

Culture



Nelson GRABURN, ed., *The Anthropology of Tourism, (Annals of Tourism Research, vol. 10, no. 1), New York, Pergamon Press, 1983. 192 pages, US \$15.15 (paper)*

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A decade ago, tourism was conspicuous by its absence in scholarly literature. Since then, however, a remarkable number of published studies have established it as an appropriate concern of social research. Tourism has also become a common subject of theses, dissertations, and field-training projects, a trend suggesting that we can look for a further proliferation of the literature.

The *Annals of Tourism Research*, a social sciences journal which is now in its tenth year of publication, has played a prominent role in catalyzing academic interest in tourism. The collection reviewed here is a special issue of that journal devoted to anthropology. Previous special issues dealt with the geography of tourism, the sociology of tourism, the economics of tourism, and so on, while future issues promise to explore tourism's relationship to political science, social psychology, and other disciplines. The growing specialization of tourism studies is seen in the present volume. Two of the contributors, Jean Thurot and Gaétane Thurot, are based at a French tourism institute, the Centre des Hautes Études Touristiques in Aix-en-Provence. Predictably, they have coined a new rhetoric, identifying their subject as "touristology" and themselves as "touristologists".

In his introductory essay, editor Nelson Graburn distinguishes broadly between two types of anthropological work on tourism: 1) studies of tourists and the nature of tourism; and 2) studies of the impact of tourism on host populations, including the character of the host-tourist relationship. While he indicates that this collection is restricted to studies of the former type, he does not mention that the latter type have generally been far more critical of tourism, often seeing it as a major source of cultural debilitation and social dislocation, especially among Third World peoples. Hence the book is rather more sanguine than its title would suggest.

This caveat notwithstanding, the book serves to dispel at least one ethnocentric misconception: the notion that pleasure travel is an exclusive privilege of white Westerners. Included are vivid ethnographic accounts of Japanese tourists (who venture much further from home than most North American

tourists), middle class Mexican tourists (whose behavior at a beach resort is more rambunctious and licensed than that of their *gringo* counterparts), East Indian tourists (who comprise about two-thirds of all visitors to the erotic temple statuary at Khajuraho), Sri Lankan tourists (who carry huge tape decks blaring cacophonous rock music on a "pilgrimage" to Sri Pade, a mountain held sacred by Buddhists, Hindus, Muslims, and Christians), and French tourists (who are confronted by powerful, highly seductive advertising images beckoning them to plush tropical resorts). Even within Western society tourism is certainly not monolithic, as indicated by essays on such diverse groups as charter yacht tourists in the Caribbean and visitors to Taos, New Mexico, an area known for museums, ethnic arts, and strenuous outdoor recreational pastimes. What emerges from these presentations is a view of tourism as a worldwide but culturally varied phenomenon, understandable in relation to the symbolic forms and social formations that shape it in a given place and time.

There are two recurrent conceptual themes in the book. The first is the relationship of tourism to pilgrimage. Most authors favor MacCannell's (in *The Tourist*, 1976) position that tourism is usefully seen as a modern quest for authentic, even sacred experience. The second theme is that tourism has essential qualities of both ritual and play. Here there is a disappointing lack of theoretical refinement, resulting in analyses that are often too simplistic for the vivid and complex material to which they are addressed. Overall, however, the ethnographic strengths of the collection outweigh its analytical weaknesses. For those unfamiliar with tourism research, the book is a lively introduction to the field. For the specialist, it is a worthwhile source of data.

Michel IZARD and Pierre SMITH, eds., *Between Belief and Transgression: Structuralist Essays in Religion, History and Myth*, translated by John Leavitt, with an introduction by James A. Boon, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1983. 288 pages, US \$20.00 (paper).

By Eric Schwimmer
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This is a translation of a work that appeared in 1979 under the title: *La fonction symbolique, Essais d'anthropologie*. As such it has been widely re-