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Commonwealth of Letters: British Literary Culture and the Emergence of Postcolonial Aesthetics

By Peter J. Kalliney

Oxford University Press Inc. Hardback. Book Condition: new. BRAND NEW PRINT ON DEMAND., Commonwealth of Letters: British Literary Culture and the Emergence of Postcolonial Aesthetics, Peter J. Kalliney, Commonwealth of Letters complicates the traditional understanding of the relationship between elite, aging modernists like T.S. Eliot and the generation of colonial poets and novelists from Africa and the Caribbean- Kamau Brathwaite, Ngugi wa Thiong'o, Jean Rhys, and others-who rose to prominence after World War Two. Rather than a mostly one-sided relationship of exploitation, Kalliney emphasizes how both groups depended on-and thrived off-one another. The modernists, dispirited by the turn to a kind of bland, welfare-state realism in literature and the rise of commercial mass culture, sought rejuvenation and kindred spirits amongst a group of emigre writers from the Caribbean and Africa who had been educated in the literary curriculum exported to the colonies in the years before 1945. For their part, the postcolonial writers, ambitious for literary success and already skeptical of the trend toward corruption and philistinism among their compatriot anticolonial politicians, sought the access to cultural capital and the comforting embrace of literature provided by metropolitan modernists. As a result, modernist networks became defined by the exchange between metropolitan...



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