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Tourisms' *Tristes Tropiques* I: Literary Travels

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Abstract

Tourisms' *Tristes Tropiques* draws attention to this tropical zone where the full scale and scope of tourism and its associated challenges and consequences are rapidly becoming materially manifest. *Tristes Tropiques* refers to the title of Claude Lévi-Strauss' famous work. That he wrote about the "sad tropics" in a memoir-travelogue is significant. Through a literary and reflexive engagement, he draws our attention to the important place literature, in its many forms, has in the anthropology of tourism and critical tourism studies. Travel literature, rather than being merely fictional, often presents the crude reality of tourism in the tropics and is essential to tourism studies. This first collection of papers (in a two-part special issue) entitled *Tourisms' Tristes Tropiques I: Literary Travels,* addresses the importance of travel literatures of and from the tropics. It presents works from the Pacific, Indonesia, Sarawak on Borneo, Cambodia, Asia, Hawai'i, Africa, and the Caribbean. Genres include poetry, dystopian futures, travelogues, travel novels, and a history of tourism.

Keywords: tropical tourism, tristes tropiques, travel literature, tropical travelogue, tropical travel writing, critical tourism, anthropology of tourism

Introduction: Literary Travels

Over the past couple of years, tourism has moved from revenge travel to overtourism in many places worldwide. As we enter 2026, the media has been busy predicting the touristic year ahead. Some of the "must-see" places are simultaneously critiqued as sites "to avoid" due to tourism density and environmental degradation. Thus, even as the island of Bali was named the World's Best Destination 2026 by TripAdvisor (Khasnaah, 2026), it was also highlighted as one of eight places to avoid (DailyDive, 2025, Travel Reveal, 2026).

Tourism has particular effects across the Tropics, including the impacts of overtourism on local peoples', fragile ecosystems, climate change vulnerability, and neocolonialism. The tropical regions of the world are undergoing rapid tourism development, yet still suffer severe poverty; they are rich in biodiversity, while being threatened by ecological destruction; they offer warm weather escapes, while being impacted by increasingly sever tropical storms and rising seas; they are home to many of the world's Indigenous peoples, who continue to endure the legacies of colonialism and the power dynamics of tourism's neocolonialism.

The emphasis of this special issue on Tourisms' *Tristes Tropiques* draws attention to this tropical zone where the full scale and scope of tourism and its associated challenges and consequences are rapidly becoming materially manifest. The title for this first special issue draws inspiration from Claude Lévi-Strauss' famous memoir *Tristes Tropiques* (1961), a travelogue in which the anthropologist reflects upon the places he has visited, his ethnographic encounters with locals, and philosophical reflections across disciplines such as anthropology, sociology, geology, history, and literature. The book has been admired for its reflexive style, which subverts the lust for exoticism, and critiqued for its sense of a romanticized "world on the wane."

That Lévi-Strauss wrote about the "sad tropics" through a memoir-travelogue is important. Through a literary and reflexive engagement, he draws our attention to the important place literature, in its many forms, has in the anthropology of tourism and critical tourism studies. In turn, we acknowledge that Anthropology's signature practice of ethnography—as first-hand observations of "being there" and as a genre of writing—was established through a manuscript that entwined scientific observations, theoretical scrutiny, and travel-adventure tale. Bronisław Malinowski's *Argonauts of the Western Pacific* (1922) established the discipline with a title that evokes travel (and its mythological depths). The ethnography also initiated, in many ways, the representation of the ethnographer as an individual keeping a kind of "magical', unexplained, secret by which a society other than the ethnographer's reveals itself (Fletcher, 2009).

Thus, it is fitting that the first collection of articles for this double special issue on Tourisms' *Tristes Tropiques* begins by investigating "Literary Travels". In turn, this analysis of literary travels will lead into the second part of the two-part special issue on tourisms' sad tropics with an exploration of "Cultural Landscapes".

Tristes Tropiques

"Travel and travellers are two things I loathe—and yet here I am, all set to tell the story of my expeditions" (Lévi-Strauss, 1961, p. 17). This opening line to *Tristes Tropiques*, also translated as "I hate traveling and explorers" (Lévi-Strauss, 1961, p. 17), is celebrated for its irony, as Claude Lévi-Strauss sets out to write about his early travels and explorations in the tropics. *Tristes Tropiques* is Lévi-Strauss's memoir, travelogue, ethnography, and philosophical reflection. Despite (or perhaps because of) its reliance on little ethnographic fieldwork, *Tristes Tropiques* is an outstanding oeuvre that offers remarkable insights into Brazil's Indigenous peoples and their relationship to the nation in the 1930s (Dumont 1994, p.482). Lévi-Strauss' travelogue remains highly reflexive throughout and is especially critical of the travellers' lust for the tropical exotic. In the memoir, the anthropologist is not interested in selling adventures; his interest is in dismantling the very premise of travel writing—the fantasy that you can arrive somewhere "untouched" and witness "authentic" otherness.

