

Toby Emert

THEMATICALLY SPEAKING, COLONIALISM IS A LOT LIKE TOURISM

With appreciation to Jamaica Kincaid

When the tourists, finally, die:
let me just tell you something
the people in a small place see the event
 in the distance heading directly towards them
 and they say, "I see the thing and it is heading towards me"

They play drums
They cannot breathe properly and they cannot think properly
It makes the minister turn and go
 inside his house without a reply
 This cannot be held against them

I mean, whose idea is it?
Who decides to celebrate?

People speak of slavery as if it had been a pageant of large ships
Perhaps there is something in that
Almost no slave ever mentions who captured or delivered him or her
Internal colorings are kept deliberately mysterious and unknown
The substantial and the important are assembled
 (artfully) into a picture story

No one seems to know who got the money

I cannot tell whether I come from children, eternal innocents,
or artists who have not yet found eminence in a world too stupid to understand,
or lunatics who have made their own lunatic asylum,
 or an exquisite combination of all three

In a small place, people
 cultivate small events.