

## Culture



**Daniel SEGAL (ed.), *Crossing Cultures: Essays in the Displacement of Western Civilization*, Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1992; xix + 270 pages, U.S. \$39.95 (cloth)**

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structured) is both non-discursive and non-representational.

Cambridge's other target is Gilroy's invariable identities of revolt, particularly rastafarianism which has got itself stuck between agency and structure. Cambridge's analysis of the shifting and ambivalent formation of black identities and subjectivities is contextualised in the dynamic context of cultural processes and their modes of individuation. He thus eschews the notion of an essential black self in opposition to racism. Cambridge effectively develops the self as an analytical concern and as a moving target for social analysis. In this, his is one of the most sophisticated accounts of black subjectivity currently available.

In *Where You Belong*, racism is something to be both revealed and countered. The authors' deconstruction of racism offers both an analytic rigour and some targets for social and political reform. But what is unique about this volume is that it achieves this without recourse to a general class politics or a rhetoric of black insurrection; key devices used in other accounts. It's main point — that human subjectivity and identity focuses on various forms of belonging and exclusion — is an important one which could be more clearly and concretely illustrated in places.

It's main failing is the density of much of the writing. Each chapter has the substance of a separate book. There are also some issues which deserve further attention. What is the relationship between personal and social identities? And between this and political agency? There is also room for a further clarification of the self as an analytic device. What, for example, is its relationship to psychoanalytic discourse?

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By Robert B. Klymasz

Canadian Museum of Civilization

Handsomely produced and beautifully edited, this compilation of six essays offers a wealth of insights into the dynamics of cultural encounters

(identified here as "crossings"). Each essay is a superbly crafted case study, provocative and sometimes even haunting. Trendy and vaguely apologetic, the book's focus rests on colonial encounters, "the reciprocity of moral regimes" and on the West vis-à-vis "the rest". Eight of the nine contributors teach at universities in the United States (the odd person out teaches at the University of Alberta); all seem pained by the insidious nature of the West's role in these encounters, and this factor inevitably sweeps into the book's warp and woof.

Half of the encounters analyzed here take place in North America during the colonial period. Some of the by-products of these "crossings" (such as syphilis, black slavery, captive Europeans, and multicultural rebellion) are featured in the first three essays written by Mary B. Campbell, Pauline Turner Strong, and Peter Linebaugh jointly with Marcus Rediker. These are carefully constructed and richly documented as are the remaining three essays. The latter focus on encounters that are removed both spatially and temporally from the North American colonial setting (Algeria, India, and Bali); and, in addition, each of these three essayists uses expertise to produce an approach that is distinct and distinguished at the same time: Derek Sayer as sociologist, David Prochaska as historian, and James Boon as anthropologist. (Boon's style of exposition is especially original albeit somewhat self-indulgent.)

Researchers attuned to the nitty-gritty of fieldwork will find this volume thoughtful but perhaps unusually tidy since it lacks the immediacy of raw and unrefined field data. But, after all, most of the findings in *Crossing Cultures* are based on written documentation ranging from archival matter to *belles-lettres*, predominantly if not exclusively west European in origin with English as the language of expression. To correct this bias, a companion volume is needed that will avoid such strictures — one that will enrich the perspective on "crossings" by engaging voices emanating from other sources. Nonetheless, this remains a strong collection enhanced by an eloquent introductory statement (by Harry Lieberohn and Daniel Segal) as well as a useful index.