Tourisms' Literatures

Tristes Tropiques demonstrates the importance of literature to the anthropology of tourism and critical tourism studies. Literature offers another perspective, a closer, more affective sense of the sad tropics, its cultures and landscapes, through the eyes of the travellers who venture forth. Lévi-Strauss' *Tristes Tropiques* interweaves memoir, travelogue, ethnographic narrative, philosophical reflection, and poetic reverie. Similarly, in this special issue, we understand literature to encompass multiple genres, including poetry, dystopian fiction, travelogue, travel novels, cinematographic narrative, and historical analysis.

Lévi-Strauss was well aware that travel writers are dealers in illusions with a long history. Colonial travel writers in the tropics, whose descriptions are thick with tropical tropes, include Rudyard Kipling who was born in India and returned to travel the country as a colonial administrator; in the Pacific, Herman Melville, Robert Louis Stevenson, Louis (Lewis) Becke, and Joseph Conrad, travelled the islands under sail (Dillon, 2022; Spicer, 2021). These, among many colonial writers, described tropical regions, their peoples, and ecologies as simultaneously profuse, yet also suffering. Contemporary postcolonial and decolonial writers from the tropics likewise inscribe a sad tropics ravaged by colonialism and neocolonialism. Yet their prose and poetry, rather than describing "a world on the wane" (Lévi-Strauss, 1961), reclaim these

colonial-ravaged lands to create future abundance. Hannah Lutchmansingh draws on Caribbean female travel writers to delineate a woman-centred Afro-Caribbean diaspora narrative that revitalizes ancestors in "a quest for self-determination and self-discovery" (Lutchmansingh, 2018, p. 34). The Chamoru poet Graig Santos Perez describes colonial-neocolonial capitalist exploitation across the Pacific from his native Guam to Hawai'i, as both a remembrance and a call to action (Perez, 2020).

Thus, while various literary genres reflect upon and write about foreign places and travel experiences, there is also a swathe of critical tourism literature that alerts us to the impinging impacts of tourism on tropical peoples and ecologies. Furthermore, and of particular interest to this special issue, travel literature itself has created specific forms of tourism, including touring places described in novels, visiting the homes of famous authors, seeking to live the plots of stories, and visiting film locations.

Classic novels (and their films) have driven tourism. In the tropics of South America, the city of Cartagena, Colombia, offers city walks themed on Gabriel García Márquez's *Love in the Time of Cholera* (1985) and One *Hundred Years of Solitude* (1967). These novels offer intimate accounts of the author's adopted city. In Africa, the memoir *Out of Africa* (scribed under the nom-de-plume Isak Dinesen) continues to inspire romantic ideals of Kenya. About seven kilometers outside the capital of Nairobi, travellers can visit the Karen Blixen Museum in the author's old African house "at the foot of the Ngong Hills" (1937). A perennial plot in travel novels is finding love in exotic locations. The memoir *Eat Pray Love* (Gilbert, 2006) and the subsequent film starring Julia Roberts (Murphy, 2010) triggered a surge of tourists to Bali seeking amorous encounters. Although tourism slowed to a standstill during the pandemic, revenge tourism has seen record numbers of visitors to the island, which has been ranked Asia's Most Romantic Destination for the seventh year at the *World Travel Awards* 2025 (Novita, 2025).

Similarly, the black comedy-drama HBO TV series *White Lotus*, satirizes neoliberal tourism by showcasing "a purgatory of entitlement and exploitation" (Kenny, 2025) through the excesses of rich Western guests in a luxury hotel set against the struggles of the local staff. The series also reveals the contradiction of luxury resorts which "market themselves as untouched paradises while requiring significant intervention, economic, environmental and cultural, to maintain the illusion" (Kenny, 2025). *White Lotus* demonstrates that paradise has a macabre underbelly; yet it has sparked a tourism craze in visiting the series' locations. The "White Lotus effect" in Thailand led to an immediate surge in tourist bookings to filming locations in Ko Samui (as well as Phuket and Bangkok) (Cobb, 2024; Hall, 2025; Catalyst Planet, 2025). In Hawai'i, the original *White Lotus* location shoot, the Four Seasons Resort Maui in Wailea, reported a phenomenal "425% uptick year on year in website visits and 386% increase in availability checks" (Hall, 2025).

