Part I Introducing Cultural Geographies

Chapter 2

Cultural Traditions

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Scholarly traditions often are presented in one of two ways. Either the tradition is held up as an honorable thing, and is presented as a teleological intellectual genealogy that naturally and inexorably leads to one's own conceptual or substantive or theoretical position within the academy. Or, the tradition is presented as a sort of intellectual 'other' – the defining foil for a more progressive or enlightened or sophisticated or somehow *better* way of approaching the subject at hand. Traditions are, of course, invented, as we learned a generation ago from Eric Hobsbawm and Terrence Ranger (1983). And although they were interested in cultural practices that seemed to serve a burgeoning (western) nationalism during the apogee of the modern nation-state, their observations are nonetheless instructive for this brief explication and exploration of traditions (and continuities) in cultural geography. More specifically, they taught us that traditions always serve a purpose – they serve a function, whether consciously intended or not – and often the interrogation of that function is as rewarding an enterprise as the examination of the 'tradition' *per se*. This position itself might be associated with the so-called 'new cultural geography' (which is really not so new anymore; the opening salvos in the once-called civil war in cultural geography having been fired some 20-plus years ago), for it presumes to take an ironic stance toward the question of 'traditional cultural geography' and its purpose is less to present an unquestionable, even unquestioned, historiography of an academic subdiscipline, than it is to raise certain positions, histories, genealogies, and debates that might serve to better place the pursuit of cultural geography *today*. Put another way, while this chapter might purport to offer a disciplinary road map of sorts, showing how we got here from then, the lessons of critical cartography tell us that all road maps are normative, and that to make claims about the past is as much about making claims on the future as it is in attempting to uncover some inalienable truth about the practice of, in this case, cultural geography.

At this point we also might take a cue from the resurgence of geographical interests in historiography, and particularly from one of the canonical works of that burgeoning literature, David Livingstone's *The Geographical Tradition* (1992). One of Livingstone's main points is that intellectual ideas and academic progress do not

occur on the head of a pin. To understand the development of a tradition – or perhaps more accurately traditions – is to interrogate not only the ideas at the core of an intellectual enterprise *as* ideas, but also to realize the institutional contexts (in our case, usually academic or university ones) which nurture (or don't) particular kinds of scholarship, as well as the general societal contexts of those ideas and their framing institutions. Finally, one of the lessons of the past 20 years of geographical scholarship is a newfound appreciation for the way in which the particular subjectivity of the author makes a difference, and part of that subjectivity is bound in place. That is to say, it is important to realize my own location as author in writing this particular chapter in a cultural geography companion, as a middle-aged, white, male, US-trained scholar, at once an individual yet also influenced by the times and places I have studied (and have studied in), and so my chapter is likely to be different from the chapter immediately following this, which is written by a scholar much younger than I, who learned her cultural geography in a different time, and in a different place – in Britain to be precise; and those facts will, to a degree, differentiate our approaches to 'cultural geography.' Yet, in the end, we share a similar substantive interest in a number of topics that somehow cohere around the concepts of culture and geography, which are embodied in how, as scholars and citizens-of-the-world, we know and interrogate the world around us. We belong to a discursive or textual community; we identify with an academic discipline.

And so, after all of the caveats that mark these opening paragraphs, we are still left begging the historiographical questions: what cultural traditions and why do they matter? Without immediately taking a position on just what, exactly, cultural geography *is* (that is the purpose of this entire volume, after all), we can begin by acknowledging that there *has been* for the better part of a century, something recognized as cultural geography, especially in an American (here to mean US) context (thus it has a genealogy), which has served, more recently, as the intellectual foil (the conceptual other) that, in concert with a general disciplinary engagement with postempiricist and postpositivist epistemologies and ontologies, has helped to foster renewed (international) interests in something else called cultural geography. And while two (hypothetical) geographical scholars, each practicing their own cultural geography – one traditional, one new – and separated by the distance of 80 years and an ocean or two, might not necessarily recognize in each other's work an intellectual kinship apparent to us today, it is in making that kinship apparent, especially through institutional or disciplinary frameworks, that this chapter is interested. With full realization of the normative, teleological, and place-bound problematics of claiming a genealogy, I present here a few signposts toward understanding traditions and the place of traditions in cultural geography, primarily in an attempt to move from traditions to continuities to connections with the broadened interest in something called cultural geography in the Anglophone world.

