



This Shipwreck of Fragments: Historical Memory, Imaginary Identities, and Postcolonial Geography in Caribbean Culture and Literature

Li-Chun Hsiao

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In light of, and in response to, the popular perception of the Caribbean as an epitome of cultural hybridity and improvisation, this book seeks to further examine Caribbean cultural identities along the lines of race, class, nationalism, and history. Drawing on a variety of genres of literature and popular music, the present volume includes not only pieces that stress the shaping and reshaping of Afro-Caribbean cultural identities and the significance of hybridization, but also those that think against the grain and pursue questions which have not received enough critical attention. This latter task can be seen in the attempt to probe the phenomenon that the Caribbean's image as a tropical getaway in metropolitan popular imaginations tends to eclipse its troubled pasts, traumatic memories, and current (and recurrent) problems which elude the rhetoric of cultural hybridity, presupposing instead a certain non-conflictual diversity or racial equality in the relatively innocuous realm of 'culture'. Although nuanced among themselves on certain issues, the individual chapters together highlight a body of work which is distinct from the bulk of Anglo-American academic productions on the Caribbean, as the majority of the textual and cultural materials treated here come from either the Hispanic or Francophone Caribbean.

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