Thus, literary and cinematic narratives are intrinsically entwined in the imaginary of the tropics as a place of leisure for foreign tourists, always upheld by the service of locals and the tropical climate and environment. While tourism has served as a vehicle for opportunities and decolonial transformation, it has been more commonly used to support and occlude the agenda that accompanies these imaginaries. The tropics have played a prominent role in colonial and neocolonial narratives of territories cast as 'utopian paradises' (Guerrón Montero, 2011), 'pristine wilderness' (Grinwood, 2015), or destinations that need to be 'saved' (Bandyopadhyay & Patil, 2017). As Grimwood et al. (2024) note, within these imaginaries, "the presence of Indigeneity is anachronized to match the romantic and exotic tropes carried by tourists and their race-based desires" (p. 900; Erickson, 2018). Thus, in line with Lévi-Strauss's allusion to tourism as a manufacturer of the tourist glance, the industry remains extractive and uneven.

Tropicality and Tourism

Travel literature and colonialism were (and still are) strongly intertwined. Mary Louise Pratt's interdisciplinary work, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (2007), explores colonial travel stories and descriptions of scientific collecting across South America and Africa, demonstrating how these writings not only recorded but also actively created an imperial image of these continents. In a similar vein, David Arnold in *The Tropics and the Traveling Gaze: India, Landscape, and Science, 1800-1856* (2006), draws on colonial travel narratives, literary texts, and scientific writings to demonstrate Anglo-European ways of seeing India. He outlines how Western perceptions of the subcontinent changed during the early to mid-1800s, re-conceptualizing the Indian landscape from oriental to tropical and wild. This, in turn, influenced colonial policy, including a push for land improvements. Such perceptions and policies were furthered across the tropics by different colonial regimes, rendering the tropics and their peoples as backward and in need of development.

Both Pratt and Arnold's critical reflections were influenced by Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1978), an investigation into how Western representations of Middle Eastern and South Asian cultures have been constructed through historical, political, and literary frameworks; these Western representations served to reinforce colonial ideologies by depicting the East as exotic, mysterious, and inferior. Said analysed how Anglo-European discourses actively constructed the "Orient" and how power works through representation—the Orient was not simply a geographical region but a colonial imaginary created to justify domination.

Adopting Edward Said's postcolonial critique established in *Orientalism,* and relocating it to the tropics, Arnold put forward the notion of "Tropicality." He argued that the same ideological effect whereby discourse became an instrument for justifying colonial

power in orientalism is, likewise, at work in tropicality. However, the difference between orientalism and tropicality is that the latter is closely entwined with climate and natural landscapes. Tropical nature is rendered as wilderness or a resource, alternatively sublime or degenerate, and always requiring Western management and cultivation. Thus, just as tropicality is an imaginary that cannot be divorced from its literary manifestations—be it travel observations or scientific narratives—neither can it be separated from the environment of the tropics through which these imaginaries arise.

Tropicality is thus both a physical and conceptual space—an imagined geography that is at the same time felt as real (Arnold, 1995; Lundberg, Regis & Agbonifo, 2022). Such imaginaries install Anglo-European ideas of superiority as an excuse for colonial capitalist expansion and exploitation. Once these imaginaries produced empires; today they form empires of tourism. These discourses of tropicality always include an intensely ecological aspect—a nature-culture domain of jungles and beaches that call up images of danger and seduction, of riot and paradise.

The materiality of tropical ecologies (inscribed as either an over-profusion of hostility or of paradisical allure) features as a major component of this discourse. Thus, rather than denying the flora and fauna of the tropics (as merely imaginary), recent theorists have drawn attention to the need "to understand how these discursive phenomena have been activated and sustained in part by the very materiality" of the tropics (Benitez & Lundberg, 2022, p. 2). In other words, the tropics' climates, landscapes, plants, and animals play a crucial role in the tropical imaginary—and in tropical tourisms' imaginaries. The peoples and cultures of the tropics, so often reduced to merely parts of the cinematic tropical landscape, are likewise regarded as available for exploitation (Lundberg et al. 2023).