Traditional cultural geography, as it is now known, was not called *traditional* cultural geography until 'it' became the focus or subject of scholarly critique over 20 years ago. It is through the nexus of critique, in this case positing a 'traditional' versus a 'new' cultural geography, that core disciplinary ideas are identified and refined, honed and retooled to meet the needs of contemporary scholars. And while critique is often seen as attack, resulting in an abandonment of the old, it also is important to remember that there had to be something intellectually valuable in

the old to merit the attack in the first place, a set of concepts or substantive foci that are worth 'fighting over.' It is always dangerous, of course, to assume that a tradition of any kind is monolithic – that all practitioners who might be identified with a discipline think and act alike and are cast from the same mold. Yet key thinkers can always be identified, canonical works cited (and citations counted), and ideas can thus be traced to ascertain their dissemination and influence. In US cultural geography, the undisputed progenitor of cultural geography was Carl O. Sauer, often identified as the 'leader' of the Berkeley School of Cultural Geography (although like most such labels, this one was not self-ascribed, but assigned as a sort-of disciplinary shorthand for Sauer and his students and his devotees). Sauerian or Berkeley School Geography has served as a narrative for both approaches to 'tradition' which opened this essay: as a foil and as a genealogy to be revered. The mediation of those two approaches has been called a 'civil war' in cultural geography (Duncan 1994), and that civil war at the very least served as a forum for a set of debates that helped to clarify the various paths toward today's cultural geographies. With the privilege of hindsight, I take the position here that such debates – as long as they do not devolve into *ad hominem* attacks or overly vitriolic exchanges or hagiographic battles over patriarchy – are a good thing, for they mark an intellectual invigoration that 'keeps us honest' as scholars, making us always careful to elucidate and explicate our conceptual and theoretical positions, always accountable to the implications and ramifications of our scholarly practice. This, of course, is also a hallmark of a critical human geography more generally understood, wherein scholarship is seen never to be 'value free' and always carries with it (or should) what Gregory (1994) calls the anticipatory utopian moment. But to get to that point is to skip the beginning, and for many cultural geographers, the beginning is Sauer.

Carl Sauer was a prodigious scholar, and was perhaps an iconoclast who defies categorization. His academic career spanned over six decades, and one can hardly expect to pin down a thinking, active intellect over such a long period. But it is important, too, to remember that what we are after is key *ideas* rather than the essence of a particular man's scholarship, and while Sauer wrote many essays and books, a very few of them have come to stand above the others as disciplinary hallmarks, perhaps none more than 'The Morphology of Landscape,' published in 1925, when Sauer was relatively new to the Berkeley Geography department, having recently arrived from his Midwestern origins. 'Morphology of Landscape' is a highly sophisticated piece of theoretical rumination that still bears reading today. Its argument is multifaceted, but its most famous maxim posits the cultural landscape as the result of culture's action upon the medium of nature, and it is from that point that much of the recent critique evolved. It is the theoretical ramifications of 'Morphology' in a postpositivist intellectual milieu that have served as foil or conceptual other for the new cultural geography, particularly through a renewed interest in the concept of cultural landscapes from the 1980s. The place of a Sauerian or Berkeley School conception of landscape and culture *vis-à-vis* the new cultural geography is well documented elsewhere and so demands only a brief précis here (see, for example: Mitchell this volume; Cosgrove 1984, 2000a; Jackson 1989; McDowell 1994; Duncan 1990; Kobayashi 1989; Hugill & Foote 1994).

'Morphology of Landscape' (1925) was written in part as a result of Sauer's dissatisfaction with the then-dominant perspective of environmental determinism,

especially as found in the work of Ellen Churchill Semple and Harlan Barrows. Sauer turned to Continental philosophy for philosophical guidance, his colleagues in Anthropology at Berkeley for theories of culture, and wrote 'Morphology' as part of "an effort to 'emancipate' himself from determinist thinking" (Williams 1983: 5). Sauer later claimed that methodological statements like 'Morphology' were part of an ongoing and shifting methodological position to which he rarely referred once they were written. Instead, he wrote, "they are best considered as successive orientations and have had utility as such; they belong to the history of geography, and if they are any good they represent change and growth" (as quoted in Williams 1983: 2).

