at all" (5).

Most English language readers of Georges Bataille are familiar with him as a peculiar *litterateur*, the author of *The Story of the Eye*, a sophisticated and disturbing novel about sexual deviants on a rampage. But interest has been gaining steadily in Bataille's other work, a startling oeuvre that includes writing in philosophy, history, anthropology, religion, art, and economics. Benjamin Noys's book, *George Bataille: A Critical Introduction*, alerts readers to the complexities involved in reading Bataille. Noys writes that Bataille "is an irruptive force of violent excitation, and this accounts for the pleasure in reading him" (5). But despite the pleasure we may find in reading Bataille, Noys argues, "to celebrate Bataille is to fail to read him" (4).

This paradox is at the heart of Bataille's work. Bataille tried to position his work as an inassimilable "foreign body" that could be neither appropriated nor rejected in the domains of literature or philosophy. Rather, his work would force these domains to open themselves to dangerous forces beyond their control, to irrationality and to excess.

Noys states that the key to Bataille's writings is the notion of waste or luxury. In his three-volume work, *The Accursed Share*, Bataille developed the argument that accumulation, which commands the attention of

most economists, is the overwhelming principle only of a "restricted economy" based on profit. This restricted economy replaces intimacy, desire, and the life of the moment with an interest in activities that have ends outside of themselves, usually material wealth. Bataille contrasted this restricted economy with the "general economy" which has ultimate authority in the cosmos and is governed by the principle of useless expenditure. Seen from the perspective of general economy, Bataille wrote, "a human sacrifice, the construction of a church or the gift of a jewel were no less interesting than the sale of wheat" (qtd. in Noys, 13).

Bataille attacked liberal democracies for their weakness, a weakness that created a vacuum for Nazism to fill. The justification for liberal democracies had been reason and utility, the great achievements of the Enlightenment. For Bataille, these achievements did not address life's important problems. Instead, they reduced human experience and human community to rational functions geared towards material ends. Primitive societies, in contrast, employed elaborate rituals of sacrifice to expel waste luxuriously. Bataille noted the need for these kinds of rituals: "A human society can have . . . an *interest* in considerable losses, in catastrophes that, *while conforming to well-defined needs*, provoke tumultuous depressions, crises of dread, and, in the final analysis, a certain orgiastic state" (qtd. in Noys, 105).

For Bataille, the expenditure of excess energy could be either glorious or catastrophic. He perceived that European nations, soon to begin a second world war, were preparing a catastrophic expenditure of excess energy. Bataille imagined instead a glorious expenditure that could avert the catastrophe.

Bataille experimented with the creation of communities that desired freedom rather than power, and to that end he and others formed a group called *Acéphale* (Headless). The group's goal was to release energies that could not be controlled by any leader. They planned a human sacrifice, but abandoned it because there were no willing executioners. However, the idea of sacrifice, particularly Marcel Mauss's work on the subject, continued to drive their thoughts.

Benjamin Noys set several difficult tasks for himself in his overview of Bataille: to explain how Bataille's work refuses both rejection and appropriation, the relationship between Bataille's life and work, the labyrinthine structure of Bataille's thought, and the influence of Bataille's work on other writers. He meets some of these goals, but falls short of others. Part of the problem is Noys's convoluted style, which hurts his efforts to clarify Bataille's work. For example:

Bennington is very critical of the pathos that Bataille reads into this problem of the limit, without perhaps recognizing that his own limitation of the problem of the limit to being a logical problem is reductive of the subjective, existential, ethical, and emotional effects that the limit can have (123).

When Noys cites the "irruptive force" of Bataille's writing, it makes us long for more of that force in his own writing.

While Noys argues that Bataille "wrote with his blood" (5), Noys does not provide many connections between Bataille's life and work, and there are few biographical details. Noys states, "I do not intend to provide an exhaustive description or chronology of his life but to select irruptive events from which

it overflows into his work" (5). Yet, because Bataille's work is so difficult, readers might have appreciated more contextual information than Noys provides.

Noys argues that Bataille was deeply affected by the Nazis' misappropriation of Nietzsche's work and wanted to make his writing "unusable." He did not, of course, succeed, for many people—most notably poststructuralist theorists from Lacan to Derrida—have appropriated Bataille to many ends. While Noys defends Bataille's claim to "unusability," a book on the many uses of Bataille might have been more enlightening, even with the caveat that "use" is a problematic term in Bataille's vocabulary. Noys assumes that Bataille's readers seek only to interpret his work, and he fails to address why work meant to be unusable has in fact been so generative for other writers.

