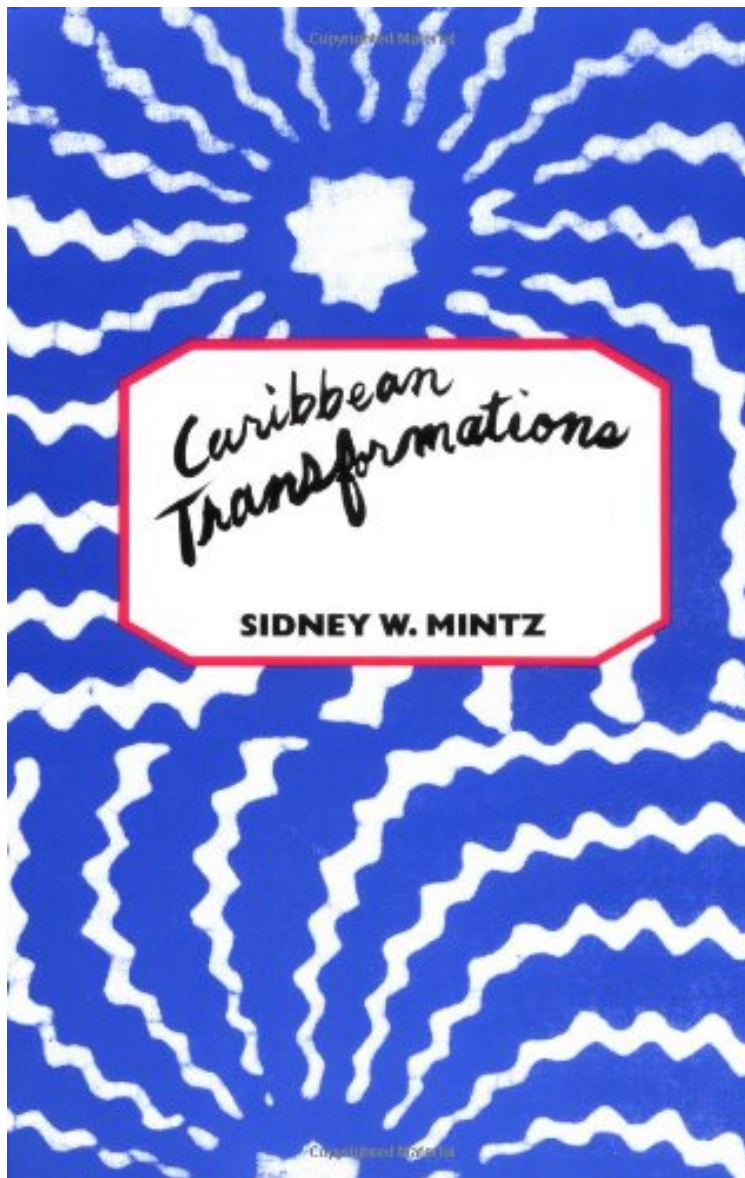


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Caribbean Transformations

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Sidney Mintz : Caribbean Transformations before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Caribbean Transformations:

Contact and clash, amalgamation and accommodation, resistance and change have marked the history of the Caribbean

islands. It is a unique region where people under the stress of slavery had to improvise, invent and literally create forms of human association through which their pasts and the symbolic interpretation of their present could be structured. *Caribbean Transformations* is divided into three major parts, each preceded by a brief introductory chapter. Part One begins with a look at the African antecedents of the Caribbean, then discusses slavery and the plantation system. Two chapters deal with slavery and forced labor in Puerto Rico and the history of a Puerto Rican plantation. Part Two is concerned with the rise of a Caribbean peasantry--the erstwhile slaves who separated themselves from the plantation system on small plots of land. This creative adaptation led to the growth of a class of rural landowners producing a large part of their own subsistence but also selling to and buying from wider markets. Mintz first discusses the origins of reconstructed peasantries, and then proceeds to the specifics of the origins and history of the peasantry in Jamaica. Part Three turns to Caribbean nationhood--the political and economic forces that affected its shaping and the social structure of its component societies. A separate chapter details the case of Haiti. The book ends with a critique of the implications of Caribbean nationhood from an anthropological perspective, stressing the ways that class, color and other social dimensions continue to play important parts in the organization of Caribbean societies.

The paperback republication of these essays, first brought out in book form in 1974, is most welcome. [T]his well-selected collection achieves a remarkable organization and unity. A stimulating and important book. Erika Bourguignon, *Man* The author provides stimulating introductions to each of the main sections of the book and succeeds in welding the studies into a meaningful whole. Bruce Young, *Geographical* This is both a collection of many of Sidney Mintz's most important articles on Caribbean societies. Always writing with care and elegance, and basing his arguments always on an unparalleled range of fieldwork in the area (Haiti, Puerto Rico, Jamaica) and superb social and cultural reconstructions, this may be Mintz's most important book to date. Roger D. Abrahams, *American Anthropologist* The book is rich in information, ideas, suggestions and speculations. It deals judiciously with the complexities of the area, resisting the temptation to simplify, to provide neat solutions or pat or dogmatic answers to complex issues. Erika Bourguignon, *The Hispanic American Historical* Sidney W. Mintz is one of the very few North American social scientists who have dedicated long careers exclusively to the Caribbean area, and he is probably the most gifted among them. Mintz's work, in my opinion, belongs to the special class of excellent, mature, and finely balanced scholarship. H. Hoetink, *American Journal of Sociology* About the Author Sidney W. Mintz is currently professor emeritus, department of anthropology at Johns Hopkins University. He founded the department there in 1975. He has done extensive field research in Puerto Rico, Jamaica and Haiti, as well as in Iran. He recently launched a research program in Hong Kong to study the consumption and production of soybean and is now examining soy products in the United States.