

Musha Doerr, Neriko and Hannah Davis Taïeb (eds.). 2017. *The Romance of Crossing Borders. Studying and Volunteering Abroad*. Oxford, New York: Berghahn Books. 302 pp. Hb.: \$90.00/£64.00. ISBN: 9781785333583

This volume offers a collection of studies about studying and volunteering abroad, focusing mainly on romance and other alluring feelings that draw students to travel. The contributing authors illuminate a range of romantic passions that fuel volunteering and study abroad; i.e., romanticising landscapes, people, communities, and language, but they also shed light on other emotions, such as fear and thrill of the unknown, longing for liberation, growth, enlightenment, and making a difference. The informants who provide stories about their study and volunteering experiences abroad are students from American colleges and universities. Their narratives are interpreted by the authors within the theoretical framework of *affect*. While there are many theories and interpretations of *affect* on offer, the authors understand *affect* as feelings, or emotion, or sentiments and seek to illuminate the relationship of *affect* to structures - that is broader social, political and economic processes. The result is a compelling multidisciplinary study that draws from interesting and thought-provoking ethnographic material and succeeds in delivering sound theoretical insights without resorting to a contextual vacuum.

Structurally, the volume is divided into three sections: introductory chapters, chapters on study abroad and chapters on volunteering abroad. The introduction section offers two theoretical chapters, written by the editors, on the *affect* and romance accompanying study and volunteering abroad. They focus in particular on the former, addressing, among others, the complexity and breadth of students' emotions when studying abroad and a myriad of possible implications stemming from cultural encounters. In many ways, their insights inform and enrich the existing scholarship and notably contribute to the field of anthropology of *affect*, but they also manage to provide a useful tool for educators and support staff working with students who study or volunteer abroad. They achieve this by offering their knowledge, based on extensive literature review and personal experience, and subtle advice on how to better understand students' passions, anxieties, disappointments and transformations, and contribute to their well-being and mental health.

The second section offers five chapters on the *affect* in student mobility and takes us on a virtual tour to Mexico, the African continent, France, Spain and Japan. The first chapter by Karen Rodríguez explores the passionate displacements into other tongues and towns, the complexity of powerful emotions emerging with travel and language learning and the possibility for a learner to discover new subjectivity through engagement with another language. To illuminate the psychoanalytic discussion of language learning and passion, she uses quotes on experiences of study abroad students in Mexico, which results in a truly compelling read. The following chapter by Bradley Rink is a fascinating portrayal of students' perceptions of Africa as a romantic landscape of animals, tribal mystery, and natural beauty: a hot, poor, dangerous, underdeveloped, unexplored, sexualised, patronised continent in need of help and simultaneously one in possession of raw uniqueness and excitement that is not readily available anywhere else in the world. The successful student experience, Rink argues, is one that mobilises *affect* as engagement

with the place as opposed to mere observation and objectification of the landscape.

A chapter by study abroad administrators (Davis Taieb, Bihl, Bui, Kim and Rosenblum) follows, in which we get a glimpse into their role as student supporters and, therefore, in many ways managers of *affect*. The chapter is a useful guide for staff working with study abroad students and is inspirational for its position that students are to be treated as interlocutors, not as clients. The final two chapters written by Neriko Musha Doerr and Yuri Kumagai are concerned with student experiences in France and Spain, and Japan, respectively. Musha Doerr offers an analysis of two different student experiences, which she attributes to different levels of affective investment (their romantic identification with the destination or lack of it). Kumagai likewise presents two opposing student experiences and learning opportunities in Japan, which she attributes to different levels of immersion into the Japanese culture and society. These, she argues, can in turn be attributed to personal traits, subjective desires and emotions that shape students' access to social networks.

In the third section, two chapters address the mobilisation and management of *affect* in the context of volunteering abroad. The first chapter by Cori Jakubiak explores in some detail the phenomenon of short-term English language volunteer tourism in the global South as an opportunity to interact with local, "authentic" people, the exotic distant others who are simultaneously needy and compelling. She brings attention to the paradox of seeking authenticity and de-commodification while simultaneously being part of a development project leading towards modernisation. Ruechen Richard Li continues the debate using the case of a long-term volunteer teaching programme in the Marshall Islands, evaluating the empirical findings within theoretical frameworks of the modernisation theory and anti-colonial theory. He illuminates students' tensions and internal conflicts between romanticisation of what is perceived as a pristine island life that they are strongly drawn to and their desire to modernise it and therefore transform it.

The concluding chapter is written by the editors. They comprehensively review and sum up all discussions featured in the volume and suggests attractive directions for future research. One of the more important ones that deserves to be highlighted is the exploration of pedagogies that are attentive to *affect* and to a multiplicity of long-term transformations for those involved.

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