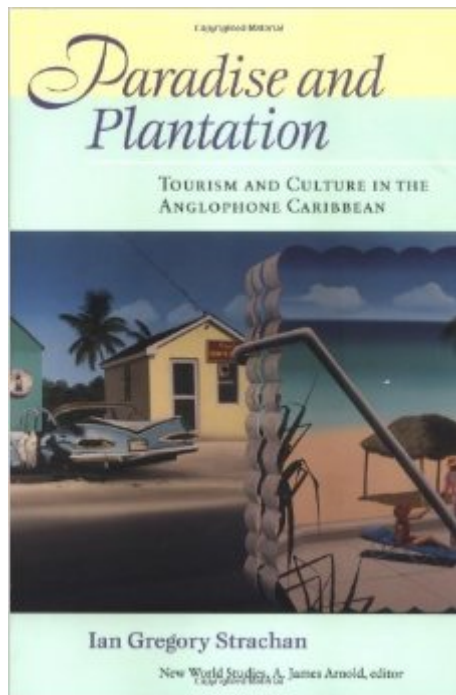


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Paradise And Plantation: Tourism And Culture In The Anglophone Caribbean (New World Studies)



Synopsis

"It is hard to ignore the hotels. They rise like mammoths of iron and concrete above the homes, the office buildings, the trees of New Providence, island of my birth." So begins Ian Strachan's history of the idea of the Caribbean as paradise. The modern image of the Bahamas as a carefree tourist oasis has its origins in much earlier cultural mythology: the first colonizers conceptualized the Caribbean as a place beyond time, beyond the real, and the region produced profit seemingly without work. Yet an Edenic experience was made possible only by the existence of the plantation--the very opposite of paradise for the Amerindians, whose homeland was colonized, and for those brought as slaves. Examining poetry, plays, novels, travelogues, magazine ads, postcards, posters, brochures, stamps, popular songs, paintings, and illustrations, *Paradise and Plantation* presents telling links between the myth of a Caribbean paradise and colonial ideologies and economics. Strachan considers the cultural, economic, and social effects of tourism's "brochure discourse" in the modern Caribbean, specifically in the Bahamas, and he enriches his discussion with a fascinating exploration of the ways postcolonial Caribbean writers such as V. S. Naipaul, Derek Walcott, Paule Marshall, Jamaica Kincaid, and Michelle Cliff have responded to the paradise-plantation dichotomy. The conspicuous disparity between the Caribbean's reputation as paradise and the stark social, economic, and political realities of the region is not news. Ian Strachan's genealogy of the paradise-plantation myth goes far beyond the established discourse in paradise studies, however, providing a new and interdisciplinary approach to further the discussion.

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