Just as colonialism created an image of the tropics as both sublime and inferior, in need of Anglo-European intervention—tourism creates the tropics in a neocolonial image as available to tourists. Today, the same tropical areas that were once colonized for exploitation are now exploited through tourism. The tropics continue to be viewed as available for Western consumption through the literature of guidebooks, advertising, marketing, and social media. Tourism thus remakes the tropics into exotic experiences ready for purchase, even as its extractivist ethos harms natural environments and local cultures. Furthermore, today, tourism has expanded beyond the classic Anglo-European market to include the rising consumer classes of former colonial countries and those considered enemies of capitalism. The huge populations of India and China join America and Europe in neocolonial-neoliberalist tourism.

Tourism and neocolonialism have thus created tropicality as both a physical and conceptual space. The tropics of tourism are imagined geographies (Arnold, 1995; Lundberg, Regis & Agbonifo, 2022). Yet, at the same time, critical literary travels' endeavours to uncover the hidden stories beneath the tourism gloss reveal the sad reality of tourisms' tropics.

A Tropical Geography of Literary Tourisms

The papers collected together here demonstrate how "Tourisms' *Tristes Tropiques*" manifest through "Literary Travels". The papers offer various insights into the sad tropes of tourism in the form of poems, dystopian fiction and travelogues, travel novels and film narrative, and a history of tourism.

Here we encounter rich examples of various incantations of the tropical melancholia via poetry of the Pacific Islands and Indonesia; dystopian fiction from Sarawak on the island of Borneo; a magical realist travelogue and AI imagery of Cambodia; followed by an analysis of a famous travelogue set in Nepal, Manila and Tokyo; and we travel further via literary analyses of novels set in Hawai'i and Africa, and an Indian novel translated into a film; then, finally, we arrive in the Caribbean via the reading of an academic history on tourism.

Poems

In Jane Downing's "Mariana Poems", the themes of anti-aesthetics and tropical tourism remain central as the author explores the three islands of Saipan, Tinian, and Guam through poetic verse. Before World War II, the USA ruled Guam, the southernmost island in the group, while Japan seized the Northern Mariana Islands, including Saipan and Tinian. These Pacific islands saw intense combat between the two countries for the duration of WWII. Importantly, Tinian was the departure point for the planes that dropped the atomic bombs on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Today's promoted tourism to the Mariana Islands is mainly for the idealised 'tropical beach vacation,' although those who are eager to not forget the horrors of the war can visit memorials on each island. The author's afterward notes how the poems contribute to a conversation regarding dark tourism in the tropics.

Reddy Anggara's ecospiritual poem entitled, "I Am a Tree: A Monologue on Tropical Ecotourism", represents opposition to the commercialization of nature and the growth of capitalist tourism. This lyrical monologue, from the reflective voice of a tropical tree set within the frame rainforest ecotourism, highlights the contradiction between promoting "environmental" travel locations and the covert devastation beneath the surface of the ecological veneer. The poem offers a decolonial critique of the way the tropical environment is commercialized and aestheticized through an ecocritical and

spiritual story based in the ancient Javanese–Balinese cosmology of Kahyangan, a sacred realm where divinity and nature cohabit. Metaphors like "framed in glossy ads" and "groomed to attract millions" represent aesthetic framing and tropical environmental commercialization. The poem serves as a silent ecological prayer. As the author notes, ecophilosophy begins in the discomfort of seeing how tropical forests are admired and showcased, while simultaneously engineered to fit tourism requirements.

"The True Fighter of Tropical Melancholy: Poetic Reflections beneath the Paradise Brochure", by Eka Yusup, is a lyrical contemplation on the melancholia and contradictions of tropical tourism. Concealed within the gleaming imagery of paradise lurks the silent endurance of the rural and informal laborers who are overlooked in tourism brochures yet are the living heart of the tropics. Rather than benefiting from tourism, they are its invisible caretakers, uprooted, overworked, and ignored. The poetic work investigates the emotional and structural features of tropical melancholy via a poetic ethnographic lens, showing injustices, symbolic erasures, and loss of livelihood beneath the promise of paradise. It provides voice to informal and rural laborers. As the author notes, the poem belongs to the sad tropics not as romantic ruin, but as living, breathing, labouring resistance.

