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Travel

Sacred Ground & Holy Water: Travel Tales of Enlightenment
Coffeetown Press
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It's clear from the first page that *Sacred Ground & Holy Water* is not a typical travel book. In this collection of travel stories, Lyn Fuchs moves around the globe from one adventure to another, and transports the reader to several exotic destinations, whose people come to life in the most fascinating and curious ways. The rich itinerary includes raw wilderness, volcanoes, and serene and eternal tropical seascapes. Readers stroll down the timeless beaches of Zihuatenejo, Mexico; take in the bluesy street culture of Sophia, Bulgaria; kayak with orcas off the coast of Vancouver Island; and study Rembrandt in Amsterdam. Billed as "travel tales of enlightenment," these stories translate life into an entertaining hodgepodge of all that is curious, exotic, and sometimes tacky. This is a mixed-up world of foibles and delights, including waking up in a rainforest with an exotic striped beetle in the navel.

Running against the waves of Fuchs' witty and entertaining prose is a riptide of edgy, often lurid language. The author's exploits are charged with racy language and sexual innuendo. As he readily admits, the tales will appeal to men and he does not disguise his interests: "…and the only wedding here is the marriage of food, wine, music and a voracious hottie." Distracted by a statuesque server at a restaurant in Sophia, the author refers to foreplay with a tabbouleh salad. However, not everyone will find the voyeuristic prose entertaining. Some may view his remarks as an affront to sensibilities or culture; others will be piqued by the off-beat commentary. The line between jibe and disparagement is often blurred. Nevertheless, Fuchs is a deft raconteur, and he shows he can paint a compelling romantic description: "…the northern turning leaves marking the passing of years [from whence he came] to the southern rolling waves [of a tropical beach] which hint of changeless eons and instill contentment."

Give credit to Fuchs for getting his point across. As he writes, "Like it or not, all cultures are changing and forever changed." Globalization is impacting Mayan culture in Guatemala, for example. Traditional local celebrations are turning tacky and curious. Yet, Fuchs offers valuable insights into people and how culture is changing for good and bad. Lovers of travel should heed

his advice to visit once-classic cultures before they disappear forever.

Gary Klinga