Noys's overview of Bataille and relevant intellectual history is clearly organized and may be quite helpful to the scholar wishing to put the various pieces of Bataille's work into perspective. Though he argues forcefully that critics commonly misread Bataille, Noys's goal is not to redeem him. He castigates Bataille for his weaknesses, errors, and failures, and he is clear-eyed about the dangers inherent in Bataille's violently transgressive ideas.

George Bataille: A Critical Introduction offers some significant contributions to cultural studies. It describes Bataille's refusal of all limits and his desire to unleash heterogeneous forces in all domains of human knowledge. Bataille's perverse interventions in numerous and disparate fields and his attacks on the boundaries of established textual domains have implications for every cultural institution. *Cultural Analysis* readers may find inspiration in Bataille's crossing of

boundaries, his exploration of intensities and disruptive meaning, and his rejection of authorities who seek to control textual domains.

Noys contributes most significantly to cultural studies by elucidating Bataille's ideas about community. Media consumers frequently inaugurate their own experimental communities, such as those that make up "fandom," and Bataille would have been fascinated with those experiments. According to Noys, Bataille distinguished between open and closed communities. The closed community (read *fascism*) operates under the ideology of the intact subject and seeks to purify itself from outside contaminants. Bataille sought an alternative in the open community, in which the individual "as subject . . . ruins itself in an undefined throng of possible existences" (qtd. in Noys, 51). It is a community based on instability, laughter, failure, danger, and a continual inquiry into the nature of community itself.

As communities form around interests in particular texts and textual practices, they must choose between open and closed forms of community. Bataille was interested in redefining community, something that cult audiences do through their newly-formed identifications around chosen texts. Cult audiences yearn for the intimacy that Bataille argues has been lost under capitalism, but they risk reproducing the very forces that destroy intimacy. Noys's book on Bataille offers them some hope of finding that elusive prize.

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The Telling. By Ursula K. Le Guin. (New York: Harcourt, Inc., 2000. Pp. 264)

In the preface to her most recent book, *The Birthday of the World and Other Stories* (Harper Collins, 2002), Ursula Le Guin discusses the imagined universe of her Hainish novels, in which *The Telling* is set. The Hainish novels constitute a family, albeit a loosely connected rather than a closely knit one. In them, Le Guin posits the existence of a parent culture, the Hain, which has seeded the universe with interrelated (but not identical) humanoid species, including the people of Earth. In *The Birthday of the World*, the author asserts the hopelessness of trying to discover an underlying implied history that ties together the novels in a coherent and consistent design, pointing out that such a history (even if it were consistent) would consist mainly of gaps. While admitting the factors of "authorial carelessness, forgetfulness, and impatience," (vii) she also affirms the logic of such incoherence, given the vastness of space and the elasticity of time under the conditions of near light-speed time travel.

To place *The Telling* in this gap-ridden spatial/temporal/textual context, it may be useful to consider further in a broad way the gap-ridden seriality of much science fiction (and fantasy) and ask how this characteristic might illuminate how we make and preserve our stories. Le Guin is the author of two grand series—the Hainish science fiction novels and the Earthsea fantasy novels—each series with its cosmology and/or geography, and each with its own rules of technology or magic.

This extended world- or universe-building puts Le Guin in the tradition of J.R.R. Tolkien, C.S. Lewis, J.K. Rowling's *Harry Potter* novels, and Frank Herbert's *Dune* novels, for several instances. Nor is her authorship of two distinct series particularly unusual. Marion Zimmer Bradley, for instance, wrote science fiction set on her invented planet of Darkover (like Le Guin, moving around in time rather than writing her novels in chronological sequence) as well as a fantasy series based in terrestrial legends (*The Mists of Avalon* being the most familiar example). Octavia Butler is another author of several series, using science fiction to explore issues of gender and race, and the human proclivity toward violent competition and consequent self-destruction. Before Butler's novels came Doris Lessing's series of five "space fiction" novels, *Canopus in Argus: Archives*, which examine the devastating consequences of human activity from a "deep" interstellar perspective. But whether it's the social criticism of Lessing and Butler or the reproduction of "traditional" (Euro-American) values in space operas such as *Star Wars*, science fiction and fantasy invite seriality.

One reason for this is obvious: science fiction and fantasy invite world/universe-building, and this activity takes time and space. One might argue that the activity also requires (or creates) a special commitment or responsibility. It certainly invites collaboration. Bradley's Darkover is a territory that has been visited by other writers, much as the Land of Oz, after L. Frank Baum's discovery and initial explorations, was visited first by Baum's followers and then recently

by Oz's revisionist historian Gregory Maguire in his novel *Wicked*.

