

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-35977-1 - The Caribbean in the Wider World, 1492-1992: A Regional Geography

Bonham C. Richardson

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The Caribbean in the wider world, 1492–1992 is a major new textbook survey that, on the eve of the quincentenary of Christopher Columbus's epic voyage, explains how the region's present geography is intimately tied to the past. The Caribbean was Europe's first overseas colony, its landscapes transformed to produce tropical staples and its decimated aboriginal populace replaced with African slaves. As European power has waned in the Caribbean, it has been replaced by the geopolitical domination of the United States.

Professor Richardson examines this colonization and recolonization of the Caribbean during the past half millennium, portraying a region victimized by natural hazards, soil erosion, introduced overpopulation, and gunboat diplomacy. Most importantly, he explains the ways in which Caribbean peoples have reacted and adapted to external influences and he shows why Caribbean identities and ways of life are best understood in light of the region's interrelationships with the outside world. No other single survey of the region provides equivalent breadth and the historical geography logic that permeates the text – ranging from aboriginal ecologies to today's narcotics traffic – effectively harnesses elements of the past to illuminate the present. *The Caribbean in the wider world, 1492–1992* will be adopted for courses dealing with regional geography, Third World issues, and the Caribbean.

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Geography of the World-Economy

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A geography without knowledge of place is hardly a geography at all. And yet traditional regional geography, underpinned by discredited theories of environmental determinism, is in decline. This new series *Geography of the World Economy* will reintegrate regional geography with modern theory and practice – by treating regions as dynamic components of an unfolding world-economy.

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The readership for this important new series will be wide. The radical new geographies it provides will prove essential reading for second-year or junior/senior students on courses in regional geography, and area and development studies. They will provide valuable case-studies to complement theory teaching.

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The United States in the world-economy

A regional geography

John Agnew

The United States in the World-Economy is a major new textbook survey of the rise of the United States within the world-economy, and the causes of its relative decline. With the USA being the dominant state in the contemporary world-economy, it is vital to understand how it got where it is today, and how it is responding to the current global economic crisis. Professor Agnew emphasizes the divergent experiences of different regions within the USA and, in so doing, provides a significant 'new' regional geography, tracing the historical evolution of the USA within the world-economy, and assessing the contemporary impact of the world-economy upon and within it. No existing treatment covers the subject with equivalent breadth and theoretical acuity, and the guiding politico-economic framework provides a coherent radical perspective within which the author undertakes specific regional and historical analysis. *The United States in the World-Economy* will prove required reading for numerous courses in regional geography, area studies and the geography of the United States.

South East Asia in the world-economy

Chris Dixon

South East Asia has for many centuries occupied a pivotal position in the wider Asian economy, linking China and the Far East with India and the Middle East and, since the early 1500s, the region has also played a major role in the world-economy. *South East Asia in the world-economy* is the first textbook survey of the area's interaction with these wider regional and international structures.

Professor Chris Dixon demonstrates how South East Asia's role has undergone frequent and profound change as a result of the successive emergence and dominance of mercantile, industrial and finance capital. He shows how the region has developed as a supplier of luxury products, such as spices; as a producer of bulk primary products; and how, since the mid-1960s, it has become a major recipient of investment and a favoured location for labour-intensive manufacturing operations, producing goods for European and American markets. The author examines how these phases in the evolution of the international economy have been reflected in the relations of production and in the spatial pattern of economic activity. He also discusses how the progressive integration of South East Asia in the world-economy has established the dominance of a small number of core areas and produced a pattern of uneven development throughout the region. In a concluding chapter, Chris Dixon explores the prospects for South East Asia in the 1990s in the light of the restructuring of the world-economy.

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For Lucy Barbara Richardson

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Acknowledgements

My academic interest in the Caribbean region extends back nearly a quarter of a century to August, 1967, when I arrived in newly independent Guyana for field research for my Master's degree in geography at the University of Wisconsin at Madison. I returned to Guyana for a year in 1968–69 to research the Ph.D. degree at Wisconsin. Since then I have done field research in Trinidad (1971), Carriacou and Grenada (1973), St. Kitts–Nevis (1976), Barbados (1980 and 1981–82), and archival work dealing with the Commonwealth Caribbean in London (1986–87). I am very grateful to the American Philosophical Society, the Association of American Geographers, the National Geographic Society, The National Science Foundation, and the Society of the Sigma Xi for various grants that have helped fund my research. I also wish to thank Rutgers University and also Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University for providing research support while I have held faculty positions at those universities.

During this more than twenty years I have augmented my primary evidence from field and archive by reading a good deal of the rich academic literature about the Caribbean. I have profited from the work of hundreds of writers, those living and dead and those from the Caribbean as well as those from elsewhere. Among the many, the writers who have been perhaps most influential for me are the geographer David Lowenthal and the anthropologist Sidney Mintz, two academics whose work I find myself perusing time and again for insight and inspiration.

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Bonham C. Richardson

Blacksburg, Virginia

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