While Sauer's position on theoretical and methodological change and growth is laudable, it is a highly personal statement and raises the question of how a wider readership responds to the writings of influential scholars. For example, 'Morphology' stood for several generations as a widely cited programmatic statement, and its influence still persists in some arenas of cultural geography today (look for it especially in introductory textbooks prepared for the US market). Additionally, Sauer's actual approach to the cultural landscape, as well as the work of his intellectual and scholarly 'offspring,' has been the subject of critique for a number of reasons. Cosgrove (1983: 2), for example, has suggested that "in the face of a strong determinism in geography" Sauer (along with Vidal) "laid emphasis on human culture as itself a deterministic force in transforming nature," and this emphasis was taken up by cultural geographers in general, especially those interrogating cultural landscapes. It is interesting in light of today's concern with the role of landscape as part and parcel of social (or socio-spatial) process, that Sauer's conception of the cultural landscape initially depended upon "apprehending the relationship between nature and culture dialectically, giving to neither an absolute dominance within a linear, determinist form of explanation" (Cosgrove 1983: 3). Nevertheless, Cosgrove continues,

> Sauer's early insistence upon regarding human geography as a positive science (1925) and the methodological position he then espoused has been more readily followed than his concern with process, other than in studies of diffusion. The dialectic was not mediated through the historical specificity of human production, so that it dissolved into either the idealist reification of culture as an agent of change, or a semi-determinism dignified by the name "possibilism." (Cosgrove 1983: 3)

This, according to Cosgrove, "has left cultural geography theoretically impoverished, many of its studies existing in a theoretical vacuum, preserving a sense of cultural significance in understanding the landscape, but failing to extend this into a developing theoretical discourse" (Cosgrove 1983: 3).

A reified concept of culture in the practice of landscape interpretation may be traced to Sauer's (1925 [1963]: 343) 'Morphology,' where he wrote that "culture is the agent, the natural area is the medium, the cultural landscape is the result." Duncan (1980) has shown that this concept of culture has had wide import in the arena of landscape interpretation, and he has written on the implications of such a "superorganic" concept of culture. Duncan (1980: 181) claims that "the superorganic mode of explanation in cultural geography reifies the notion of culture, assign-

ing it ontological status and causative power." A superorganic conception of culture posits "culture" as somehow external to individual human beings; culture becomes "an entity . . . not reducible to actions by the individuals who are associated with it, mysteriously responding to laws of its own" (Duncan 1980: 182). Duncan challenges many of the assumptions, or the intellectual baggage, implicit in employing a reified, superorganic concept of culture, including: the tendency to see humans as "relatively passive and impotent" (190); the idea that there exists an individual somehow apart from culture (189); the "assumption of homogeneity within a culture" (193); the tendency to create ideal types, and to "reduce the character of millions of people to a few traits" (193); the assumption of Pavlovian conditioning where "culture" is based upon unconscious and conditioned habit, rather than conscious intellectual activity (194); and failure to acknowledge other types of explanation beyond "culture as a determining force . . . hence many important questions are precluded" (191). Ultimately,

> the most serious consequence of attributing causal power to culture is the fact that it obscures many important issues as to the origins, transmittal, and differentiation within a population of various "cultural characteristics." There is a surprising lack of many kinds of explanatory variables that are employed in other subfields of geography and in other social sciences; for example there is little or no discussion of social stratification, the political interests of particular groups, and the conflicts which arise from their opposing interests. Similarly, there is little discussion of government and other institutional policies, or the effects of business organizations and financial institutions on the landscape. Many of these things are seen as "given," or as cultural characteristics of a people that are not analyzed in any detail or used in explanation. Culture, which presumably includes the factors mentioned above, is seen to produce such effects on landscape. (191)

Mitchell (1995) has continued this critique of "culture" in cultural geography, most recently suggesting that even more recent, seemingly more-refined notions of culture as employed in cultural geography still reify the concept, granting it ontological and explanatory status. He suggests instead that there is no such thing as culture, only the *idea* of culture, to which several responses have been registered (Jackson 1996, Cosgrove 1996, Duncan & Duncan 1996, Mitchell 1996), including the challenge that even *ideas* themselves are "real" and have material and ideological consequences.

