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Rebecca Cawood McIntyre. *Souvenirs of the Old South: Northern Tourism and Southern Mythology.* Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2011. 224 pp. $69.95 (cloth), ISBN 978-0-8130-3695-3.

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A Survey of Southern Tourism

Author Rebecca Cawood McIntyre takes on a worthy subject, the rise of tourism in the U.S. South, and identifies several critical themes while providing some insightful readings of travel writing and imagery. Although several historians have examined tourism in particular areas, states, and cities of the South, until now none had studied what is arguably the nation's most historically distinct region as a whole. Unfortunately, this account is thinly contextualized and draws on a limited range of sources.

McIntyre begins by contrasting pre- and postwar portrayals of the region: before the Civil War, travel writers portrayed the South as progressively American; afterward, it featured as a separate, backward part of a nation defined by the industrial North. Drawing on some of the earliest national guidebooks, the author focuses on the resorts built near mineral and hot springs in Virginia and North Carolina, which northern promoters described as "at least as good as Saratoga," the nationally known New York spa (p. 17). Southerners, meanwhile, insisted that their resorts were even better than northern ones, not because of regional differences but because the southern spas were more exclusive and less crowded.

The remaining five chapters examine postwar writings, which typically identified the South as a distinct, backward region. Chapters 2 and 3 examine two major tourist landscapes: the southern Appalachian Mountains and the swamps. Alternately portrayed as sturdy American yeomen and as lazy, backward hillbillies, the mountain-dwellers soothed fears about industrialization and justified the northern appropriation of southern resources. The portrayal of some of the region's largest wetlands–the Great Dismal Swamp on the border between Virginia and North Carolina, northeastern Florida's Ocklawaha River, and southern Louisiana's bayous–as gothic landscapes also gave the South a distinctive identity. As the once-despised swamps came to evoke "grand, lost civilizations … medieval, melancholy, and slightly grotesque," they became symbols of the defeated Confederacy for northern visitors (p. 68).

A chapter on the portrayal of African Americans is next. Invisible in prewar writings, blacks became stock figures in later works, signaling "southernness" and representing a range of racist stereotypes. Arguing that the animus behind these stereotypes intensified between the 1870s and the turn of the twentieth century, McIntyre reminds us of the central role of racism in cementing sectional reconciliation. In chapters 2 through 4, the author draws heavily on two popular illustrated works, *Picturesque America* (1872) and *The Great South* (1874), analyzing several engravings in detail and emphasizing the role of these works in constructing the tourist gaze. This book is generously illustrated, but unfortunately the images have often been reproduced at too small a size to show the details mentioned in the text.

In chapters 5 and 6, the author examines two common tropes: leisure and aristocracy. White Americans had long identified the South as a place of leisure, and this identification reinforced the region's distinctiveness after the war. Cast as a natural playground for northerners disturbed by the consequences of industrialization, "the South as a sanctioned place of leisure … functioned as a palliative to Americans' distrust and fear about leisure in general" (p. 142). Whereas prewar travel writing avoided portraying the South's planter elite as an aristocracy, after the war this imagery proliferated, particularly once white Southerners took the lead in regional promotion in the 1920s. The myth of the aristocratic Old South bolstered southerners' pride and regional identity while attracting white northern visitors.

All of these topics are crucial for a history of tourism in the U.S. South, but the subject needs to be contextualized more complexly. For example, the chapter on African Americans shows mainly that travel writing did not make a distinctive contribution to the corpus of racist

imagery or sectional reconciliation. It might have been more fruitful to compare the portrayals of white hillbillies, African Americans, and planter aristocrats, addressing directly the interaction of class and race in the construction of regional difference. Acknowledging that well-to-do whites applied such stereotypes to poor Londoners and New Yorkers, Native Americans, and Hispanics would have situated this study in relation to other works on tourism.

Another important context is the broad range of travel writing and other literary genres that elaborated on regional and ethnic difference. Except in the last chapter, when she mentions the role of antebellum plantation novels in establishing the idea of an aristocratic South, McIntyre neither questions what counts as travel writing nor attends to the other genres, notably local color and regionalist works, that mediated the construction of nationality and regional identity.

Absent from this account are the businesses that promoted tourism: railroads, steamships, and hotels. Almost none of the copious marketing materials that these companies put out is listed in the bibliography. Paying attention to the business side of tourism might have drawn the author to examine collaboration–and one suspects, conflict–between northerners and southerners, since by 1900 the major transportation companies were based in the North, whereas many hotels remained in local hands. How did southerners respond to northern depictions of the South? Why by the 1920s were southern elites able to take control of regional promotion?

McIntyre frequently makes strong claims about what northern tourists wanted, but she offers little evidence to support these assertions. Especially in the first four chapters, quotations from primary sources are rare. Moreover, all of the sources seem to be published works; no archival collections are listed in the bibliography. In place of contemporary testimony, the author relies on the widely accepted arguments that leisure made Americans anxious and that urbanization and industrialization spurred a search for rural and old-fashioned refuges. As broad trends these arguments have some validity, but they tell us nothing about why a person would choose to visit Charleston instead of Martha's Vineyard, Acoma Pueblo, or Yosemite. Finally, the University Press of Florida has not served McIntyre well; the text seems not to have been copyedited or proofread.

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