Unlike Oz, or the single extraterrestrial human-settled cultures of *Darkover* or *Dune*, Le Guin's territory is hugely vast. The Hain-originated humanoid species, despite their distance from one another and their physiological differentiation over time, are joined together in an interstellar cultural confederacy called the Ekumen. To locate and to connect these scattered people, the Ekumen uses a device called the *ansible* that permits instantaneous communication, but interstellar travel is still conducted at sub-light-speed. This means that the Ekumen's traveling representatives are permanent exiles from their home space-time, doing their best to reestablish extended family relationships with alien people and places, and occasionally achieving intimacy.

Le Guin's social and technical assumptions provide a common set of assumptions for most of her science fiction, occasional inconsistencies and gaps notwithstanding. This larger fictional environment also gives *The Telling*, a rather slight effort when considered on its own, value as a piece that fills in one of the holes in the vast interstellar Hainish map. Arguably, universe building transcends the particular merits of any individual text.

In general terms, *The Telling* depicts how the unified national voice of the state, using its human and technological agents of control, promulgates deception, drowning out the voices of individual people and seeking to rob them of their past. But the narrative reveals as well the hidden culture that persists un-

derground, in secret places, and reminds us how culture is not an abstraction, but is alive, vivid in its material forms, powerful in its retellings, precious in the mind.

In her comments on the origins of the novel, Le Guin points out a connection with Maoist China and its suppression of Taoism, but certainly *The Telling* has wider resonance than that. The powers of sight, sound, and smell operate more powerfully than sociopolitical critique or character development. The novel opens with these sensory evocations of a past that is like our own terrestrial past, so that the narrative is immediately knitted to the readers' universe as well as to the Hainish. But because the terrestrial past thus evoked is Indian, it is India, rather than a "progressive" Euro-Americanoid "First World," that is constructed as home/"Cradle of Civilization":

Yellow of brass, yellow of turmeric paste and of rice cooked with saffron, orange of marigolds, dull orange haze of sunset dust above the fields. . . . A whiff of asafetida. The brook-babble of Aunty gossiping. . . . Ganesh's little piggy kindly eye. A match struck and the rich grey curl of incense smoke: pungent, vivid, gone. (1)

As the paragraph closes we are conducted from that place of warmth into a colder, darker present in which Suttu, the novel's main character, recalls these fragments of her childhood as she walks, or eats, or takes "a break from the sensory assault of the nearreals she had to partiss in" (2). Thus the narrative moves with great economy from the rich sensory data of the "old world" of childhood and

of an ancient terrestrial culture to a "new world" characterized by technology, its jargon, its simulacra, and an ambiance of sensory assault and compulsion. One version of that new world exists on Earth, which (paradoxically) has fallen to the control of religious fundamentalists; another version exists on the planet Aka, a corporate state dedicated to the pursuit of progress and the erasure of history. It is here that Suttu has been sent.

The novel's opening passages also prefigure the essential dilemma of Suttu as an individual, with a personal past, and as an Observer, an official representative of the Ekumen. Suttu searches for lost language, its pictographic written forms, and its literature, which have disappeared to be replaced by an official Newspeak, disseminated via propaganda recordings. As Ekumenical representative, Suttu is required not to interfere in the local culture, to retain her objectivity and to avoid opinion: "The old farfetchers' motto: Opinion ends reception" (55). But as her observations take her from Aka's putatively progressive capital to the "backward" provincial city of Okzat-Ozkat and into the mountains beyond, she learns that objectivity is not possible. Her journey also shows that through knowledge and compassion come insight—not only into familiar principles of what we often term "common humanity," but also, even if partially and occasionally, into areas of blindness caused by cultural difference.

Suttu's journey is rendered more painful by her solitude; her lover, with whom she was hoping to share her life's work, was killed in the bombing of a library in their home city of Seattle. Initially char-

acterized as isolated and plagued with a sense of inadequacy, Suttu practices the receptiveness of the "farfetchers" and thereby enters into a sustaining network of connections with the underground practitioners of the Telling, preservers of the old texts. That network enables her to slip through the boundaries of official control and travel to the sacred caves at the heart of the Mother-mountain Silong, which she first sees looming like an immense white wall, "a wrinkled curtain of light halfway up the sky" (52) above Okzat-Ozkat.