Sustained critique of the so-called "Sauerian" or "Berkeley" school of cultural geography, including its dominance of the landscape tradition in cultural geography, prompted Cosgrove and Jackson (1987) to suggest that there was on the horizon a "new" cultural geography, which was:

> contemporary as well as historical (but always contextual and theoretically informed); social as well as spatial (but not confined exclusively to narrowly-defined landscape issues); urban as well as rural; and interested in the contingent nature of culture, in dominant ideologies and in forms of resistance to them. It would, moreover, assert the centrality of culture in human affairs.

From these points it can be argued that Sauerian cultural geography – no matter the 'accuracy' of its depiction – became little more than an opportunity for renewed

engagement with questions of landscape interpretation, at first, and eventually for cultural geography more broadly; an engagement situated within then-current debates in geography more broadly aimed at moving away from positivist and empiricist human geographies. Thus Cosgrove's *Social Formation and Symbolic Landscape* (1984) represents geography's first sustained engagement with Marxism (see Mitchell this volume), while Duncan's doctoral dissertation from which the 'Superorganic' essay (1980) was drawn was a critique born of humanistic geography. It can be argued that this marks a turning-point in cultural geography's explicit (re)engagement with the discipline of Geography (Sauer himself generally withdrew from disciplinary engagement as Geography in the US, at least, underwent its 'quantitative revolution'); a move that perhaps brought cultural geography from the margins (in the US) or virtual non-existence (elsewhere) more solidly into the main streams of human geography, and took to that cultural geography subsequent concerns for literary theory, an anthropology struggling with a crisis of representation, questions of structure and agency and structuration, feminism, postcolonialism, critical race theory, and so on. But that brings us to this volume, and misses the point that some took exception to the critique, or at least to the manner in which it 'reinvented' cultural geography, and this was not necessarily deemed a good thing.

In a defense of a Sauerian tradition published in the *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, Price and Lewis (1993: 1) took exception to what they saw as the "new cultural geographers" and "their critique of their academic forebears that has moved increasingly off-the-mark." While conceding the advancement of cultural research in several important ways, Price and Lewis's defense of the Sauerian tradition hinged primarily upon conflicting interpretations of just what that tradition is or was, and what they saw as the "faulty undergirding of the 'misrepresentation' of cultural geography by its critics." The essay and its rejoinders (Cosgrove 1993, Duncan 1993, Jackson 1993) are an important part of disciplinary dialogue, and provide insight into the nuances of 'paradigm clashes' as they are manifest in scholarly journals, as well as the manner in which 'traditions' are contested. Yet, one is left at the end of the clash with a vague sense that what was at stake was not so much the pursuit of a cultural geography as an institutionalized claim to a hagiographic tradition. Good points were made on both sides, of course – it is a rare debate that is entirely one sided, and the nuance of conflicting positions is always instructive for shattering a tendency to caricature another's scholarly practice. In the end one is tempted to agree with Price and Lewis's (1993: 2) claim that "in practice, old and new variants of cultural geography share precious little beyond their common name."

Yet, for some reason – filial loyalty? institutional attachment? a desire for continuity or lineage? a sense of genuine intellectual affinity? – there was (and perhaps still is), in the US at least, a *bona fide* attempt at *rapprochement* between the old and the new. Perhaps the hallmark of that *rapprochement* is the volume *Re-reading Cultural Geography* (Foote et al. 1994), in which a number of essays culled from the annals of traditional cultural geography were reprinted, alongside new essays and commentary by new cultural geographers. The book's foreword was written by Philip Wagner, who with Marvin Mikesell had published some 30 years earlier one of the more important programmatic statements in the traditional cultural geography's canon, *Readings in Cultural Geography* (Wagner & Mikesell 1962), a volume

that had itself been a touchstone in the new cultural geography's critique. Wagner recanted, in part, that earlier volume's conception of culture, and wrote of the *Re-reading* collection (1994: 4):

> What I invite you, the reader, to appreciate, then, is the diversity of original contributions, the mutability of messages, and yet the community of commitment that allows us to recognize our modest subdiscipline as a persistent, permissive, and open quest for a shared understanding, acknowledging multiple precedents and allowing for numerous metamorphoses within the diffusional universe that constitutes our common territory.

