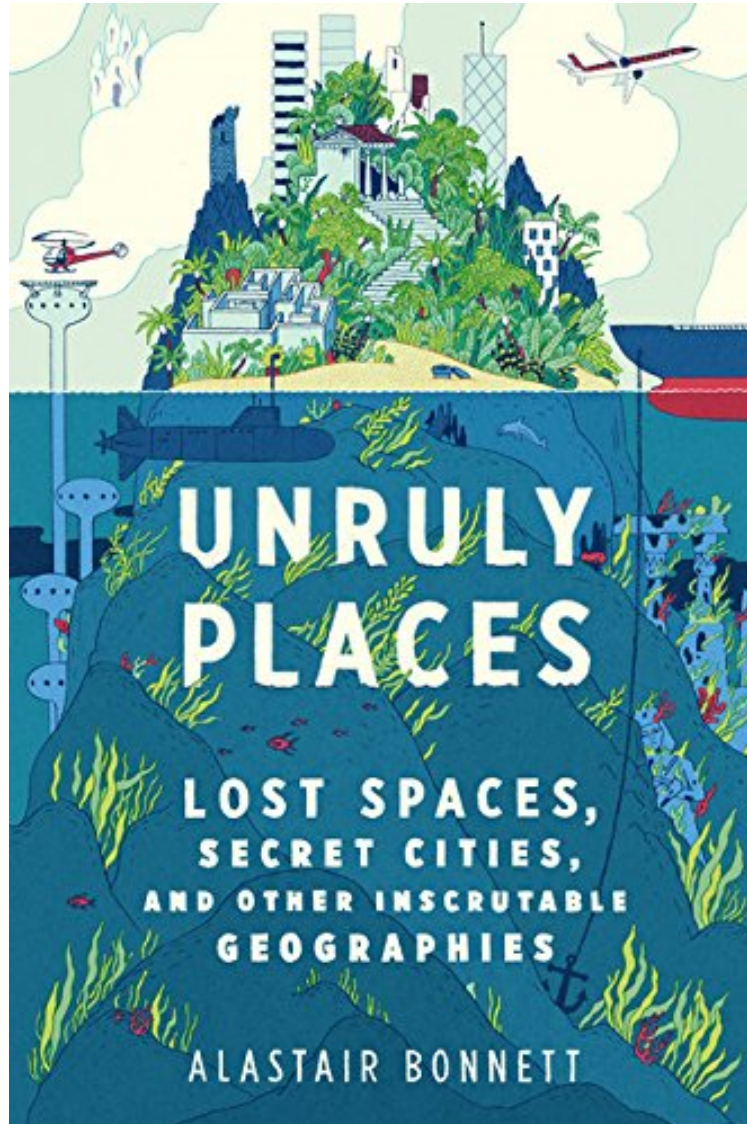


Unruly Places: Lost Spaces, Secret Cities, and Other Inscrutable Geographies

Alastair Bonnett

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Alastair Bonnett : Unruly Places: Lost Spaces, Secret Cities, and Other Inscrutable Geographies before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Unruly Places: Lost Spaces, Secret Cities, and Other Inscrutable Geographies:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. History, anthropology, and theory By Alysa H. A blend of history, anthropology, and theory, Bonnett's writing here often has the journalistic feel of a series of particularly engaging New

