



# The Iconography of Independence: 'Freedoms at Midnight'

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## The Iconography of Independence: 'Freedoms at Midnight'

This book explores the phenomenon of Independence Days. These rituals had complex meanings both in the territories concerned and in Britain as the imperial metropole, where they were extensively reported in the press. The text is concerned with the political management, associated rhetoric and iconography of these seminal celebrations. The focus is therefore very much on political culture in a broad sense, and changing perceptions and presentations over time. Highlights of the book include an overview by David Cannadine relating the topic to ornamentalism, invented tradition and transitions in British culture. Although the book is mainly concerned with the British Empire, Martin Shipway – a leading historian and cultural analyst of French decolonization – contributes an acute summary of how the same ‘moment’ was handled differently in the other great European empires. There are detailed and lively studies by noted specialists of the immediate coming of Independence to India/Pakistan, Malaya, Ghana, Zimbabwe, and Guyana. The book includes a thematic focus on the important role of representatives of the British monarchy in legitimating transfers of sovereignty at their point of climax.

This book was published as a special issue of *The Round Table*.

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