Wagner (p. 8) observed that "Cultural geography continues to flourish. Its locus of interest has changed, but not its logic of inquiry." And he hoped (p. 7) that:

> Cultural geography can help to analyze and attack the human problems in our own societies that attach to race and poverty, age and gender, ethnicity and alienation. Spatial imagination, historical awareness, cultural sensitivity, and ecological insight, as well as that observational gift upon which field work depends, can all play a part in rendering service, and committed engagement will enrich our vision as well.

Similar bridge-building took place in Britain, most notably in Stephen Daniels' essay on the duplicity of landscape, in which he tried to theoretically accommodate the then-perceived divide between Marxian and humanistic inspired cultural geographies. Daniels (1989: 197) was particularly interested in furthering cultural geography's then-new engagement with Raymond Williams and John Berger (both Marxist cultural critics who also are central to the development of British cultural studies) in order to "open up the broad domain of geographical experience and imagination" which are central to their work. According to Daniels (p. 197), "this will involve making more of a rapprochement with Sauerian traditional cultural geography – in emphasizing observation, in emphasizing the importance of education, in reinstating the biophysical world, and in reinstating the idea of landscape, not despite of its difficulty as a comprehensive or reliable concept, but because of it." It would seem that Daniels, at least, and others most certainly, could see continuity in the gulf between the traditional and the new cultural geographies that involved more than a nostalgic desire for intellectual or patrimonial lineage.

Meanwhile, James Duncan's commentary, 'After the Civil War,' in the Foote volume, suggested, perhaps somewhat sympathetically to Wagner's point, that cultural geography be conceived of as an epistemological heterotopia rather than a "single contested space of power/knowledge." Duncan argued that "contemporary cultural geography . . . is no longer as much an intellectual site in the sense of sharing a common intellectual project as it is an institutional site, containing significant epistemological differences" (Duncan 1994: 402). Duncan reached this conclusion after noting that the younger generation of cultural geographers, "although still predominantly North American, has been joined over the past few years by British social geographers who have, under the influence of British cultural studies, taken the 'cultural turn' that is increasingly common in the social sciences," and so Duncan claimed a certain ennui regarding the civil war, as "the intellectual patrimony of the new cultural geographies has become so diffuse that many younger geographers see rebelling against a particular patriarch as increasingly obsessive and irrelevant."

And what exactly was the cultural turn, especially as it was manifest in cultural geography, new or old? That turn is the subject of at least two essays in this volume (those by Scott and Barnett), and has been recounted *vis-à-vis* cultural geography elsewhere in some detail (see, for example, Mitchell 2000). The cultural turn in geography drew upon a burgeoning interdisciplinary attention to 'culture' that was informed diversely by such intellectual forebears as E. P. Thompson, Raymond Williams, Louis Althusser, Richard Hoggart, Stuart Hall, Ashis Nandy, Donna Haraway, Gayatri Spivak, Homi Bhabha, Sara Suleri, Cornel West, bell hooks, Antonio Gramsci, Edward Said; and upon concepts such as semiotics, representation, discourse analysis, hegemony, subaltern studies, diaspora, queer studies, postcoloniality. Clearly, cultural studies, or the cultural turn, is a broad interdisciplinary field. Of particular relevance to cultural geography, however, is a set of characteristics summarizing what cultural studies aims to do (Sardar & Van Loon 1999: 9):

1 Cultural studies aims to examine its subject-matter in terms of *cultural practices* and their *relation to power*. Its constant goal is to expose power relationships and examine how these relationships influence and shape cultural practices.
2 Cultural studies is not simply the study of culture as though it were a discrete entity divorced from its social or political context. Its objective is to understand culture in all its complex forms and to analyze the *social and political context* within which it manifests itself.
3 Culture in cultural studies always performs two functions: it is both the *object* of study and the *location* of political criticism and action. Cultural studies aims to be both an intellectual and a pragmatic enterprise.
4 Cultural studies attempts to *expose and reconcile the division of knowledge*, to overcome the split between tacit (that is, intuitive knowledge based on local cultures) and objective (so-called universal) forms of knowledge. It assumes a common identity and common interest between the knower and the known, between the observer and what is being observed.
5 Cultural studies is committed to a *moral evaluation* of modern society and a *radical line* of political action. The tradition of cultural studies is not one of value-free scholarship but one committed to social reconstruction by critical political involvement. Thus cultural studies aims to *understand and change* the structures of dominance everywhere but in industrialist capitalist societies in particular.

