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Identity and affect : experiences of identity in a globalising world

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Abstrak

This book describes and analyses the distinctive social habitats that arise from the interpretation of globalization and local cultures. Through in-depth case studies of South Asian, East African, Melanesian and European societies, the contributors provide a careful, contextual analysis of the formation and expression of local identities and of the affective self-constitution of social agents. A key issue is the increase in scale and fragmentation of social relations which, in forcing individuals and communities into an increasingly outward orientation, initiates a process of cultural redefinition and social realignment. The different effects of colonialism on identity formation are examined in the chapters on communalism in Sri Lanka, Indian untouchables, cargo cults in New Guinea and the substitution of food exchange for cannibalism in Kaluana. The formation and experience of belonging to cultural diaspora is then explored from the perspective of the individual and the social collective, focusing on Italians in London and south Asians in East Africa. Narratives allow individuals to speak for themselves and create a self-consciousness of how they are linked to global cultural streams and to specific localities. Finally the book examines some of the defining experiences of modernity, specifically how individuals in industrial capitalist societies have come to see their identity as dependent on modern forms of industrial, public sector work.