

Winner

Kritish Rajbhandari (Northwestern U)

Title

Anarchival Drift and the Limits of Community in Indian Ocean Fiction.

Citation

Anarchival Drift advances a compelling model of comparison between south-to-south oceanic cultures that is as richly drawn as it is originally conceived. Rajbhandari's culturalist approach to comparative studies draws from an impressive array of sources ranging from colonial legal archives to photographs and travel narratives to rethink our conception of contemporary Indian ocean fictions across the Anglophone and Francophone traditions. *Anarchival Drift* is sharp-eyed work. It extends critical conversations in a number of fields: transoceanic studies, postcolonial thought, migrant history and ecology. Rajbhandari's capacity to move fluidly between languages (such as Swahili, Luo, Mauritian, Laskari and various Creoles) is also inspired. Aside from brilliant readings of fictions about the sea (by Amitav Ghosh, Abdulrazak Gurnah, Sophia Mustafa, Shenaz Patel and others), Rajbhandari uncovers a kaleidoscope of transcultural and multilingual postures that reveal the remarkable history of migration, labor, and linguistic exchange between Asia and Africa often ignored in Eurocentric stories of empire.