

Cheeky Fictions: Laughter and the Postcolonial

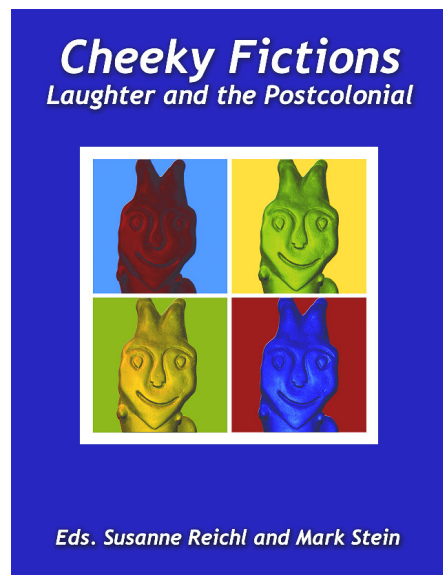
Edited by Susanne Reichl & Mark Stein

Amsterdam/New York, NY 2005. ca. 314 pp

(Internationale Forschungen zur Allgemeinen und Vergleichenden Literaturwissenschaft)

ISBN: 90-420-1995-6

full price: € 65,- subscription offer: € 47,-



Humour is a key feature, laughter a central element, disrespect a vital textual strategy of postcolonial transcultural practice. Devices such as irony, parody, and subversion can be subsumed under an interventionist stance and have accordingly received some critical attention. But literary and cultural postcolonial criticism has been marked by a restraint verging on the pious towards the wider significance and functions of laughter. This collection transcends such orthodoxies: laughter can constitute an intervention – but it can also function otherwise. The essays collected here take an interest in the strategic use of what can loosely be termed laughter – in all its manifestations. Examining postcolonial transcultural practice from a range of disciplinary and methodological perspectives, this study seeks to analyse laughter and the postcolonial in their complexity.

For the first time, then, this collection gathers a group of international specialists in postcolonial transcultural studies to analyse the functions of laughter, the comic and humour in a wide range of cultural texts. Contributors have worked with texts from Africa, Asia, Australia, North America, the Caribbean, and Britain, reading work by authors such as Zakes Mda, Timothy Mo, VS Naipaul, and Zadie Smith. This interdisciplinary collection is a contribution to both, postcolonial studies and humour theory.

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