Dystopian Fiction and Travelogues

In the fictional Bornean future described in "On Being an Eco-Tourist Guide and Wannabe Eco-Terrorist," by Christina Yin, Sarawak and its major eco-tourist destinations—the Cultural Village, Semenggoh Wildlife Centre, and Bako National Park—form the geography of a dystopian world where wildlife and other natural resources are severely depleted. While endangered endemic wildlife survives only under capture (in holographic images or cages); likewise, Su-Lin, the female protagonist of this future Sarawak, fights for survival in a world where humans are in continual rivalry with posthuman clones. As she learns how to be an eco-tourist guide, leading visitors of the twenty-second century around the famous cultural and wildlife sites, an eco-terrorist strike with the goal of freeing confined species, such as bearded pigs, silver langurs, and proboscis monkeys, disrupts the tropical eco-tour. The encounter prompts Su-Lin to imagine becoming a tropical eco-terrorist.

Brenton Rossow's, "An Ascendant in Scorpio: Dark Tourism in the Kingdom of Cambodia, a Travelogue" is a surreal fictionalized memoir of his trips to Cambodia in early 2000s when dark tourism was promoted as an aspect of backpacking experiences. The protagonist, Syd's, travels in Cambodia bring him to the little town of Skuon, where locals eat deep fried tarantulas—thorax, legs and all. However, the journey to Skuon turns into a pilgrimage into the depraved recesses of Syd's

devastated mind rather than just an exotic tourism check box. As he becomes the spider that he seeks, he must either confront his anxieties and consume the monster within or live forever in the purgatory of his shadow self and its never-ending torments. He needs to exercise caution to avoid becoming a victim to the allure of dark tourism's seedy delights that exploit the horrors of the war-torn Kingdom's genocidal history.

In "Translating the Tropical Tourist Gaze: Hyperreal Asia in Pico Iyer's *Video Night in Kathmandu"*, Ajeesh A K, argues that the tropics of tourism are produced as an image-world—portable, buyable, and increasingly aware of its own representation. In order to reveal this imaginary, he reads Pico Iyer's classic *Video Night in Kathmandu* as a late-20th century travelogue that captures the emergence of the global tourist-media economy in the 1980s. The paper combines discussions of society of the spectacle, hyperreality, and Orientalism to demonstrate that Iyer's most revealing scenes unveil environments through which American cultural forms seem natural to consume rather than the dissemination of those forms. Through the lens of tropicality, the piece pushes Orientalism further by viewing "the tropics" as an environmental Orientalism where climate and landscape are transformed into cultural justifications, moral excuses, and economic resources. Tropicality in Iyer's book functions less as a rigid geography than as a traveling aesthetic: paradise and danger, sensual excess, tamed risk, and atmospheric authenticity—adapted for the era of package tourism, franchised recreation, and air-conditioned comfort. The article presents travel writing as an erratic activity of climatic and cultural translation, shifting between domestication by analogy and estrangement by excess. "Video Night" is a reflexive travelogue of how tropical settings are transformed into consumable scenes, and how this transformation is connected to labour, infrastructures, and unequal vulnerability.

Travel Novels and Film Narrative

Roshima Uday, in "Hawai'i beyond Tropical Overtourism: Decolonial Perspectives on Jasmin 'Iolani Hakes' *Hula*", examines the travel novel as a decolonial critique of overtourism, land dispossession, and cultural commodification. The story portrays local Hawaiian experiences in the context of colonial dominance and emphasizes Indigenous methods of resistance and resilience. Uday is interested in how *Hula* portrays tourism as a continuation of colonial violence, and uses Indigenous epistemologies to challenge the touristic vision of Hawai'i as "paradise". It combines a textual analysis of the novel, cross-referenced with ecocritical insights from Rob Nixon, Walter Mignolo's theory of "epistemic disobedience," and Aníbal Quijano's notion of the "coloniality of power" to show how the novel depicts tourism as a gradual expansion of colonial domination, which results in the eradication of Indigenous presence and the exacerbation of environmental damage. However, in maintaining

genuine hula (dance form), communal storytelling, and activism against military and commercial encroachments, the novel also exhibits epistemic disobedience. By focusing on Indigenous Hawaiian agency and presenting Hawai'i as a disputed homeland where cultural rebirth and sovereignty are still important, Uday argues that the novel challenges the tourist gaze.

