

basic information on SIR-C, which operated in 1994. However, if one is to use this as a textbook for teaching remote sensing, it is highly recommended to use it in conjunction with a book that summarizes the western technology including both those of NASA and ESA (the European Space Agency).

The final part of the book discusses the requirements of remote sensing data for global change observation and is summarized by defining how to optimize observing systems. This part is interesting, but also studious in detail—much more than most readers of this book would be able to handle. The reference list of this book follows the general character of the book by having an extensively detailed reference list of 602 items, many of which are in Russian.

Reading this book brings to mind the notion that global change is a purely physical phenomenon for the physical scientist. However, socio-political changes are occurring daily on a global scale. Many of these leave their impact on the physical environment and thus can be documented and mapped by current remote sensing systems. The release of the Soviet technology should in fact encourage this direction of research. Many of the former Soviet remote sensing systems were designed for gathering political and social information. Hence, many of the systems described uniquely in this book are suitable for monitoring global change in the human arena. Finally, this book makes a real contribution to the remote sensing literature as it summarizes a set of operative instruments unfamiliar in the West before. The disappointing part of the book is that it really does not deal much with global change, but rather with remote sensing of phenomena that can show evidence of global change. Obviously, the authors are affiliated with Russian institutions that have a lot to offer in the field.

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**SURVEYING CONTEMPORARY CULTURAL GEOGRAPHY** by Mike Crang.  
London and New York: Routledge, 1998.

Mike Crang's *Cultural Geography* celebrates an important development in the area of human (or should it be humanistic?) geography: the institutionalization of a new branch of geographical knowledge and field of inquiry—only that the name “cultural geography” was already occupied. Crang's cultural geography is about contemporary cultural geography, which is substantially different from the older, mainly the American school of cultural geography. This is most manifest in the bibliographical list attached to the book, where articles that have appeared in journals such as *Society and Space*, *Ecumene* and *Antipode* predominate. Significantly, the author fails to warrant a single mention of an article published in the *Journal of Cultural Geography*, which testifies that contemporary cultural geography is different from traditional cultural geography. In this sense, Crang's book is a celebration of a specific strand of cultural geography that is contemporary, social-theory oriented and affiliated with radical approaches to society and culture.

As a subdiscipline of humanistic geography, cultural geography was developed in the U.S.A. and became associated with the pioneering work of Carl Sauer and the Berkeley School. Cultural geographers have studied 'cultural landscapes' and 'culture regions'. As an aspect of humanistic geography, they have been concerned with the relationship between communities and their environment, and the spatial distribution of cultural artifacts. The geographical contexts preferred have been North and Latin American vernacular landscapes. Traditional cultural geography has been closely aligned with anthropology, a connection that goes back to the 1920s and is still evident in some American universities where geography and anthropology are allied in the administrative framework of the same department.

Crang's book is about a new cultural geography that developed mainly in Great Britain in the 1980s and spread to other former English speaking colonies. This cultural geography is a derivative of and affiliated with another academic tradition: cultural studies. This tradition had evolved in Britain in the 1970s. Focusing on contexts and experiences of everyday life, it was concerned with the cultural dimension of power, hegemony and domination and accordingly, with subversive mechanisms applied in social situations and contexts and employed by social agents. The 'radical' scent of cultural studies is strongly felt in Crang's version of cultural geography, even though he is also attentive to the influence of post-modernist concerns and approaches on contemporary academic discourse.

Crang formulates the unifying theme of the book as a question: How does culture shape everyday life. The book expands on different answers to this question as elaborated upon in a set of case studies and theoretical considerations. The multitude of answers renders cultural geography elastic; it points out to possible directions and areas of interest. Altogether, these answers, though partial and limited in scope and perspective, define the author's notion about the institution of contemporary cultural geography as an academic field of inquiry.

Cultural Geography is an intelligent, well-organized and well-written book that makes (new) cultural geography accessible to students, teachers and researchers interested in getting acquainted with this increasingly fashionable and topical field of geographical study. Intended as an introduction to and survey of cultural geography, the relatively simple language employed by Crang makes the subject matter accessible to the 'uninitiated' while also providing an enjoyable and refreshing, sometimes even insightful reading also for those already familiar with the issues and topics discussed in the text. For the benefit of the readers, each chapter is supplemented by a list for further reading. The glossary at the end of the book elaborates on key concepts and strands of thought in a concise and clear manner. In short, the book indeed fulfills its primary function: to introduce contemporary cultural geography to the readers regardless of their degree of knowledge of and acquaintance with the subject matter. The difference is, of course, that whoever is acquainted with the subject matter and the literature is in a better position to evaluate the analysis offered by the author and to assess the selection of case-studies that, in the final account, defines in this book what cultural geography is.

The book addresses an aggregate of issues and topics that define cultural geography as an on-going academic project. Apart from the first and the last chapters that frame the discussion, each chapter highlights a theme or a cluster of related themes through the examination of and commentary on particular case studies that pertain to the chapter's theme. In this manner, the author succeeds in presenting cultural geography not as a coherent doctrine (which it is not), but rather as a cluster of issues that, pertaining to the cultural organization of social life and the social dimension of cultural interactions, creates a diverse and dynamic field of research.

