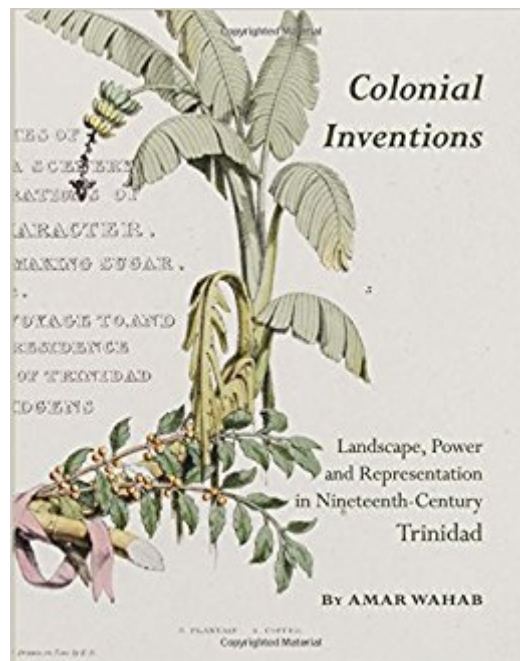




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Colonial Inventions: Landscape, Power And Representation In Nineteenth-Century Trinidad



Synopsis

This book situates its contemplation of the nineteenth-century Trinidadian landscape in the context of an emerging sub-field of Caribbean postcolonial studies, by connecting the visual representation and indexing of colonial landscapes and people with the making of colonial power. Emphasis is placed on three pivotal image catalogues which span the pre and post emancipation periods and which connect the projects of British slavery and indentureship. The book unearths sketches, paintings, lithographs and engravings and analyzes them as central to the iconic framing and disciplining of colonized subjects, tropical nature and the plantation landscape. Focusing on the image works of British travellers Richard Bridgens and Charles Kingsley and Creole artist, Michel Jean Cazabon, the chapters consider how an aesthetic logic was not only illustrative but constitutive of racialized and gendered scripts of colonial landscapes, nature and identity. While these various strands of aesthetic reasoning reveal a seemingly coherent operation of colonial power, they also register the very ambiguity of these disciplinary projects in moments of uncertainty regarding the amelioration of African slavery, the emancipation of slavery, and the highly contested project of Indian indentureship in the Caribbean. The book reflects the dynamic instability of colonial inventive projects manifest in a period of experimental and troubled British rule that potentially frustrates any attempt to recover the truth of Caribbean colonial reality.

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