"African Tropics and Ecological Crisis: Tourist Gaze in Helon Habila's *Oil on Water* and *Travellers,"* by Mahaprasad Rath and Swati Samantaray, shows how Habila's two novels emphasize the confluence of tourism, extractive capitalism, slow ecological violence, and neocolonial power dynamics. The article argues that Habila critically analyses the tourist gaze as a way of commodifying ecological devastation and human displacement in the fragile African tropics. By placing Habila's novels in the context of a far longer history of environmental degradation resistance in Africa, the paper emphasizes African environmental activism and intellectual traditions, notably the legacies of Ken Saro-Wiwa and Wangari Maathai. Alongside African traditions, it also utilizes Judith Butler's concept of grievability, John Urry's notion of the tourist gaze, and Rob Nixon's proposition of slow violence. The article contends that Habila's work moves tourism studies and ecocriticism closer to decolonial ethics and ecological justice. By insisting on African epistemologies as central to any broader understanding of environmental crisis, the article addresses both theoretical aspects and textual details in Habila's novels adding to a postcolonial ecocriticism that opposes Western dominance over environmental knowledge and instead offers an African and Western postcolonial ecocritical framework.

In his article "From Tropicality and Tourist Gaze to Affective Geography: Reclaiming Kochi in *Cobalt Blue,"* Guhan Priyadharshan P. in examines the novel, and the subsequent adapted Netflix film by Indian author/director Sachin Kundalkar. The film *Cobalt Blue* departs from the novel (of the same name) in two ways. Firstly, despite the novel's backdrop being set in Pune, Maharashtra, the film moves location to Kochi in Kerala. The change in setting creates a dialectical relationship of importance as, in contrast to the novel's introspective narrative, the film visualizes the cinematic tropical landscape of Kochi and Kerala. This also foregrounds a shift from phenomenological experiences of the brother and sister protagonists, Tanay and Anuja, both of whom fall in love with the tourist, to emphasising the queer relationship between the brother and the tourist against tropical cinematic landscapes. That the film is streamed on Netflix with its global reach creates the potential for a "Netflix gaze", prioritizing a global touristic tropical aesthetic. However, the article argues that beneath the stereotypical picturesque visuality, a more radical and personal cartography is constructed for these geographical landscapes are grounded in the intimate phenomenological experiences of the brother and sister protagonists, Tanay and Anuja, thereby, creating an affective geography filled with personalized meanings. Drawing on theories from Dean

MacCannell, John Urry, Sara Ahmed, and selected philosophical frameworks of Alain Badiou, the article argues that while the film *Cobalt Blue* appears to embrace an aesthetics of tropicality for a global audience—influenced by the capitalist tourism domain—ultimately it subverts this "Netflix gaze."

Travel History

Prabhudutta Samal and Swati Samantaray, in their article "Tourism's Colonial Afterlives: Reading Blake C. Scott's *Unpacked: A History of Caribbean Tourism,"* set out to identify the historical continuities that underpin contemporary tourism in the Caribbean. According to the book, the leisure industry in this area of the tropics has always been a (neo)colonial system maintained through labour hierarchies, racist cultural tropes, and engineered infrastructures. Scott's history shows how colonial endeavours like the Panama Canal, mosquito eradication initiatives, and Pan American Airways changed the Caribbean region from a dreaded 'white man's graveyard' into a paradise of white consumption, while simultaneously institutionalizing racial and socioeconomic inequities into the very mechanics of movement. The Tivoli and Havana Hilton hotels are fine examples of a service economy supported by racialized labour, where the 'service smile' masked enduring exploitation. The tourist gaze—that glossed over the violence of colonial inequalities and the rapid environmental changes—was at the same time being celebrated in various forms of travel writing; from Hemingway's dispatches to airline advertisements. The article emphasizes how current crises of overtourism marked by cruise ship traffic, ecological damage, and service industry dependency, are amplifications of earlier colonial patterns. The paper calls for a decolonial rethinking of tourism, moving away from discourses of extraction, to those based in reciprocity.

Conclusion

The emphasis of this special issue on Tourisms' *Tristes Tropiques I: Literary Travels* has drawn attention to the tropical zone where the full scale and scope of tourism and its associated challenges and consequences are rapidly becoming materially manifest. Through literary and reflexive engagements, the papers collected here draw our attention to the important place literature, in its many forms, continues to have on the anthropology of tourism and critical tourism studies. Rather than being merely fictional, these travel literatures have revealed the stark realism of tourism in the tropics. We argue that literature is essential to tourism studies. This collection of papers under the subtheme of *Literary Travels,* showcases travel literatures of and from various regions of the tropics.

This issue on *Literary Travels* is the first collection of papers in a twin special issue. The second issue titled *Tourisms' Tristes Tropiques II: Cultural Landscapes,* explores

manifestations of the "sad tropics" through an examination of the impact of tourism on sociocultural and ecological landscapes. We encourage scholars to read both issues for their many resonances and overlaps.

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