These tenets are not unassailable. They are one attempt to characterize a broad and at times disparate interdisciplinary movement that also plays out differentially in different geographical contexts. It should not be a surprise that the genesis, adoption, and adaptations of cultural studies in Britain, notably through the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies, would appear differently than its counterparts in, say, Canada, New Zealand, Australia, the United States, or in India, Mexico, Malaysia, or Nigeria. And of course, as with any intellectual or scholarly 'movement,' cultural studies was and is open to critique itself, including, for example, charges that its earliest emphasis on class ignored equally important aspects of gender or race or sexuality in the constitution of everyday social life and power. So, too, the engagement by geographers with cultural studies has been variegated, depending upon the idea, places, and people involved.

And in geography, and for cultural, or increasingly culturally minded, geographers in several national and institutional contexts, the cultural turn in the human sciences provided at least two opportunities, perhaps even necessities. First, it provided an opportunity for geographers interested in 'culture' to take what was on their minds, or in their notebooks, as the basic stuff of a traditional cultural geography, and, through that material, engage with broader, interdisciplinary debates: a revalorization of culturally directed geographies, with a greater emphasis on questions of power, theory, and normativity. Second, the cultural turn's explicit attention to social theory fit nicely with burgeoning developments in geography more broadly, and perhaps brought cultural geographers more directly into swelling mainstream disciplinary currents; and perhaps also engaged heretofore economic or political or social geographers in cultural analysis and interpretation for the first time. In a sense, the new cultural geography took traditional cultural-geographic concerns as a point of departure, retheorized key concepts and ideas through cultural studies, and reengaged with the discipline at large through the concomitant attention to postpositivist and postempiricist theoretical frameworks, a commitment, in many cases, to a critical human geography, and ultimately to what Soja (1989) has called the reassertion of space in critical social theory – for let us not forget that what geographers had to offer the cultural turn and social theory was a practical history of attention to space, place, region, landscape, and society–nature dichotomies as key concepts of their twentieth-century discipline.

Cultural geography certainly is not alone in this potential elision, whereby a tradition is erected only to become the foil for perhaps entirely altogether different scholarly aims and directions. Fieldwork, once the bastion not only of empiricist epistemologies but an enterprise that carried within its practice the social reproduction of a male-dominated masculinist geographical practice, has been 'taken' on and redefined (reinvented?) as a broader, more catholic, and more reflexive set of practices (see, for example, Nast 1994). Fieldwork was central to a Sauerian tradition (see Price & Lewis 1993; or several of Sauer's own methodological statements, e.g. Sauer 1941, 1956). Yet recently a special issue of the *Geographical Review* titled 'Doing Fieldwork' (DeLyser & Starrs 2001) makes it clear that even in this arguably traditional journal (which published much in the Berkeley School tradition over the years) the core ideas of an intellectual enterprise can radically change, even while acknowledging a continuity of genealogy.

And so we are left with a genealogical problematic: whither tradition or wither tradition? Toward the second point, it is clear that today one can 'do' cultural geography without recourse to a 'traditional cultural geography' (see, for example, Shurmer-Smith & Hannam 1994). That position is probably more prevalent in Britain, where at times it might seem that all of human geography has become cultural geography. The next chapter, by Heidi Scott, more directly engages the cultural turn in geography from a decidedly British perspective (the bibliography is almost exclusively compiled from British-based academic publications, for example); and aside from an early reference to 'traditional cultural geography' which relegates the 'critique' to an American national context, the chapter generally gives credence to the development of a 'new' cultural geography almost exclusively out of a British cultural studies literature. There also are precedents that fall out of the predominant Sauerian teleology: where is the work of someone such as

Estyn Evans, for instance, in our rising new cultural geography? Yet one can argue that there is always internalized in that literature a critical space in which the Sauerian lives on, as a catalytic ghost that had to be exorcised for a clean break with an American tradition, if only, in the end, to avoid a name confusion. Or perhaps that is only the conservative curmudgeon in me writing, as every generation must come to terms with the fact that it might not be necessary for the next to read everything that was formative in one's own intellectual development.