The imagery of city, journey, and mountain is striking in its details and intricately patterned. From the capital, Dovza City, the voyage by boat to Okzat-Ozkat is, Suttu reflects, "longer. . . than [her] journey from Earth to Aka" (39). Her journey onward from there to Silong is, predictably, longer and more arduous than the mountain's dramatic visibility from the town would suggest. We have here a contrast between the technologically-manipulated "future" temporality of interstellar travel, in which huge distances are covered within humanly-achievable durations, and the "past" temporality of mythic journeys, in which time and effort are magnified by the operations of the spirit.

Suttu's pilgrimage takes place in company, but she remains singular and to that extent isolated as she approaches Silong. Silong also initially appears to be a strikingly singular entity, but close up is revealed to be one of a twosome, paired with Zubuam, the thunderer: "Old maz mountains. Old lovers" (186). The same pattern is articulated in the pairing of the *maz*, who are Aka's under-

ground professional Tellers. The maz, whose union is permanent beyond death, and who do not always follow the heterosexual official norm, are in those regards similar to Suttu and her dead female lover Pao, so that we readers begin to see Suttu differently than she (as yet) sees herself. The maz's essential two-in-oneness is inscribed in the old prohibited grammar common to all the major Akan languages, "a peculiar singular/dual pronoun" (112) that is ironically reflected even in the "producer-consumer heroes of Corporation propaganda" (112). It is also reflected in the mirror-image names of maz partners and for that matter would account for the name of the city Okzat-Ozkat. Thus the deep structure of a culture will surface in the face of all efforts to suppress it.

The power of the old culture to rise to the surface is also illustrated by the fate of Yara, an Akan Monitor (as such, the opposite number to Suttu in her official role of Observer). Initially appearing to be an emotionless extension of the Corporate State, the Monitor follows Suttu to Silong for reasons that turn out to be personal. Their initial opposition turns into another form of two-in-oneness, when at the caves they engage in their own private Tellings, exchanging their own unofficial, well-hidden stories. Yara thus for a brief time becomes a kind of shadow-partner for Suttu.

Silong's caves are strikingly envisaged as "endless bubble chambers inter-connecting, interfacing, dark walls, floors, ceilings all curved into one another seamlessly, so disorienting that sometimes she felt she was floating weightless" (194). The womb imagery is

elaborated by the function of these chambers as a kind of Borgesian library; within them are housed innumerable books, manuscripts, and fragments of text containing the accumulated culture of Aka: "the texts of blessings, the protocols of ceremonies, recipes, prescriptions for curing cold sores and for living to a great age, stories, legends, annals. . . herbals, bestiaries, anatomies, geometries both real and metaphysical, maps of Aka, maps of imaginary worlds, histories of ancient lands, poems. All the poems in the world were here" (197).

This library-as-microcosm is the treasure at the end of the quest, but it is clearly not a treasure for the individual taking. There is simply too much material, too randomly preserved. Its housing in bubble-caves is conceptually appropriate, analogous to the gap-ridden Hainish universe itself, which Le Guin compares to a partially unraveled piece of knitting.

Confronted with a treasure of such magnitude, Suttu is confronted with a dilemma: how to ensure its preservation without violating the Ekumen's non-interference policy. In the end she is able to do so because of her understanding of Akan culture; the novel concludes with a "tit for tat" (263) arrangement, technology for texts, a solution that holds out a promise of continued openness.

One finds a similar combination of social problem-solving and personal transformation in *The Left Hand of Darkness* as well as other, less widely-known Hainish fiction. *The Left Hand of Darkness's* main characters are far more complex, plausible, and engaging than *The Telling's* Suttu, and that novel is much

richer on the level of narrative, interweaving multiple strands of invented myth, legend, and folktale into a narrative of cultural thickness. Disappointingly, *The Telling* tells us that important narrative material is being preserved, but we do not get to read it for ourselves, as we do in *The Left Hand of Darkness*. Nonetheless, *The Telling*, for all its slightness, exhibits Le Guin's characteristic interest in the fragments out of which we reconstruct our visions of the past.

The fragments in *The Telling* consist most obviously of Aka's languages and literature, found in Silong's caves and in other hidden places, in physical documents and in the oral tales Suttu hears from the Tellers and the many other informal participants of the Telling, for the activity is not limited to the professionals. Early in her stay at Okzat-Ozkat, while visiting an old shop, Suttu sees inscriptions on the wall that she recognizes from her offplanet study as the old pictographs, and she receives in exchange for her insider's knowledge a gift from the shopkeeper. That early encounter proves to be one of her several points of entry into the underground culture. An even earlier encounter with the hidden culture comes by way of a few scraps salvaged from a lost interplanetary transmission: the picture of a fisherman on a humpbacked bridge, some bits of prose, a few lines of poetry. After arriving on Aka, Suttu must delete her copies of these prohibited materials, but she does not forget them. Thus they change their substance (original to physical copy to mental copy) but they do not lose their form, and their contextual significance turns out to be retrievable in the caves of Silong.

