Book Review of

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Forthcoming in Cultural Geography

This is a great book, yet it is also a work book. It is a book that takes work to read. And this is due in part to the fact that it is a book that works with its words to show its own work, on the move, on the mind, on the sleight of mind, here and there, North and South, “out of joint with the times” (173). As such, it might be said to be a sort of Post Card work too: “ready to work” (235) from one space to the next with bits of the real found in the world at large, but not as a post man of truth from the jet set, nor Freud for real, nor fort and da for Dad (or a big Dad on the Left Bank), just lots of home work. From house work with its gods, to map work on its home ground, it is Other Asias through which much of this work takes (and in which it thus finds) place. Not the East of the West, though, here it is much more than this site and cite from the bard song of Troy’s time (210) all the way on to A Pac M prime. Other Asias is at odds with such con texts: a more than one space that is a place with a trace but no face, a space that makes you think through place, not race; a more than one space out of sync with the Time of a one world race.

We know, of course, that plain prose cheats. But this book brings a new write (not rite or right) which I try to text here. The big words, long lines and rich cites take turns with short sharp sound bites. And, in turn, their trick is to call us to think through how the cheat does not work so much as make might right; or, to use a quote that turns this on its head, the book calls us to take on how (with add on work) the cheat “can give” (83). “This call,” you start to see, “is a gift” (79). Thus if “thought is ... the blank part of the text” (60), the short words here make us think of the trace of the more than one space with no face. The South comes to us thus with a North, a “rich/poor” (55) slash, a ground ground up by a G.I.S. mash (84, 87), but, as such, with short sharp power maps too, maps that are an “ad hoc” (9) aid to thought that help - like those who try to heal à la Health for All – graph the place of “flesh and blood” on the move on the ground.

“I hope I have made it clear by now that in spite of all [my place marks] off track” (46-7), the plain prose can map. These maps go far and wide, “[a]nd yet they do mean” (103). And, as gigs that tie text, space and place in new ways, they mean to teach too. But who? To be sure, “[t]hese gigs make me learn things” (160). It may be work, “[y]ou will judge” (208), but if you can learn from this “straw in the wind” (58), ”you [too] will work out” (184) with Other Asias.

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