Yet, that Sauerian ghost refuses to give up in some quarters. Clearly for some (Price & Lewis 1993, Robbins this volume) it is a sense of carrying on in key substantive research directions. In others, I suspect, its ghostly presence is a feature of institutional training. We read Sauer. We read the critique. We realized the path by which we got to the present state of affairs in cultural geography, and that the telling of the story is a central narrative in the ongoing redefinition of a tradition. Sometimes we need to do this for pedagogical reasons, in order to make clear in our graduate seminars the seemingly esoteric references that pervade the literature from the civil-war period. At other times we feel the need to clarify for colleagues who already carry with them an understanding of cultural geography exactly where we stand. In short, the critique is now perhaps tradition; and it carries 'traditional cultural geography' along with it. There are still others, perhaps, who take a middle ground, of sorts, me included. For example, in my own attempts to grapple with the idea(l)s of cultural landscapes (e.g. Schein 1993, 1997, 2003) I find that there is much that I learned from reading Sauer and the Berkeley School that I want to retain in my poststructuralist take on cultural landscapes as discourse materialized (Cosgrove 2000b), most notably an attention to detailed empirics (if not empiricism) for working through the theoretical implications of the landscape in reconstituting social life as well as a concern for the *long durée*, for the historical geographies of place that are central to the structuring qualities of those very places and landscapes. While I learned much from reading Foucault, I learned these things also from particular teachers, themselves devotees of Sauer, who believed in looking and thinking and, perhaps, in Sauer's (1956 [1963]: 393) 'morphologic eye': "a spontaneous attention to form and pattern . . . some of us have this sense of significant form, some develop it (and in them I take it to have been latent), and some never get it. There are those who are quickly alerted when something new enters the field of observation or fades out from it." One can take exception with the latent biological essentialism of Sauer's morphologic eye, but a charitable 'read' in a positive moment of genealogical reconstruction might make connections to more recent concerns with vision, ocular-centrism, and the lesson that these are learned and social epistemologies (see Cosgrove 1985; Rose 1992, 1993; Nash 1996). Learning from looking was central to the Sauerian tradition (Lewis 1983) and has not entirely faded from a retheorized contemporary cultural geography (Rose 2001). In short, there are elements of a 'traditional cultural geography' that bear retelling, revisiting, reformulating, and if the continuity is seen as forced or teleological, so be it. There is a certain ethical obligation to acknowledge intellectual forebears if, indeed, it is through their work that one's present position was achieved. And finally, there even has been in recent years a discovery of Sauer in other quarters that must be accounted for in geographical literatures. A prime example is the adoption of Sauer by William Cronon, especially in his groundbreaking *Changes in the Land* (1983),

now a foundational text in American literatures on historical ecological change in an imperialist context.

In the end, there is a temptation to take a functionalist position on the matter of traditional cultural geography, especially at the institutional level. The *invocation* of the tradition is the point in the first place. Traditional cultural geography serves as part of a central narrative about how we practice our contemporary cultural geography, which is institutionalized to greater or lesser extent depending upon national disciplinary contexts and individual predilections.

There is a temptation also to recognize at the intellectual and scholarly level of ideas, that there is (through a positive historiographical interpretation) a grand continuity through some concepts and subjects basic to cultural geography of any definition. We can see in the Sauerian tradition attention to: the society/nature nexus, cultural landscapes, patterns and processes of imperialism and colonial domination, ecological change, historical as well as geographical process, detailed empirical work, and even the moral and ethical implications of our geographical practice, all topics that are very much a part of this volume. And these ideas resonate not just in a cultural-studies-derived (British) cultural geography, but across the Anglophone literatures in cultural geography. They can be found between the pages of (relatively) new journals such as *Cultural Geographies*, *Gender, Place, and Culture*, and *Journal of Social and Cultural Geography*, as well as in key books (such as Anderson 1995; Anderson & Gale 1992; Jacobs 1996; Fincher & Jacobs 1998; Wood 1998; Mitchell 1996, 2003; Henderson 1999; Hoelscher 1998; to mention only a few) by authors from a range of national disciplinary contexts beyond Britain. Traditions in the end are what you make of them. The tensions between critique and continuity, between old and new, between differing institutional sites of interrogation, between differing epistemologies, will always sit in uneasy opposition in any account of a tradition. In the end it is likely that no one will be entirely happy with any genealogical exercise, but it is the process of undertaking the interrogation that matters, after all, and not the quest for an ossified or reified set of essential characteristics by which we might model our scholarship, for then our traditions surely would wither as the world passed us by.

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