

The strange islands of Ernesto Cardenal: dynamics of commercialization, purification and institutionalization in the Solentiname project

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Abstract

Based on a reading of *Las islas extranas*, one of the volumes of Ernesto Cardenal's memoirs that deals with the foundation of the Solentiname community, this article demonstrates the importance of this community as a counter-institution, as well as its particular use of cultural goods as an economic resource. Solentiname functioned as a counter-institution of the (Trappist) monastic institution and the dictatorial state in Nicaragua. In order to support the community, Cardenal made strategic use of cultural goods (painting, poetry, sculpture) through their promotion and commercialization. However, as the paper demonstrates, this signified a complex dynamic of appropriation and purification of consumption from a spiritual perspective. The article emphasizes the interrelation of the poetic and cultural practice of Cardenal regarding this strategic use, as well as his importance as a cultural agent, and his use of avant garde topics in establishing his relationship with his peasant disciples in the community.

Palabras clave

Palabras clave de autor: [Nicaragua](#); [Solentiname](#); [cultural goods](#); [cultural field](#); [institutions](#); [naive painting](#)

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