



Mainland Passage: The Cultural Anomaly of Puerto Rico

Ramon E. Soto-Crespo

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One-third of the population of Puerto Rico moved to New York City during the mid-twentieth century. Since this massive migration, Puerto Rican literature and culture have grappled with an essential change in self-perception. *Mainland Passage* examines the history of that transformation, the political struggle over its representation, and the ways it has been imagined in Puerto Rico and in the work of Latina/o fiction writers.

Ramón E. Soto-Crespo argues that the most significant consequence of this migration is the creation of a cultural and political borderland state. He intervenes in the Puerto Rico status debate to show that the two most discussed options—Puerto Rico's becoming either a fully federated state of the United States or an independent nation—represent false alternatives, and he forcefully reasons that Puerto Rico should be recognized as an anomalous political entity that does not conform to categories of political belonging.

Investigating a fundamental shift in the way Puerto Rican writers, politicians, and scholars have imagined their cultural identity, *Mainland Passage* demonstrates that Puerto Rico's commonwealth status exemplifies a counterhegemonic logic and introduces a vital new approach to understanding Puerto Rican culture and history.

"An extraordinarily effective and persuasive synthesis of political theory, historical exposition, and cultural analysis that does real justice to a topic of daunting complexity. Ramón Soto-Crespo's readings strike me as some of the best work being done now in US Latino literary criticism." —**Ricardo L. Ortíz**, Georgetown University

"*Mainland Passage* is a provocative intervention into some of the most intractable problems in Puerto Rican studies." —*The Americas*

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