The text opens with a general discussion of culture and the notion of the culture(s) of everyday life in particular (Ch. 1). The following chapters examine different approaches to and scales of the underlying theme of the book, that according to the author is "how culture shapes the everyday world?" Chapter 2 examines "People, landscape and time", wherein the American roots of cultural geography are elaborated upon, especially Carl Sauer and the Berkeley School he founded. Chapters 3 and 4 elaborate on symbolic and literary landscapes, respectively. The fifth chapter is about "self and the other", and the sixth is about environments mediated by films, TV and music. Chapter 7 examines the relationship between space and place. Chapters 8 and 9 examine landscapes of consumption and production, respectively. Chapter 10 addresses nations, homelands and the notion of belonging. A sort of conclusion, Chapter 11 elaborates on the location of the cultural geographer as a student of cultures and a member of another (academic) culture. This chapter does not directly deal with methodical issues, but raises pertinent epistemological questions and most importantly, it reflects on the position of the cultural geographer vis a vis the culture(s) he studies.

The selection of themes and case-studies reflects the author's preferences. The power of the author in this case is in his prerogative to celebrate issues and topics as constitutive of cultural geography, and what is not less important, to canonize authors and their work. A book which suggests to synthesize a field of knowledge is always about selection, exclusion and inclusion of topics, issues and perspectives. This is also important because as a part of a series of books on different aspects of human geography, the book will probably introduce cultural geography to a new generation of students and in so doing, will determine to a substantial degree the scope and orientation of future cultural geography. Therefore it is important to consider some of the author's strategic choices.

Thus it is regrettable that tourism is not included in the framework of cultural geography. True, another book in the Routledge series on human geography will be dedicated to this pertinent matter. True, focusing on 'everyday experiences' seems to exclude the tourist experience which is anything but an 'everyday experience' (for most people it is a 'once-in-a-year experience'). Yet tourism is an important aspect of the cultural geography of both modernity and post-modernity. Its total exclusion, even if it is justified by thematic or practical considerations and constraints, seems to narrow the otherwise wide perspective suggested in Crang's book. It may also be asked why issues pertaining to social memory are also not mentioned, espe-

cially since they bear on everyday experiences by means of the built environment. The strong affinity between memory and landscape and the formation of memoryscapes figures prominently in the fashioning of national identities. It should also be pointed out that high-culture is also an important feature of social life that should not be discarded even if the current trend is to emphasize popular culture.

Crang's cultural geography is an aspect of both cultural studies and sociology. The critical approach typical of cultural studies is strongly represented. Sociology is present through sociological jargon and the strong emphasis on social theory. Interestingly, the theoretical premises of cultural geography are imported from sociology; cultural geography's main contribution is in the application of geographical imagination in the study of culture and society. The absence of an intellectual dialogue with anthropology is regrettable. In recent decades anthropology has undergone major changes and it does not focus solely on exotic societies. Anthropological insights and perspectives may prove to be useful to the study of the cultural geographies of both past and contemporary societies. As in the past, anthropology may become again an intellectual ally of cultural geography, especially so since both focus on culture as a prominent feature of social life.

Crang's book is permeated with contemporary sensitivities about the 'other' and the preoccupation with oppressed minorities (especially if they belong to the official list). One may argue about the poetics of political correctness and its moral foundations. Yet it seems that denouncing the West's denouncement of Saddam Hussein as yet another and to that a contemporary example of the vilification of the non-European other, seems not only unfortunate, but also counter-productive for the entire argument. Sensitive readers may find the language of political correctness annoying, but they should also be aware that this belongs to the academic culture of cultural geographers, a fashion which is not confined to this academic field but is an aspect of an influential trend in the humanities and the social sciences.

The book does not tell its readers about the emergence and evolution of contemporary cultural geography as an academic field. In Crang's version, traditional cultural geography belongs to the history of cultural geography rather than to its present. Significantly, the traditional version of cultural geography is presented only as an early chapter of its development. In this version, cultural geography's history is a narrative of disciplinary development that culminates in the critical approaches characteristic of contemporary cultural geography. This picture is somewhat one-sided and represents a particular point of view rather than the current situation, wherein two types of cultural geography co-exist, each representing a different perspective and methodology.

Some reservations and questions notwithstanding, Mike Crang's introduction into contemporary cultural geography is an important book that should be read by anyone interested in recent developments in human geography and the new links forged between geography and the social sciences. The mostly simple language and its clear argumentation should make the book an obligatory item on the reading list of students. As an elaborate and mostly persuasive synthesis of ideas and case studies

it is a major contribution to contemporary cultural geography as a field of academic inquiry and as an intellectually fascinating topic. However, it should not be forgotten that Crang's book is not 'contemporary cultural geography', but rather the author's version. In this sense, the book is suggestive rather than definitive.

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