Yorker articles. I'm not sure the book will make me think about my own relationship to places and spaces -- which is a slight failure of the theoretical parts -- but there were at least enough "Wow, really?!" moments that I would happily recommend it to friends who are interested in random interesting geographical bits. The places are grouped into the following categories/chapter headings: Lost Spaces, Hidden Geographies, No Man's Lands, Dead Cities, Spaces of Exception, Enclaves and Breakaway Nations, Floating Islands, and Ephemeral Places. I found the first six sections better than the final two. The former had more detail about each place while the latter by their very natures were more theoretical. Like some other reviewers, I would have preferred either a longer book which covered each place in greater detail, or a book of the same length which covered fewer places, leaving room for... greater detail. In a book about places, and peoples' relationships to them, why not write even more about, well, the places themselves? One of the main takeaways for me is that I now want to seek out more information on some of the places that Bonett discusses so briefly. Make of that what you will. ** I received a Review Copy of this book via NetGalley ** 2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Unruly Places By Leah This book tells of forgotten, destroyed, transformed, impermanent places, small bits of land left over, man and nature that create place and strives for you to imagine a world that's off the map. You can tell the author is very enchanted by these places and you start to feel the same sort of fascination. He wants you to think about the mystery, the history and the possibility. I read many geographical tellings and even in my love for them, I find most of them to be dry but Unruly Places was one of the easiest books to get through. It's full of his own musings and makes cause for you to reimagine your own surroundings and find places you've seen, but not thought of, and imagine a world where place may exist, even if you can't see it. Each chapter tells of a different place, and it's been said that brevity is the soul of wit, but merely five pages per place just wasn't enough. I found myself just getting to know these places when the chapter would end and after 47 chapters it's a little heartbreaking. He visited many of these places and I'm jealous that he got to see their beauty and I'm left with coordinates to peer down from above. It seems to me that a book with less places, more in depth tellings and photos of his travels would have better appealed to me, but nonetheless, I very much enjoyed the book and I have many places to learn more about. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Random travelogue mixed with theory By Atle Brandt Grabbed the kindle edition at significant discount, so was mainly expecting a short fun read. And most of the book is just that. Short description ordered by a few themes, mixed with a bit of meta reflection on place as such. The places range from the spectacular to the mundane - and it is at times hard to grasp which ones are written based on actual visit compared to read about. A few places leads the writer of on a slightly rambling meta discussion with himself, ranging far and wide (literally and metaphorically). Better editing or forming these pieces into a more coherent debate would edge towards 5. Great illustrations for each theme. Solid references and even GPS coordinate included.

A tour of the worlds hidden geographies from disappearing islands to forbidden deserts and a stunning testament to how mysterious the world remains today

From Booklist Bonnett divides places into helpful categories. Hidden Geographies includes tunnel labyrinths below old cities and oddities like an established community within a Philippine cemetery. We visit Dead Cities like the skyscrapered, yet bizarrely empty, attempts by China and North Korea to proclaim ideological success. Unused spaces enclosed by highways fall within No Mans Lands. Lost Spaces range from tiny islands that come and go, with shifting conditions, to Leningrad, Russia, which was renamed St. Petersburg. International airspace, a peninsula-consuming Greek monastery, and a Somalian pirate feral city fall under Spaces of Exception. A section on breakaway nations includes a chunk of India within an Indian enclave in Bangladesh. Floating Islands come made of pumice, trash, ice, and modern building materials. The strongest places concern human adaptation. These Ephemeral Places contain a parking lot where work-desperate airport employees, including many pilots, lay over in RVs. The erudite Bonnett explores the roots of place all the way to childhood hideaways, yet the book doesn't build. The many locations remain detached. --Dane Carr Its not so much the idea of the journey, or even movement that Alastair Bonnett has on its mind... Here, its all about location, location, location... He takes the reader to the ends of the earth and the other side of the street, illuminating why it is that place matters and demands our attention lest we lose the very essence of who we are..." --The New York Times Book "Delightfully quirky." Ron Charles, Washington Post "Fascinating... A conversational, thoroughly researched, and very engaging armchair tour of what might be seen as a parallel planet to the one we live in every day one in which nothing is ordinary... Alastair Bonnett is a most excellent traveling companion." The Atlantic "Unruly [Places] overflows with amazing examples of the world's hidden places." Entertainment Weekly "[Bonnett] takes us to one-of-a-kind, off-the-grid areas from Cappadocia to Camp Zeist to Chitmahaisin this inspired, instructive travelogue on earth's lost spaces, breakaway nations, no-man's-lands, floating islands, and secret enclaves." Elle "Bonnett is an excellent guide and literary companion. He wears his learning and his prejudices lightly, leaving the reader to join the geopolitical dots. He succeeds in making the strange familiar and the familiar strange, fully justifying his conclusion that "ordinary places are also extraordinary places; the exotic can be around the corner or right under our feet." Los Angeles Times "A chronicle of the worlds missing and hidden treasures... Bonnett manages to imbue the mundane traffic island in Newcastle, England with the same gravitas given

to the politically and historically weighty an empty decoy city in North Korea meant to lure defectors from its southern neighbor." The Daily Beast "Alastair Bonnett shows us that our maps still hold plenty of secrets...The geography of the unknown has never been so comprehensible." Mother Jones "[A] delightfully outlandish travelogue. You'll never look at a map or your own backyard the same way again." O, The Oprah Magazine