



Creolization as Cultural Creativity

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Creolization as Cultural Creativity From University Press of Mississippi

Global in scope and multidisciplinary in approach, *Creolization as Cultural Creativity* explores the expressive forms and performances that come into being when cultures encounter one another. Creolization is presented as a powerful marker of identity in the postcolonial creole societies of Latin America, the Caribbean, and the southwest Indian Ocean region, as well as a universal process that can occur anywhere cultures come into contact.

An extraordinary number of cultures from Haiti, Martinique, Guadeloupe, the southern United States, Trinidad and Tobago, Madagascar, Mauritius, Seychelles, Réunion, Puerto Rico, Argentina, Suriname, Jamaica, and Sierra Leone are discussed in these essays.

Drawing from the disciplines of folklore, anthropology, ethnomusicology, literary studies, history, and material culture studies, essayists address theoretical dimensions of creolization and present in-depth field studies. Topics include adaptations of the Gombé drum over the course of its migration from Jamaica to West Africa; uses of “ritual piracy” involved in the appropriation of Catholic symbols by Puerto Rican *brujos*; the subversion of official culture and authority through playful and combative use of “creole talk” in Argentine literature and verbal arts; the mislabeling and trivialization (“toy blindness”) of objects appropriated by African Americans in the American South; the strategic use of creole techniques among storytellers within the islands of the Indian Ocean; and the creolized character of New Orleans and its music. In the introductory essay the editors address both local and universal dimensions of creolization and argue for the centrality of its expressive manifestations for creolization scholarship.

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Creolization as Cultural Creativity From University Press of Mississippi Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #5601778 in Books
- Published on: 2011-09-01
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 9.02" h x .94" w x 5.98" l, 1.56 pounds
- Binding: Hardcover
- 320 pages

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Editorial Review

Review

“For anyone interested in human culture as something alive?something that moves as we, its makers, move with it?this book, with its vivid, surprising, and far-reaching examples of syncretic forms, will be an inspiration.”

?Susan Stewart, author of *The Poet’s Freedom: A Notebook on Making*

“This volume delivers a powerful compilation of thoughtful and provocative essays written by a group of first-rate scholars. While each contributor has turned to their own particular specialization in cultural inquiry, collectively they provide their readers with a broad view of the wide range of social developments found across a wide swath of the western hemisphere.”

?John Michael Vlach, author of *Back of the Big House: The Architecture of Plantation Slavery* and *The Planter’s Prospect: Privilege and Slavery in Plantation Paintings*

“*Creolization as Cultural Creativity* teaches us how to think about the many verbal ways that people on the lower rungs dynamically express and remake themselves in challenging cultural circumstances. How do they respond and create something new? In these trying historical times, I find this an immensely helpful, hopeful, and even liberating scholarly book.”

?Edward Hirsch, author of *The Living Fire: New and Selected Poems* and *How to Read a Poem and Fall in Love with Poetry*

From the Inside Flap

What happens when cultures meet and new creative expressions emerge

About the Author

Robert Baron, Brooklyn, New York, directs the folk arts program of the New York State Council on the Arts. He is the coeditor, with Nick Spitzer, of *Public Folklore*.

Folklorist Ana C. Cara, Oberlin, Ohio, is professor of Hispanic studies at Oberlin College. Her articles have appeared in *Journal of American Folklore*, *World Literature Today*, and *Latin American Research Review*.

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