Suttu's memories and dreams of Earth constitute another set of fragments, as we see at the very beginning of the novel and repeatedly thereafter. She is in effect accompanied on her journey by her dead partner, Pao. Le Guin completes the linkage by having Suttu narrate the circumstances of Pao's death in her conversation with the Observer Yara. Two-in-one thereby become three, and the grammatical-interpersonal formula expands to include all who are linked in the Telling, a cosmic tree of myriad branches, "the being that can be told" of which "the mountain is the root" (96), as a maz tells her.

Turning again to the idea of the serial (or multiple-textual) nature of science fiction—the vehicle for Le Guin's ideas about the many-in-one/one-in-many, it may be worth reexamining the ground in which the novel itself is rooted.

Outside the Hainish textual universe and inside our own space/time, where, or how, is *The Telling* rooted? There is, of course, Le Guin's critique of Chinese Communism, which to my mind is not particularly effective, but neither is it intrusive. More problematic, for all that it is localized rather than widespread in the narrative, is the heavy-handed allusion to Starbuck's Coffee. Sharing Starbrew, the Corporation brand of *akakafi*, "was one of the few rituals of social bonding the people of Dovza City allowed themselves" (66). This allusion, doubtless designed to create a connection between the narrative space/time and our own, has instead the unfortunate effect of disturbing the imaginative integrity of the Hainish universe—a more serious problem than the "incoherence" that Le Guin

admits in *The Birthday of the World*. Starbrew violates our sense of appropriate connection between there/then and here/now.

Inside the Hainish textual universe—that is, viewed as one of a series—*The Telling* is rooted in Hainish history, but that history overlaps with our own via the conventions of historical-literary realism. That is, Suttty's Earth is consistent with our Earth as it might be in the future. (This is quite different from the illogical-to-make-a-point positioning of Starbuck's/Starbrew in Dovza City.) On Suttty's Earth (as on ours), on Aka, and on the other Hainish planets reintroduced in *The Birthday of the World*, this is a history that is repeatedly forgotten, so that the gaps in Le Guin's fiction exist both narratively and metanarratively:

... [Y]ou can ask the Hainish, who have been around for a long time, and whose historians not only know a lot of what happened, but also know that it keeps happening and will happen again. . . .

The people on all the other worlds, who all descended from the Hainish, naturally don't want to believe what the old folks say, so they start making history; and so it all happens again.

I did not plan these worlds and people. I found them, gradually piecemeal, while writing stories. I'm still finding them. (viii)

The very notions of forgetting—on the part of characters—and of finding—on the part of the author—contribute to our sense of actuality: something has gone on before the beginning of the first page

of the first book and continues after the last page of the last book, and things happen between one text and the next, far too many for us ever to learn about all of them. And we are also reminded that people don't always want to remember, so that even in this far future, the same terrible mistakes continue to be made.

And here we might turn from the relationship between Hainish past and Hainish present to that between our own almost-lost past and dimly haunted present. In her essay "World-Making" (1981, reprinted in *Dancing at the Edge of the World*, Grove Press, 1989), Le Guin calls us "the inhabitants of a Lost World" (47) annihilated by the European conquerors, the ancestors of many of us, including Le Guin herself:

The people who lived here, in this place, on these hills, for tens of thousands of years, are remembered (when they are remembered at all) in the language of the conquistadores: the "Costanos," the "Santa Claras," the "San Franciscos," names taken from foreign demigods. . . . Here is one. . . fragment, a song. . . . The people sang:

I dream of you,
I dream of you jumping,
Rabbit, jackrabbit, and quail.
(47-48)

In the essay Le Guin talks about the relationship between fragments from the past and the invented worlds she has constructed from sometimes culturally disparate pieces—bricolage: a bit here, a bit there, "and so patch together a world as best I can. But still there is a mystery" (48). So here we might stop and simply

consider the fragmentary poem from our own Lost World, so like the fragments Suttu retrieves from the ruined transmission. The poem represents the "I" who dreams and the life going on within the dream, a story within a dream within a song, all framed by Le Guin's own Telling—and then reframed, however modestly, by this essay you are reading now. Like the books stored within the bubble-caves of Silong, stories lie side by side and also within one another. Meditating on the writings of Ursula Le Guin and on their wider implications, we are likely to come away with a reinvigorated sense of our own participation in the great Telling, an activity of more than personal and surely of more than academic interest.

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