



Islanded Identities: Constructions of Postcolonial Cultural Insularity (Cross/Cultures)

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The island, because of its supposed isolation, and its apparent small scale, has historically been a privileged site of colonial aggression and acquisitiveness. Yet the island has also been imagined as a uniquely sovereign space, and thus one in which the colonial enterprise can be seen as especially egregious. 'Islandedness' takes on a particular charge in the early twenty-first century, in the supposedly postcolonial period. While contemporary media offer a simulacrum of proximity to others, the reality is that we are ever more distant, inhabiting islands both real and conceptual. Meanwhile migrants from today's 'postcolonial' islands are routinely denied access to the perceived 'mainland'. And, in islands freed from overt colonialism, but often beset by neocolonial forces of domination and control, identities are constructed so as to differentiate insider from outsider - even when the outsider comes from within. This is the first volume devoted explicitly to the postcolonial island, conceived in a broad geographical, historical, and metaphorical sense. Branching across disciplinary parameters (literary studies, anthropology, history, cultural studies), and analyzing a range of cultural forms (literature, dance, print journalism, and television), the volume attempts to focus critically on three areas: the current realities of formerly colonized island nations; the phenomenon of 'foreign' communities living within a dominant host community; and the existence of (local) practices and theoretical perspectives that complement, but are often critical of, prevailing theories of the postcolonial. The islands treated in the volume include Ireland, Montserrat, Martinique, Mauritius, and East Timor, and the collection includes more broadly conceived historical and theoretical essays. The volume should be required reading for scholars working in postcolonial studies, in island studies, and for those working in and across a range of disciplines (literature, cultural studies, anthropology). Contributors: Ralph Crane, Matthew Boyd Goldie, Lyn Innes, Maeve McCusker, Paulo de Medeiros, Burkhard Schnepel, Cornelia Schnepel, Jonathan Skinner, Anthony Soares, Ritu Tyagi, Mark Wehrly

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